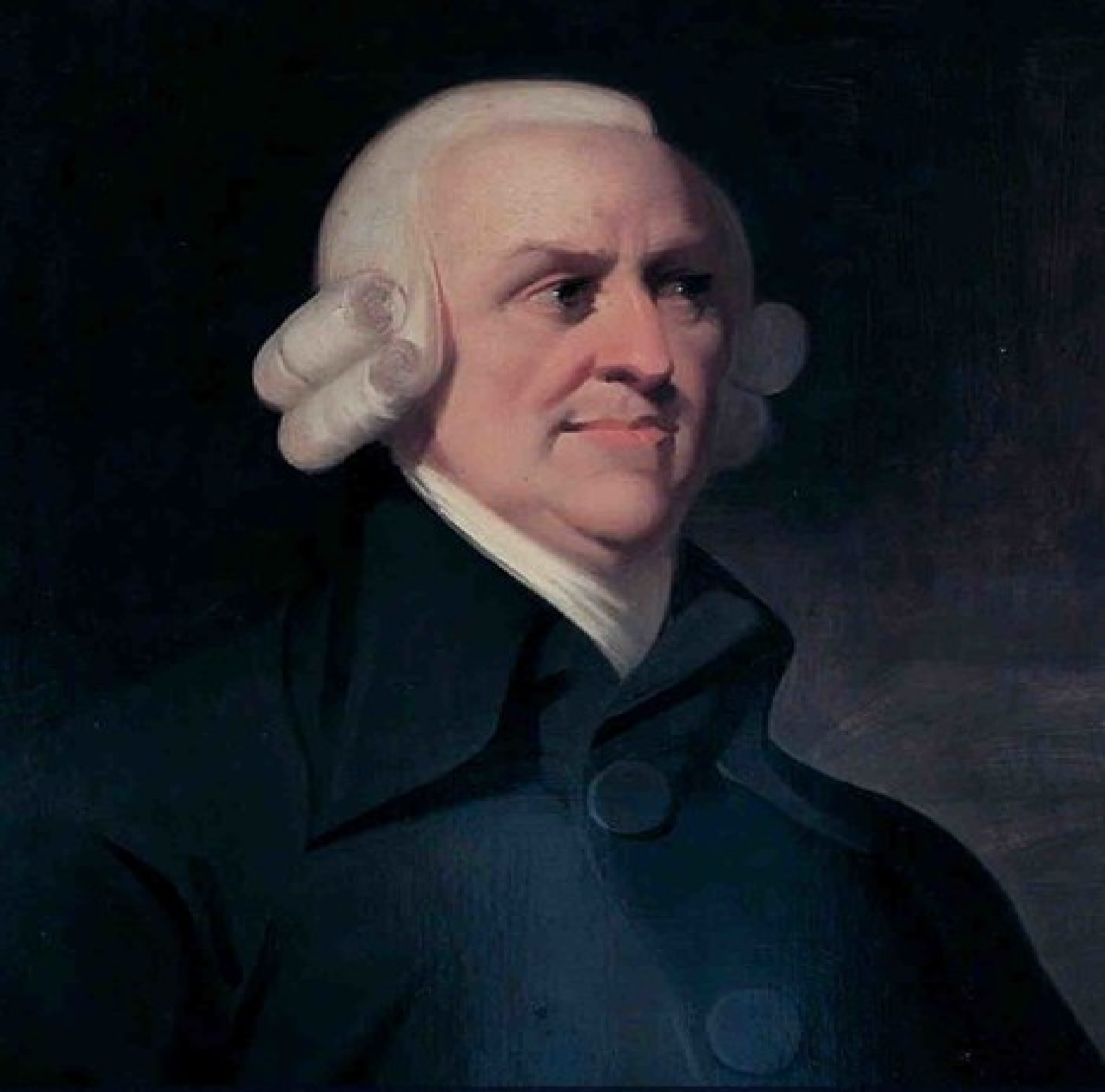


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The Complete Works of

ADAM SMITH



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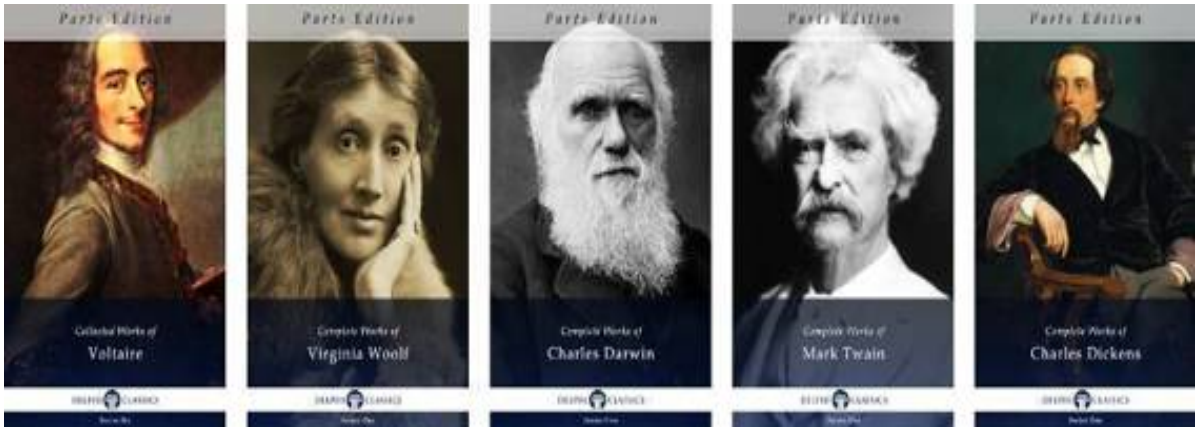
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The Books



Kirkcaldy, a town and former royal burgh in Fife, on the east coast of Scotland — Smith's birthplace



Portrait of Smith's mother, Margaret Douglas

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS



First published in 1759, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* provides the ethical, philosophical, psychological and methodological underpinnings to Adam Smith's later works. The ideas expressed in the text follow the views of his mentor, Francis Hutcheson of the University of Glasgow, who divided moral philosophy into four parts: Ethics and Virtue; Private rights and Natural liberty; Familial rights (Economics); and State and Individual rights (Politics). Hutcheson had abandoned the psychological view of moral philosophy, claiming that motives were too fickle to be used as a basis for a philosophical system. Instead, he hypothesised a dedicated "sixth sense" to explain morality. This idea, to be taken up by David Hume, claimed that man is pleased by utility.

In the work, Smith critically examines the moral thinking of his time, and suggests that conscience arises from dynamic and interactive social relationships through which people seek "mutual sympathy of sentiments." His goal in writing the book was to explain the source of mankind's ability to form moral judgement, given that people begin life with no moral sentiments at all. Smith proposes a theory of sympathy, in which the act of observing others and seeing the judgements they form of both others and oneself makes people aware of themselves and how others perceive their behaviour. The feedback we receive from perceiving (or imagining) others' judgements creates an incentive to achieve "mutual sympathy of sentiments" with them and leads people to develop habits, and then principles, of behaviour, which come to constitute one's conscience.

Starting in 1741, Smith set on the task of using Hume's experimental method (appealing to human experience) to replace the specific moral sense with a pluralistic approach to morality based on a multitude of psychological motives. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* begins with the following assertion: "How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortunes of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrows of others, is a matter of fact too

obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous or the humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it."

Smith departs from the "moral sense" tradition of Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Hume, as the principle of sympathy takes the place of that organ. "Sympathy" was the term Smith uses for the feeling of these moral sentiments. It was the feeling with the passions of others. It operated through a logic of mirroring, in which a spectator imaginatively reconstructed the experience of the person he watches. However, Smith rejects the idea that Man is capable of forming moral judgements beyond a limited sphere of activity, again centred on his own self-interest.

Though first published in 1759, Smith continued making extensive revisions to the book, up until his death. In spite of *The Wealth of Nations* being widely regarded as his most influential work, it is believed that Smith himself considered *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* to be a superior work.



Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746), the Ulster-Scots philosopher that became known as one of the founding fathers of the Scottish Enlightenment.

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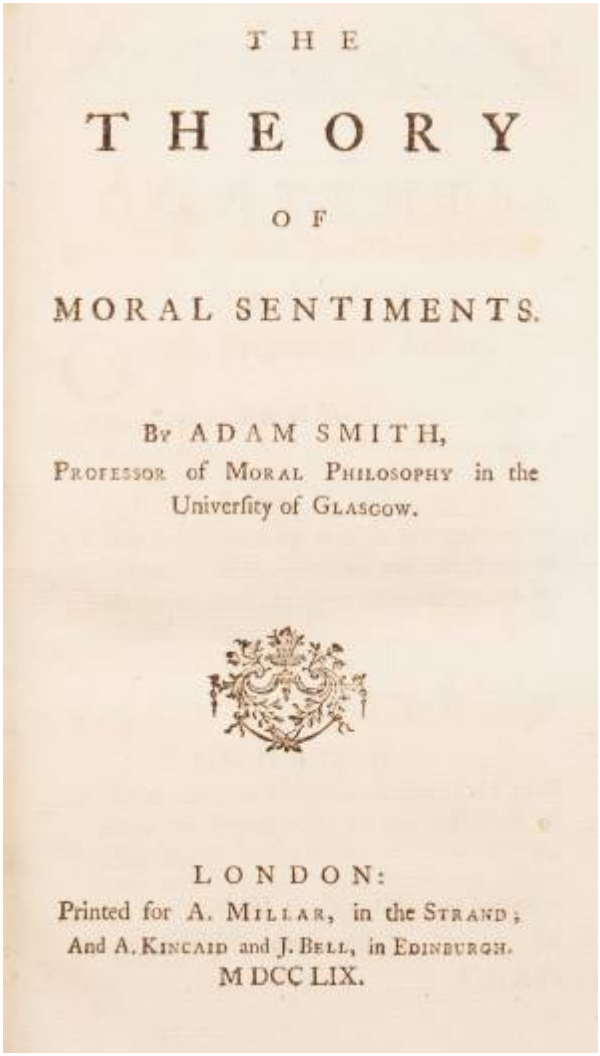
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THE

THEORY

OF

MORAL SENTIMENTS.

By ADAM SMITH,
Professor of Moral Philosophy in the
University of Glasgow.

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The first edition's title page

Part I: Of the Propriety of Action Consisting of Three Sections

Section I: Of the Sense of Propriety

Chap. I: Of Sympathy

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it.

As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation. Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. They never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. Neither can that faculty help us to this any other way, than by representing to us what would be our own, if we were in his case. It is the impressions of our own senses only, not those of his, which our imaginations copy. By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. His agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at last to affect us, and we then tremble and shudder at the thought of what he feels. For as to be in pain or distress of any kind excites the most excessive sorrow, so to conceive or to imagine that we are in it, excites some degree of the same emotion, in proportion to the vivacity or dulness of the conception.

That this is the source of our fellow-feeling for the misery of others, that it is by changing places in fancy with the sufferer, that we come either to conceive or to be affected by what he feels, may be

demonstrated by many obvious observations, if it should not be thought sufficiently evident of itself. When we see a stroke aimed and just ready to fall upon the leg or arm of another person, we naturally shrink and draw back our own leg or our own arm; and when it does fall, we feel it in some measure, and are hurt by it as well as the sufferer. The mob, when they are gazing at a dancer on the slack rope, naturally writhe and twist and balance their own bodies, as they see him do, and as they feel that they themselves must do if in his situation. Persons of delicate fibres and a weak constitution of body complain, that in looking on the sores and ulcers which are exposed by beggars in the streets, they are apt to feel an itching or uneasy sensation in the correspondent part of their own bodies. The horror which they conceive at the misery of those wretches affects that particular part in themselves more than any other; because that horror arises from conceiving what they themselves would suffer, if they really were the wretches whom they are looking upon, and if that particular part in themselves was actually affected in the same miserable manner. The very force of this conception is sufficient, in their feeble frames, to produce that itching or uneasy sensation complained of. Men of the most robust make, observe that in looking upon sore eyes they often feel a very sensible soreness in their own, which proceeds from the same reason; that organ being in the strongest man more delicate, than any other part of the body is in the weakest.

Neither is it those circumstances only, which create pain or sorrow, that call forth our fellow-feeling. Whatever is the passion which arises from any object in the person principally concerned, an analogous emotion springs up, at the thought of his situation, in the breast of every attentive spectator. Our joy for the deliverance of those heroes of tragedy or romance who interest us, is as sincere as our grief for their distress, and our fellow-feeling with their misery is not more real than that with their happiness. We enter into their gratitude towards those faithful friends who did not desert them in their difficulties; and we heartily go along with their resentment against those perfidious traitors who injured, abandoned, or deceived them. In every passion of which the mind of man is susceptible, the emotions of the by-stander always correspond to hat, by bringing the case home to himself, he imagines should be the sentiments of the sufferer.

Pity and compassion are words appropriated to signify our fellow-feeling with the sorrow of others. Sympathy, though its meaning was, perhaps, originally the same, may now, however, without much

impropriety, be made use of to denote our fellow-feeling with any passion whatever.

Upon some occasions sympathy may seen to arise merely from the view of a certain emotion in another person. The passions, upon some occasions, may seem to be transfused from one man to another, instantaneously and antecedent to any knowledge of what excited them in the person principally concerned. Grief and joy, for example, strongly expressed in the look and gestures of any one, at once affect the spectator with some degree of a like painful or agreeable emotion. A smiling face is, to every body that sees it, a cheerful object; as a sorrowful countenance, on the other hand, is a melancholy one.

This, however, does not hold universally, or with regard to every passion. There are some passions of which the expressions excite no sort of sympathy, but before we are acquainted with what gave occasion to them, serve rather to disgust and provoke us against them. The furious behaviour of an angry man is more likely to exasperate us against himself than against his enemies. As we are unacquainted with his provocation, we cannot bring his case home to ourselves, nor conceive any thing like the passions which it excites. But we plainly see what is the situation of those with whom he is angry, and to what violence they may be exposed from so enraged an adversary. We readily, therefore, sympathize with their fear or resentment, and are immediately disposed to take part against the man from whom they appear to be in so much danger.

If the very appearances of grief and joy inspire us with some degree of the like emotions, it is because they suggest to us the general idea of some good or bad fortune that has befallen the person in whom we observe them: and in these passions this is sufficient to have some little influence upon us. The effects of grief and joy terminate in the person who feels those emotions, of which the expressions do not, like those of resentment, suggest to us the idea of any other person for whom we are concerned, and whose interests are opposite to his. The general idea of good or bad fortune, therefore, creates some concern for the person who has met with it, but the general idea of provocation excites no sympathy with the anger of the man who has received it. Nature, it seems, teaches us to be more averse to enter into this passion, and, till informed of its cause, to be disposed rather to take part against it.

Even our sympathy with the grief or joy of another, before we are informed of the cause of either, is always extremely imperfect. General lamentations, which express nothing but the anguish of the sufferer,

create rather a curiosity to inquire into his situation, along with some disposition to sympathize with him, than any actual sympathy that is very sensible. The first question which we ask is, What has befallen you? Till this be answered, though we are uneasy both from the vague idea of his misfortune, and still more from torturing ourselves with conjectures about what it may be, yet our fellow-feeling is not very considerable.

Sympathy, therefore, does not arise so much from the view of the passion, as from that of the situation which excites it. We sometimes feel for another, a passion of which he himself seems to be altogether incapable; because, when we put ourselves in his case, that passion arises in our breast from the imagination, though it does not in his from the reality. We blush for the impudence and rudeness of another, though he himself appears to have no sense of the impropriety of his own behaviour; because we cannot help feeling with what confusion we ourselves should be covered, had we behaved in so absurd a manner.

Of all the calamities to which the condition of mortality exposes mankind, the loss of reason appears, to those who have the least spark of humanity, by far the most dreadful, and they behold that last stage of human wretchedness with deeper commiseration than any other. But the poor wretch, who is in it, laughs and sings perhaps, and is altogether insensible of his own misery. The anguish which humanity feels, therefore, at the sight of such an object, cannot be the reflection of any sentiment of the sufferer. The compassion of the spectator must arise altogether from the consideration of what he himself would feel if he was reduced to the same unhappy situation, and, what perhaps is impossible, was at the same time able to regard it with his present reason and judgment.

What are the pangs of a mother, when she hears the moanings of her infant that during the agony of disease cannot express what it feels? In her idea of what it suffers, she joins, to its real helplessness, her own consciousness of that helplessness, and her own terrors for the unknown consequences of its disorder; and out of all these, forms, for her own sorrow, the most complete image of misery and distress. The infant, however, feels only the uneasiness of the present instant, which can never be great. With regard to the future, it is perfectly secure, and in its thoughtlessness and want of foresight, possesses an antidote against fear and anxiety, the great tormentors of the human breast, from which reason and philosophy will, in vain, attempt to defend it, when it grows up to a man.

We sympathize even with the dead, and overlooking what is of real importance in their situation, that awful futurity which awaits them, we are chiefly affected by those circumstances which strike our senses, but can have no influence upon their happiness. It is miserable, we think, to be deprived of the light of the sun; to be shut out from life and conversation; to be laid in the cold grave, a prey to corruption and the reptiles of the earth; to be no more thought of in this world, but to be obliterated, in a little time, from the affections, and almost from the memory, of their dearest friends and relations. Surely, we imagine, we can never feel too much for those who have suffered so dreadful a calamity. The tribute of our fellow-feeling seems doubly due to them now, when they are in danger of being forgot by every body; and, by the vain honours which we pay to their memory, we endeavour, for our own misery, artificially to keep alive our melancholy remembrance of their misfortune. That our sympathy can afford them no consolation seems to be an addition to their calamity; and to think that all we can do is unavailing, and that, what alleviates all other distress, the regret, the love, and the lamentations of their friends, can yield no comfort to them, serves only to exasperate our sense of their misery. The happiness of the dead, however, most assuredly, is affected by none of these circumstances; nor is it the thought of these things which can ever disturb the profound security of their repose. The idea of that dreary and endless melancholy, which the fancy naturally ascribes to their condition, arises altogether from our joining to the change which has been produced upon them, our own consciousness of that change, from our putting ourselves in their situation, and from our lodging, if I may be allowed to say so, our own living souls in their inanimated bodies, and thence conceiving what would be our emotions in this case. It is from this very illusion of the imagination, that the foresight of our own dissolution is so terrible to us, and that the idea of those circumstances, which undoubtedly can give us no pain when we are dead, makes us miserable while we are alive. And from thence arises one of the most important principles in human nature, the dread of death, the great poison to the happiness, but the great restraint upon the injustice of mankind, which, while it afflicts and mortifies the individual, guards and protects the society.

Chap. II: Of the Pleasure of mutual Sympathy

But whatever may be the cause of sympathy, or however it may be excited, nothing pleases us more than to observe in other men a fellow-feeling with all the emotions of our own breast; nor are we ever so much shocked as by the appearance of the contrary. Those who are fond of deducing all our sentiments from certain refinements of self-love, think themselves at no loss to account, according to their own principles, both for this pleasure and this pain. Man, say they, conscious of his own weakness, and of the need which he has for the assistance of others, rejoices whenever he observes that they adopt his own passions, because he is then assured of that assistance; and grieves whenever he observes the contrary, because he is then assured of their opposition. But both the pleasure and the pain are always felt so instantaneously, and often upon such frivolous occasions, that it seems evident that neither of them can be derived from any such self-interested consideration. A man is mortified when, after having endeavoured to divert the company, he looks round and sees that nobody laughs at his jests but himself. On the contrary, the mirth of the company is highly agreeable to him, and he regards this correspondence of their sentiments with his own as the greatest applause.

Neither does his pleasure seem to arise altogether from the additional vivacity which his mirth may receive from sympathy with theirs, nor his pain from the disappointment he meets with when he misses this pleasure; though both the one and the other, no doubt, do in some measure. When we have read a book or poem so often that we can no longer find any amusement in reading it by ourselves, we can still take pleasure in reading it to a companion. To him it has all the graces of novelty; we enter into the surprise and admiration which it naturally excites in him, but which it is no longer capable of exciting in us; we consider all the ideas which it presents rather in the light in which they appear to him, than in that in which they appear to ourselves, and we are amused by sympathy with his amusement which thus enlivens our own. On the contrary, we should be vexed if he did not seem to be entertained with it, and we could no longer take any pleasure in reading it to him. It is the same case here. The mirth of the company, no doubt, enlivens our own mirth, and their silence, no doubt, disappoints us. But though this

may contribute both to the pleasure which we derive from the one, and to the pain which we feel from the other, it is by no means the sole cause of either; and this correspondence of the sentiments of others with our own appears to be a cause of pleasure, and the want of it a cause of pain, which cannot be accounted for in this manner. The sympathy, which my friends express with my joy, might, indeed, give me pleasure by enlivening that joy: but that which they express with my grief could give me none, if it served only to enliven that grief. Sympathy, however, enlivens joy and alleviates grief. It enlivens joy by presenting another source of satisfaction; and it alleviates grief by insinuating into the heart almost the only agreeable sensation which it is at that time capable of receiving.

It is to be observed accordingly, that we are still more anxious to communicate to our friends our disagreeable than our agreeable passions, that we derive still more satisfaction from their sympathy with the former than from that with the latter, and that we are still more shocked by the want of it.

How are the unfortunate relieved when they have found out a person to whom they can communicate the cause of their sorrow? Upon his sympathy they seem to disburthen themselves of a part of their distress: he is not improperly said to share it with them. He not only feels a sorrow of the same kind with that which they feel, but as if he had derived a part of it to himself, what he feels seems to alleviate the weight of what they feel. Yet by relating their misfortunes they in some measure renew their grief. They awaken in their memory the remembrance of those circumstances which occasioned their affliction. Their tears accordingly flow faster than before, and they are apt to abandon themselves to all the weakness of sorrow. They take pleasure, however, in all this, and, it is evident, are sensibly relieved by it; because the sweetness of his sympathy more than compensates the bitterness of that sorrow, which, in order to excite this sympathy, they had thus enlivened and renewed. The cruelest insult, on the contrary, which can be offered to the unfortunate, is to appear to make light of their calamities. To seem not to be affected with the joy of our companions is but want of politeness; but not to wear a serious countenance when they tell us their afflictions, is real and gross inhumanity.

Love is an agreeable; resentment, a disagreeable passion; and accordingly we are not half so anxious that our friends should adopt our friendships, as that they should enter into our resentments. We can forgive them though they seem to be little affected with the favours

which we may have received, but lose all patience if they seem indifferent about the injuries which may have been done to us: nor are we half so angry with them for not entering into our gratitude, as for not sympathizing with our resentment. They can easily avoid being friends to our friends, but can hardly avoid being enemies to those with whom we are at variance. We seldom resent their being at enmity with the first, though upon that account we may sometimes affect to make an awkward quarrel with them; but we quarrel with them in good earnest if they live in friendship with the last. The agreeable passions of love and joy can satisfy and support the heart without any auxiliary pleasure. The bitter and painful emotions of grief and resentment more strongly require the healing consolation of sympathy.

As the person who is principally interested in any event is pleased with our sympathy, and hurt by the want of it, so we, too, seem to be pleased when we are able to sympathize with him, and to be hurt when we are unable to do so. We run not only to congratulate the successful, but to condole with the afflicted; and the pleasure which we find in the conversation of one whom in all the passions of his heart we can entirely sympathize with, seems to do more than compensate the painfulness of that sorrow with which the view of his situation affects us. On the contrary, it is always disagreeable to feel that we cannot sympathize with him, and instead of being pleased with this exemption from sympathetic pain, it hurts us to find that we cannot share his uneasiness. If we hear a person loudly lamenting his misfortunes, which, however, upon bringing the case home to ourselves, we feel, can produce no such violent effect upon us, we are shocked at his grief; and, because we cannot enter into it, call it pusillanimity and weakness. It gives us the spleen, on the other hand, to see another too happy or too much elevated, as we call it, with any little piece of good fortune. We are disobliged even with his joy; and, because we cannot go along with it, call it levity and folly. We are even put out of humour if our companion laughs louder or longer at a joke than we think it deserves; that is, than we feel that we ourselves could laugh at it.

Chap. III: Of the manner in which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of the affections of other men, by their concord or dissonance with our own.

When the original passions of the person principally concerned are in perfect concord with the sympathetic emotions of the spectator, they necessarily appear to this last just and proper, and suitable to their objects; and, on the contrary, when, upon bringing the case home to himself, he finds that they do not coincide with what he feels, they necessarily appear to him unjust and improper, and unsuitable to the causes which excite them. To approve of the passions of another, therefore, as suitable to their objects, is the same thing as to observe that we entirely sympathize with them; and not to approve of them as such, is the same thing as to observe that we do not entirely sympathize with them. The man who resents the injuries that have been done to me, and observes that I resent them precisely as he does, necessarily approves of my resentment. The man whose sympathy keeps time to my grief, cannot but admit the reasonableness of my sorrow. He who admires the same poem, or the same picture, and admires them exactly as I do, must surely allow the justness of my admiration. He who laughs at the same joke, and laughs along with me, cannot well deny the propriety of my laughter. On the contrary, the person who, upon these different occasions, either feels no such emotion as that which I feel, or feels none that bears any proportion to mine, cannot avoid disapproving my sentiments on account of their dissonance with his own. If my animosity goes beyond what the indignation of my friend can correspond to; if my grief exceeds what his most tender compassion can go along with; if my admiration is either too high or too low to tally with his own; if I laugh loud and heartily when he only smiles, or, on the contrary, only smile when he laughs loud and heartily; in all these cases, as soon as he comes from considering the object, to observe how I am affected by it, according as there is more or less disproportion between his sentiments and mine, I must incur a greater or less degree of his disapprobation: and upon all occasions his own sentiments are the standards and measures by which he judges of mine.

To approve of another man’s opinions is to adopt those opinions, and to adopt them is to approve of them. If the same arguments which convince you convince me likewise, I necessarily approve of your conviction; and if they do not, I necessarily disapprove of it: neither can I possibly conceive that I should do the one without the other. To approve or disapprove, therefore, of the opinions of others is acknowledged, by every body, to mean no more than to observe their agreement or disagreement with our own. But this is equally the case with regard to our approbation or disapprobation of the sentiments or passions of others.

There are, indeed, some cases in which we seem to approve without any sympathy or correspondence of sentiments, and in which, consequently, the sentiment of approbation would seem to be different from the perception of this coincidence. A little attention, however, will convince us that even in these cases our approbation is ultimately founded upon a sympathy or correspondence of this kind. I shall give an instance in things of a very frivolous nature, because in them the judgments of mankind are less apt to be perverted by wrong systems. We may often approve of a jest, and think the laughter of the company quite just and proper, though we ourselves do not laugh, because, perhaps, we are in a grave humour, or happen to have our attention engaged with other objects. We have learned, however, from experience, what sort of pleasantry is upon most occasions capable of making us laugh, and we observe that this is one of that kind. We approve, therefore, of the laughter of the company, and feel that it is natural and suitable to its object; because, though in our present mood we cannot easily enter into it, we are sensible that upon most occasions we should very heartily join in it.

The same thing often happens with regard to all the other passions. A stranger passes by us in the street with all the marks of the deepest affliction; and we are immediately told that he has just received the news of the death of his father. It is impossible that, in this case, we should not approve of his grief. Yet it may often happen, without any defect of humanity on our part, that, so far from entering into the violence of his sorrow, we should scarce conceive the first movements of concern upon his account. Both he and his father, perhaps, are entirely unknown to us, or we happen to be employed about other things, and do not take time to picture out in our imagination the different circumstances of distress which must occur to him. We have learned, however, from experience, that such a misfortune naturally excites such a degree of sorrow, and we

know that if we took time to consider his situation, fully and in all its parts, we should, without doubt, most sincerely sympathize with him. It is upon the consciousness of this conditional sympathy, that our approbation of his sorrow is founded, even in those cases in which that sympathy does not actually take place; and the general rules derived from our preceding experience of what our sentiments would commonly correspond with, correct upon this, as upon many other occasions, the impropriety of our present emotions.

The sentiment or affection of the heart from which any action proceeds, and upon which its whole virtue or vice must ultimately depend, may be considered under two different aspects, or in two different relations; first, in relation to the cause which excites it, or the motive which gives occasion to it; and secondly, in relation to the end which it proposes, or the effect which it tends to produce.

In the suitableness or unsuitableness, in the proportion or disproportion which the affection seems to bear to the cause or object which excites it, consists the propriety or impropriety, the decency or ungracefulness of the consequent action.

In the beneficial or hurtful nature of the effects which the affection aims at, or tends to produce, consists the merit or demerit of the action, the qualities by which it is entitled to reward, or is deserving of punishment.

Philosophers have, of late years, considered chiefly the tendency of affections, and have given little attention to the relation which they stand in to the cause which excites them. In common life, however, when we judge of any person’s conduct, and of the sentiments which directed it, we constantly consider them under both these aspects. When we blame in another man the excesses of love, of grief, of resentment, we not only consider the ruinous effects which they tend to produce, but the little occasion which was given for them. The merit of his favourite, we say, is not so great, his misfortune is not so dreadful, his provocation is not so extraordinary, as to justify so violent a passion. We should have indulged, we say; perhaps, have approved of the violence of his emotion, had the cause been in any respect proportioned to it.

When we judge in this manner of any affection, as proportioned or disproportioned to the cause which excites it, it is scarce possible that we should make use of any other rule or canon but the correspondent affection in ourselves. If, upon bringing the case home to our own breast, we find that the sentiments which it gives occasion to, coincide and tally with our own, we necessarily approve of them as proportioned and

suitable to their objects; if otherwise, we necessarily disapprove of them, as extravagant and out of proportion.

Every faculty in one man is the measure by which he judges of the like faculty in another. I judge of your sight by my sight, of your ear by my ear, of your reason by my reason, of your resentment by my resentment, of your love by my love. I neither have, nor can have, any other way of judging about them.

Chap. IV: The same subject continued

We may judge of the propriety or impropriety of the sentiments of another person by their correspondence or disagreement with our own, upon two different occasions; either, first, when the objects which excite them are considered without any peculiar relation, either to ourselves or to the person whose sentiments we judge of; or, secondly, when they are considered as peculiarly affecting one or other of us.

1. With regard to those objects which are considered without any peculiar relation either to ourselves or to the person whose sentiments we judge of; wherever his sentiments entirely correspond with our own, we ascribe to him the qualities of taste and good judgment. The beauty of a plain, the greatness of a mountain, the ornaments of a building, the expression of a picture, the composition of a discourse, the conduct of a third person, the proportions of different quantities and numbers, the various appearances which the great machine of the universe is perpetually exhibiting, with the secret wheels and springs which product them; all the general subjects of science and taste, are what we and our companion regard as having no peculiar relation to either of us. We both look at them from the same point of view, and we have no occasion for sympathy, or for that imaginary change of situations from which it arises, in order to produce, with regard to these, the most perfect harmony of sentiments and affections. If, notwithstanding, we are often differently affected, it arises either from the different degrees of attention, which our different habits of life allow us to give easily to the several parts of those complex objects, or from the different degrees of natural acuteness in the faculty of the mind to which they are addressed.

When the sentiments of our companion coincide with our own in things of this kind, which are obvious and easy, and in which, perhaps, we never found a single person who differed from us, though we, no doubt, must approve of them, yet he seems to deserve no praise or admiration on account of them. But when they not only coincide with our own, but lead and direct our own; when in forming them he appears to have attended to many things which we had overlooked, and to have adjusted them to all the various circumstances of their objects; we not only approve of them, but wonder and are surprised at their uncommon and unexpected acuteness and comprehensiveness, and he appears to deserve a very high degree of admiration and applause. For approbation

heightened by wonder and surprise, constitutes the sentiment which is properly called admiration, and of which applause is the natural expression. The decision of the man who judges that exquisite beauty is preferable to the grossest deformity, or that twice two are equal to four, must certainly be approved of by all the world, but will not, surely, be much admired. It is the acute and delicate discernment of the man of taste, who distinguishes the minute, and scarce perceptible differences of beauty and deformity; it is the comprehensive accuracy of the experienced mathematician, who unravels, with ease, the most intricate and perplexed proportions; it is the great leader in science and taste, the man who directs and conducts our own sentiments, the extent and superior justness of whose talents astonish us with wonder and surprise, who excites our admiration, and seems to deserve our applause: and upon this foundation is grounded the greater part of the praise which is bestowed upon what are called the intellectual virtues.

The utility of those qualities, it may be thought, is what first recommends them to us; and, no doubt, the consideration of this, when we come to attend to it, gives them a new value. Originally, however, we approve of another man’s judgment, not as something useful, but as right, as accurate, as agreeable to truth and reality: and it is evident we attribute those qualities to it for no other reason but because we find that it agrees with our own. Taste, in the same manner, is originally approved of, not as useful, but as just, as delicate, and as precisely suited to its object. The idea of the utility of all qualities of this kind, is plainly an after-thought, and not what first recommends them to our approbation.

2. With regard to those objects, which affect in a particular manner either ourselves or the person whose sentiments we judge of, it is at once more difficult to preserve this harmony and correspondence, and at the same time, vastly more important. My companion does not naturally look upon the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me, from the same point of view in which I consider them. They affect me much more nearly. We do not view them from the same station, as we do a picture, or a poem, or a system of philosophy, and are, therefore, apt to be very differently affected by them. But I can much more easily overlook the want of this correspondence of sentiments with regard to such indifferent objects as concern neither me nor my companion, than with regard to what interests me so much as the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me. Though you despise that picture, or that poem, or even that system of philosophy, which I admire, there is little danger of our quarrelling upon

that account. Neither of us can reasonably be much interested about them. They ought all of them to be matters of great indifference to us both; so that, though our opinions may be opposite, our affections may still be very nearly the same. But it is quite otherwise with regard to those objects by which either you or I are particularly affected. Though your judgments in matters of speculation, though your sentiments in matters of taste, are quite opposite to mine, I can easily overlook this opposition; and if I have any degree of temper, I may still find some entertainment in your conversation, even upon those very subjects. But if you have either no fellow-feeling for the misfortunes I have met with, or none that bears any proportion to the grief which distracts me; or if you have either no indignation at the injuries I have suffered, or none that bears any proportion to the resentment which transports me, we can no longer converse upon these subjects. We become intolerable to one another. I can neither support your company, nor you mine. You are confounded at my violence and passion, and I am enraged at your cold insensibility and want of feeling.

In all such cases, that there may be some correspondence of sentiments between the spectator and the person principally concerned, the spectator must, first of all, endeavour, as much as he can, to put himself in the situation of the other, and to bring home to himself every little circumstance of distress which can possibly occur to the sufferer. He must adopt the whole case of his companion with all its minutest incidents; and strive to render as perfect as possible, that imaginary change of situation upon which his sympathy is founded.

After all this, however, the emotions of the spectator will still be very apt to fall short of the violence of what is felt by the sufferer. Mankind, though naturally sympathetic, never conceive, for what has befallen another, that degree of passion which naturally animates the person principally concerned. That imaginary change of situation, upon which their sympathy is founded, is but momentary. The thought of their own safety, the thought that they themselves are not really the sufferers, continually intrudes itself upon them; and though it does not hinder them from conceiving a passion somewhat analogous to what is felt by the sufferer, hinders them from conceiving any thing that approaches to the same degree of violence. The person principally concerned is sensible of this, and at the same time passionately desires a more complete sympathy. He longs for that relief which nothing can afford him but the entire concord of the affections of the spectators with his own. To see the emotions of their hearts, in every respect, beat time to his own, in the

violent and disagreeable passions, constitutes his sole consolation. But he can only hope to obtain this by lowering his passion to that pitch, in which the spectators are capable of going along with him. He must flatten, if I may be allowed to say so, the sharpness of its natural tone, in order to reduce it to harmony and concord with the emotions of those who are about him. What they feel, will, indeed, always be, in some respects, different from what he feels, and compassion can never be exactly the same with original sorrow; because the secret consciousness that the change of situations, from which the sympathetic sentiment arises, is but imaginary, not only lowers it in degree, but, in some measure, varies it in kind, and gives it a quite different modification. These two sentiments, however, may, it is evident, have such a correspondence with one another, as is sufficient for the harmony of society. Though they will never be unisons, they may be concords, and this is all that is wanted or required.

In order to produce this concord, as nature teaches the spectators to assume the circumstances of the person principally concerned, so she teaches this last in some measure to assume those of the spectators. As they are continually placing themselves in his situation, and thence conceiving emotions similar to what he feels; so he is as constantly placing himself in theirs, and thence conceiving some degree of that coolness about his own fortune, with which he is sensible that they will view it. As they are constantly considering what they themselves would feel, if they actually were the sufferers, so he is as constantly led to imagine in what manner he would be affected if he was only one of the spectators of his own situation. As their sympathy makes them look at it, in some measure, with his eyes, so his sympathy makes him look at it, in some measure, with theirs, especially when in their presence and acting under their observation: and as the reflected passion, which he thus conceives, is much weaker than the original one, it necessarily abates the violence of what he felt before he came into their presence, before he began to recollect in what manner they would be affected by it, and to view his situation in this candid and impartial light.

The mind, therefore, is rarely so disturbed, but that the company of a friend will restore it to some degree of tranquillity and sedateness. The breast is, in some measure, calmed and composed the moment we come into his presence. We are immediately put in mind of the light in which he will view our situation, and we begin to view it ourselves in the same light; for the effect of sympathy is instantaneous. We expect less sympathy from a common acquaintance than from a friend: we cannot

open to the former all those little circumstances which we can unfold to the latter: we assume, therefore, more tranquillity before him, and endeavour to fix our thoughts upon those general outlines of our situation which he is willing to consider. We expect still less sympathy from an assembly of strangers, and we assume, therefore, still more tranquillity before them, and always endeavour to bring down our passion to that pitch, which the particular company we are in may be expected to go along with. Nor is this only an assumed appearance: for if we are at all masters of ourselves, the presence of a mere acquaintance will really compose us, still more than that of a friend; and that of an assembly of strangers still more than that of an acquaintance.

Society and conversation, therefore, are the most powerful remedies for restoring the mind to its tranquillity, if, at any time, it has unfortunately lost it; as well as the best preservatives of that equal and happy temper, which is so necessary to self-satisfaction and enjoyment. Men of retirement and speculation, who are apt to sit brooding at home over either grief or resentment, though they may often have more humanity, more generosity, and a nicer sense of honour, yet seldom possess that equality of temper which is so common among men of the world.

Chap. V: Of the amiable and respectable virtues

Upon these two different efforts, upon that of the spectator to enter into the sentiments of the person principally concerned, and upon that of the person principally concerned, to bring down his emotions to what the spectator can go along with, are founded two different sets of virtues. The soft, the gentle, the amiable virtues, the virtues of candid condescension and indulgent humanity, are founded upon the one: the great, the awful and respectable, the virtues of self-denial, of self-government, of that command of the passions which subjects all the movements of our nature to what our own dignity and honour, and the propriety of our own conduct require, take their origin from the other.

How amiable does he appear to be, whose sympathetic heart seems to reecho all the sentiments of those with whom he converses, who grieves for their calamities, who resents their injuries, and who rejoices at their good fortune! When we bring home to ourselves the situation of his companions, we enter into their gratitude, and feel what consolation they must derive from the tender sympathy of so affectionate a friend. And for a contrary reason, how disagreeable does he appear to be, whose hard and obdurate heart feels for himself only, but is altogether insensible to the happiness or misery of others! We enter, in this case too, into the pain which his presence must give to every mortal with whom he converses, to those especially with whom we are most apt to sympathize, the unfortunate and the injured.

On the other hand, what noble propriety and grace do we feel in the conduct of those who, in their own case, exert that recollection and self-command which constitute the dignity of every passion, and which bring it down to what others can enter into! We are disgusted with that clamorous grief, which, without any delicacy, calls upon our compassion with sighs and tears and importunate lamentations. But we reverence that reserved, that silent and majestic sorrow, which discovers itself only in the swelling of the eyes, in the quivering of the lips and cheeks, and in the distant, but affecting, coldness of the whole behaviour. It imposes the like silence upon us. We regard it with respectful attention, and watch with anxious concern over our whole behaviour, lest by any impropriety we should disturb that concerted tranquillity, which it requires so great an effort to support.

The insolence and brutality of anger, in the same manner, when we indulge its fury without check or restraint, is, of all objects, the most detestable. But we admire that noble and generous resentment which governs its pursuit of the greatest injuries, not by the rage which they are apt to excite in the breast of the sufferer, but by the indignation which they naturally call forth in that of the impartial spectator; which allows no word, no gesture, to escape it beyond what this more equitable sentiment would dictate; which never, even in thought, attempts any greater vengeance, nor desires to inflict any greater punishment, than what every indifferent person would rejoice to see executed.

And hence it is, that to feel much for others and little for ourselves, that to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature; and can alone produce among mankind that harmony of sentiments and passions in which consists their whole grace and propriety. As to love our neighbour as we love ourselves is the great law of Christianity, so it is the great precept of nature to love ourselves only as we love our neighbour, or what comes to the same thing, as our neighbour is capable of loving us.

As taste and good judgment, when they are considered as qualities which deserve praise and admiration, are supposed to imply a delicacy of sentiment and an acuteness of understanding not commonly to be met with; so the virtues of sensibility and self-command are not apprehended to consist in the ordinary, but in the uncommon degrees of those qualities. The amiable virtue of humanity requires, surely, a sensibility, much beyond what is possessed by the rude vulgar of mankind. The great and exalted virtue of magnanimity undoubtedly demands much more than that degree of self-command, which the weakest of mortals is capable of exerting. As in the common degree of the intellectual qualities, there is no abilities; so in the common degree of the moral, there is no virtue. Virtue is excellence, something uncommonly great and beautiful, which rises far above what is vulgar and ordinary. The amiable virtues consist in that degree of sensibility which surprises by its exquisite and unexpected delicacy and tenderness. The awful and respectable, in that degree of self-command which astonishes by its amazing superiority over the most ungovernable passions of human nature.

There is, in this respect, a considerable difference between virtue and mere propriety; between those qualities and actions which deserve to be admired and celebrated, and those which simply deserve to be approved of. Upon many occasions, to act with the most perfect propriety, requires

no more than that common and ordinary degree of sensibility or self-command which the most worthless of mankind are possest of, and sometimes even that degree is not necessary. Thus, to give a very low instance, to eat when we are hungry, is certainly, upon ordinary occasions, perfectly right and proper, and cannot miss being approved of as such by every body. Nothing, however, could be more absurd than to say it was virtuous.

On the contrary, there may frequently be a considerable degree of virtue in those actions which fall short of the most perfect propriety; because they may still approach nearer to perfection than could well be expected upon occasions in which it was so extremely difficult to attain it: and this is very often the case upon those occasions which require the greatest exertions of self-command. There are some situations which bear so hard upon human nature, that the greatest degree of self-government, which can belong to so imperfect a creature as man, is not able to stifle, altogether, the voice of human weakness, or reduce the violence of the passions to that pitch of moderation, in which the impartial spectator can entirely enter into them. Though in those cases, therefore, the behaviour of the sufferer fall short of the most perfect propriety, it may still deserve some applause, and even in a certain sense, may be denominated virtuous. It may still manifest an effort of generosity and magnanimity of which the greater part of men are incapable; and though it fails of absolute perfection, it may be a much nearer approximation towards perfection, than what, upon such trying occasions, is commonly either to be found or to be expected.

In cases of this kind, when we are determining the degree of blame or applause which seems due to any action, we very frequently make use of two different standards. The first is the idea of complete propriety and perfection, which, in those difficult situations, no human conduct ever did, or ever can come, up to; and in comparison with which the actions of all men must for ever appear blameable and imperfect. The second is the idea of that degree of proximity or distance from this complete perfection, which the actions of the greater part of men commonly arrive at. Whatever goes beyond this degree, how far soever it may be removed from absolute perfection, seems to deserve applause; and whatever falls short of it, to deserve blame.

It is in the same manner that we judge of the productions of all the arts which address themselves to the imagination. When a critic examines the work of any of the great masters in poetry or painting, he may sometimes examine it by an idea of perfection, in his own mind,

which neither that nor any other human work will ever come up to; and as long as he compares it with this standard, he can see nothing in it but faults and imperfections. But when he comes to consider the rank which it ought to hold among other works of the same kind, he necessarily compares it with a very different standard, the common degree of excellence which is usually attained in this particular art; and when he judges of it by this new measure, it may often appear to deserve the highest applause, upon account of its approaching much nearer to perfection than the greater part of those works which can be brought into competition with it.

Section II: Of the Degrees of the different Passions which are consistent with Propriety

Introduction

The propriety of every passion excited by objects peculiarly related to ourselves, the pitch which the spectator can go along with, must lie, it is evident, in a certain mediocrity. If the passion is too high, or if it is too low, he cannot enter into it. Grief and resentment for private misfortunes and injuries may easily, for example, be too high, and in the greater part of mankind they are so. They may likewise, though this more rarely happens, be too low. We denominate the excess, weakness and fury: and we call the defect stupidity, insensibility, and want of spirit. We can enter into neither of them, but are astonished and confounded to see them.

This mediocrity, however, in which the point of propriety consists, is different in different passions. It is high in some, and low in others. There are some passions which it is indecent to express very strongly, even upon those occasions, in which it is acknowledged that we cannot avoid feeling them in the highest degree. And there are others of which the strongest expressions are upon many occasions extremely graceful, even though the passions themselves do not, perhaps, arise so necessarily. The first are those passions with which, for certain reasons, there is little or no sympathy: the second are those with which, for other reasons, there is the greatest. And if we consider all the different passions of human nature, we shall find that they are regarded as decent, or indecent, just in proportion as mankind are more or less disposed to sympathize with them.

Chap. I: Of the Passions which take their origin from the body

1. It is indecent to express any strong degree of those passions which arise from a certain situation or disposition of the body; because the company, not being in the same disposition, cannot be expected to sympathize with them. Violent hunger, for example, though upon many occasions not only natural, but unavoidable, is always indecent, and to eat voraciously is universally regarded as a piece of ill manners. There is, however, some degree of sympathy, even with hunger. It is agreeable to see our companions eat with a good appetite, and all expressions of loathing are offensive. The disposition of body which is habitual to a man in health, makes his stomach easily keep time, if I may be allowed so coarse an expression, with the one, and not with the other. We can sympathize with the distress it in the which excessive hunger occasions when we read the description of journal of a siege, or of a sea voyage. We imagine ourselves in the situation of the sufferers, and thence readily conceive the grief, the fear and consternation, which must necessarily distract them. We feel, ourselves, some degree of those passions, and therefore sympathize with them: but as we do not grow hungry by reading the description, we cannot properly, even in this case, be said to sympathize with their hunger.

It is the same case with the passion by which Nature unites the two sexes. Though naturally the most furious of all the passions, all strong expressions of it are upon every occasion indecent, even between persons in whom its most complete indulgence is acknowledged by all laws, both human and divine, to be perfectly innocent. There seems, however, to be some degree of sympathy even with this passion. To talk to a woman as we would to a man is improper: it is expected that their company should inspire us with more gaiety, more pleasantry, and more attention; and an intire insensibility to the fair sex, renders a man contemptible in some measure even to the men.

Such is our aversion for all the appetites which take their origin from the body: all strong expressions of them are loathsome and disagreeable. According to some ancient philosophers, these are the passions which we share in common with the brutes, and which having no connexion with the characteristical qualities of human nature, are upon that account beneath its dignity. But there are many other passions which we share in

common with the brutes, such as resentment, natural affection, even gratitude, which do not, upon that account, appear to be so brutal. The true cause of the peculiar disgust which we conceive for the appetites of the body when we see them in other men, is that we cannot enter into them. To the person himself who feels them, as soon as they are gratified, the object that excited them ceases to be agreeable: even its presence often becomes offensive to him; he looks round to no purpose for the charm which transported him the moment before, and he can now as little enter into his own passion as another person. When we have dined, we order the covers to be removed; and we should treat in the same manner the objects of the most ardent and passionate desires, if they were the objects of no other passions but those which take their origin from the body.

In the command of those appetites of the body consists that virtue which is properly called temperance. To restrain them within those bounds, which regard to health and fortune prescribes, is the part of prudence. But to confine them within those limits, which grace, which propriety, which delicacy, and modesty require, is the office of temperance.

2. It is for the same reason that to cry out with bodily pain, how intolerable soever, appears always unmanly and unbecoming. There is, however, a good deal of sympathy even with bodily pain. If, as has already been observed, I see a stroke aimed, and just ready to fall upon the leg, or arm, of another person, I naturally shrink and draw back my own leg, or my own arm: and when it does fall, I feel it in some measure, and am hurt by it as well as the sufferer. My hurt, however, is, no doubt, excessively slight, and, upon that account, if he makes any violent outcry, as I cannot go along with him, I never fail to despise him. And this is the case of all the passions which take their origin from the body: they excite either no sympathy at all, or such a degree of it, as is altogether disproportioned to the violence of what is felt by the sufferer.

It is quite otherwise with those passions which take their origin from the imagination. The frame of my body can be but little affected by the alterations which are brought about upon that of my companion: but my imagination is more ductile, and more readily assumes, if I may say so, the shape and configuration of the imaginations of those with whom I am familiar. A disappointment in love, or ambition, will, upon this account, call forth more sympathy than the greatest bodily evil. Those passions arise altogether from the imagination. The person who has lost his whole fortune, if he is in health, feels nothing in his body. What he suffers is

from the imagination only, which represents to him the loss of his dignity, neglect from his friends, contempt from his enemies, dependance, want, and misery, coming fast upon him; and we sympathize with him more strongly upon this account, because our imaginations can more readily mould themselves upon his imagination, than our bodies can mould themselves upon his body.

The loss of a leg may generally be regarded as a more real calamity than the loss of a mistress. It would be a ridiculous tragedy, however, of which the catastrophe was to turn upon a loss of that kind. A misfortune of the other kind, how frivolous soever it may appear to be, has given occasion to many a fine one.

Nothing is so soon forgot as pain. The moment it is gone the whole agony of it is over, and the thought of it can no longer give us any sort of disturbance. We ourselves cannot then enter into the anxiety and anguish which we had before conceived. An unguarded word from a friend will occasion a more durable uneasiness. The agony which this creates is by no means over with the word. What at first disturbs us is not the object of the senses, but the idea of the imagination. As it is an idea, therefore, which occasions our uneasiness, till time and other accidents have in some measure effaced it from our memory, the imagination continues to fret and rankle within, from the thought of it.

Pain never calls forth any very lively sympathy unless it is accompanied with danger. We sympathize with the fear, though not with the agony of the sufferer. Fear, however, is a passion derived altogether from the imagination, which represents, with an uncertainty and fluctuation that increases our anxiety, not what we really feel, but what we may hereafter possibly suffer. The gout or the tooth-ach, though exquisitely painful, excite very little sympathy; more dangerous diseases, though accompanied with very little pain, excite the highest.

Some people faint and grow sick at the sight of a chirurgical operation, and that bodily pain which is occasioned by tearing the flesh, seems, in them, to excite the most excessive sympathy. We conceive in a much more lively and distinct manner the pain which proceeds from an external cause, than we do that which arises from an internal disorder. I can scarce form an idea of the agonies of my neighbour when he is tortured with the gout, or the stone; but I have the clearest conception of what he must suffer from an incision, a wound, or a fracture. The chief cause, however, why such objects produce such violent effects upon us, is their novelty. One who has been witness to a dozen dissections, and as many amputations, sees, ever after, all operations of this kind with great

indifference, and often with perfect insensibility. Though we have read or seen represented more than five hundred tragedies, we shall seldom feel so entire an abatement of our sensibility to the objects which they represent to us.

In some of the Greek tragedies there is an attempt to excite compassion, by the representation of the agonies of bodily pain. Philoctetes cries out and faints from the extremity of his sufferings. Hippolytus and Hercules are both introduced as expiring under the severest tortures, which, it seems, even the fortitude of Hercules was incapable of supporting. In all these cases, however, it is not the pain which interests us, but some other circumstances. It is not the sore foot, but the solitude, of Philoctetes which affects us, and diffuses over that charming tragedy, that romantic wildness, which is so agreeable to the imagination. The agonies of Hercules and Hippolytus are interesting only because we foresee that death is to be the consequence. If those heroes were to recover, we should think the representation of their sufferings perfectly ridiculous. What a tragedy would that be of which the distress consisted in a colic. Yet no pain is more exquisite. These attempts to excite compassion by the representation of bodily pain, may be regarded as among the greatest breaches of decorum of which the Greek theatre has set the example.

The little sympathy which we feel with bodily pain is the foundation of the propriety of constancy and patience in enduring it. The man, who under the severest tortures allows no weakness to escape him, vents no groan, gives way to no passion which we do not entirely enter into, commands our highest admiration. His firmness enables him to keep time with our indifference and insensibility. We admire and entirely go along with the magnanimous effort which he makes for this purpose. We approve of his behaviour, and from our experience of the common weakness of human nature, we are surprised, and wonder how he should be able to act so as to deserve approbation. Approbation, mixed and animated by wonder and surprise, constitutes the sentiment which is properly called admiration, of which, applause is the natural expression, as has already been observed.

Chap. II: Of those Passions which take their origin from a particular turn or habit of the Imagination

Even of the passions derived from the imagination, those which take their origin from a peculiar turn or habit it has acquired, though they may be acknowledged to be perfectly natural, are, however, but little sympathized with. The imaginations of mankind, not having acquired that particular turn, cannot enter into them; and such passions, though they may be allowed to be almost unavoidable in some part of life, are always, in some measure, ridiculous. This is the case with that strong attachment which naturally grows up between two persons of different sexes, who have long fixed their thoughts upon one another. Our imagination not having run in the same channel with that of the lover, we cannot enter into the eagerness of his emotions. If our friend has been injured, we readily sympathize with his resentment, and grow angry with the very person with whom he is angry. If he has received a benefit, we readily enter into his gratitude, and have a very high sense of the merit of his benefactor. But if he is in love, though we may think his passion just as reasonable as any of the kind, yet we never think ourselves bound to conceive a passion of the same kind, and for the same person for whom he has conceived it. The passion appears to every body, but the man who feels it, entirely disproportioned to the value of the object; and love, though it is pardoned in a certain age because we know it is natural, is always laughed at, because we cannot enter into it. All serious and strong expressions of it appear ridiculous to a third person; and though a lover may be good company to his mistress, he is so to nobody else. He himself is sensible of this; and as long as he continues in his sober senses, endeavours to treat his own passion with raillery and ridicule. It is the only style in which we care to hear of it; because it is the only style in which we ourselves are disposed to talk of it. We grow weary of the grave, pedantic, and long-sentenced love of Cowley and Petrarca, who never have done with exaggerating the violence of their attachments; but the gaiety of Ovid, and the gallantry of Horace, are always agreeable.

But though we feel no proper sympathy with an attachment of this kind, though we never approach even in imagination towards conceiving a passion for that particular person, yet as we either have conceived, or may be disposed to conceive, passions of the same kind, we readily enter

into those high hopes of happiness which are proposed from its gratification, as well as into that exquisite distress which is feared from its disappointment. It interests us not as a passion, but as a situation that gives occasion to other passions which interest us; to hope, to fear, and to distress of every kind: in the same manner as in a description of a sea voyage, it is not the hunger which interests us, but the distress which that hunger occasions. Though we do not properly enter into the attachment of the lover, we readily go along with those expectations of romantic happiness which he derives from it. We feel how natural it is for the mind, in a certain situation, relaxed with indolence, and fatigued with the violence of desire, to long for serenity and quiet, to hope to find them in the gratification of that passion which distracts it, and to frame to itself the idea of that life of pastoral tranquillity and retirement which the elegant, the tender, and the passionate Tibullus takes so much pleasure in describing; a life like what the poets describe in the Fortunate Islands, a life of friendship, liberty, and repose; free from labour, and from care, and from all the turbulent passions which attend them. Even scenes of this kind interest us most, when they are painted rather as what is hoped, than as what is enjoyed. The grossness of that passion, which mixes with, and is, perhaps, the foundation of love, disappears when its gratification is far off and at a distance; but renders the whole offensive, when described as what is immediately possessed. The happy passion, upon this account, interests us much less than the fearful and the melancholy. We tremble for whatever can disappoint such natural and agreeable hopes: and thus enter into all the anxiety, and concern, and distress of the lover.

Hence it is, that, in some modern tragedies and romances, this passion appears so wonderfully interesting. It is not so much the love of Castalio and Monimia which attaches us in the Orphan, as the distress which that love occasions. The author who should introduce two lovers, in a scene of perfect security, expressing their mutual fondness for one another, would excite laughter, and not sympathy. If a scene of this kind is ever admitted into a tragedy, it is always, in some measure, improper, and is endured, not from any sympathy with the passion that is expressed in it, but from concern for the dangers and difficulties with which the audience foresee that its gratification is likely to be attended.

The reserve which the laws of society impose upon the fair sex, with regard to this weakness, renders it more peculiarly distressful in them, and, upon that very account, more deeply interesting. We are charmed with the love of Phaedra, as it is expressed in the French tragedy of that

name, notwithstanding all the extravagance and guilt which attend it. That very extravagance and guilt may be said, in some measure, to recommend it to us. Her fear, her shame, her remorse, her horror, her despair, become thereby more natural and interesting. All the secondary passions, if I may be allowed to call them so, which arise from the situation of love, become necessarily more furious and violent; and it is with these secondary passions only that we can properly be said to sympathize.

Of all the passions, however, which are so extravagantly disproportioned to the value of their objects, love is the only one that appears, even to the weakest minds, to have any thing in it that is either graceful or agreeable. In itself, first of all, though it may be ridiculous, it is not naturally odious; and though its consequences are often fatal and dreadful, its intentions are seldom mischievous. And then, though there is little propriety in the passion itself, there is a good deal in some of those which always accompany it. There is in love a strong mixture of humanity, generosity, kindness, friendship, esteem; passions with which, of all others, for reasons which shall be explained immediately, we have the greatest propensity to sympathize, even notwithstanding we are sensible that they are, in some measure, excessive. The sympathy which we feel with them, renders the passion which they accompany less disagreeable, and supports it in our imagination, notwithstanding all the vices which commonly go along with it; though in the one sex it necessarily leads to the last ruin and infamy; and though in the other, where it is apprehended to be least fatal, it is almost always attended with an incapacity for labour, a neglect of duty, a contempt of fame, and even of common reputation. Notwithstanding all this, the degree of sensibility and generosity with which it is supposed to be accompanied, renders it to many the object of vanity. and they are fond of appearing capable of feeling what would do them no honour if they had really felt it.

It is for a reason of the same kind, that a certain reserve is necessary when we talk of our own friends, our own studies, our own professions. All these are objects which we cannot expect should interest our companions in the same degree in which they interest us. And it is for want of this reserve, that the one half of mankind make bad company to the other. A philosopher is company to a philosopher, only. the member of a club, to his own little knot of companions.

Chap. III: Of the unsocial Passions

There is another set of passions, which, though derived from the imagination, yet before we can enter into them, or regard them as graceful or becoming, must always be brought down to a pitch much lower than that to which undisciplined nature would raise them. These are, hatred and resentment, with all their different modifications. With regard to all such passions, our sympathy is divided between the person who feels them, and the person who is the object of them. The interests of these two are directly opposite. What our sympathy with the person who feels them would prompt us to wish for, our fellow-feeling with the other would lead us to fear. As they are both men, we are concerned for both, and our fear for what the one may suffer, damps our resentment for what the other has suffered. Our sympathy, therefore, with the man who has received the provocation, necessarily falls short of the passion which naturally animates him, not only upon account of those general causes which render all sympathetic passions inferior to the original ones, but upon account of that particular cause which is peculiar to itself, our opposite sympathy with another person. Before resentment, therefore, can become graceful and agreeable, it must be more humbled and brought down below that pitch to which it would naturally rise, than almost any other passion.

Mankind, at the same time, have a very strong sense of the injuries that are done to another. The villain, in a tragedy or romance, is as much the object of our indignation, as the hero is that of our sympathy and affection. We detest Iago as much as we esteem Othello; and delight as much in the punishment of the one, as we are grieved at the distress of the other. But though mankind have so strong a fellow-feeling with the injuries that are done to their brethren, they do not always resent them the more that the sufferer appears to resent them. Upon most occasions, the greater his patience, his mildness, his humanity, provided it does not appear that he wants spirit, or that fear was the motive of his forbearance, the higher their resentment against the person who injured him. The amiableness of the character exasperates their sense of the atrocity of the injury.

Those passions, however, are regarded as necessary parts of the character of human nature. A person becomes contemptible who tamely sits still, and submits to insults, without attempting either to repel or to

revenge them. We cannot enter into his indifference and insensibility. we call his behaviour mean-spiritedness, and are as really provoked by it as by the insolence of his adversary. Even the mob are enraged to see any man submit patiently to affronts and ill usage. They desire to see this insolence resented, and resented by the person who suffers from it. They cry to him with fury, to defend, or to revenge himself. If his indignation rouses at last, they heartily applaud, and sympathize with it. It enlivens their own indignation against his enemy, whom they rejoice to see him attack in his turn, and are as really gratified by his revenge, provided it is not immoderate, as if the injury had been done to themselves.

But though the utility of those passions to the individual, by rendering it dangerous to insult or injure him, be acknowledged; and though their utility to the public, as the guardians of justice, and of the equality of its administration, be not less considerable, as shall be shewn hereafter; yet there is still something disagreeable in the passions themselves, which makes the appearance of them in other men the natural object of our aversion. The expression of anger towards any body present, if it exceeds a bare intimation that we are sensible of his ill usage, is regarded not only as an insult to that particular person, but as a rudeness to the whole company. Respect for them ought to have restrained us from giving way to so boisterous and offensive an emotion. It is the remote effects of these passions which are agreeable; the immediate effects are mischief to the person against whom they are directed. But it is the immediate, and not the remote effects of objects which render them agreeable or disagreeable to the imagination. A prison is certainly more useful to the public than a palace; and the person who founds the one is generally directed by a much juster spirit of patriotism, than he who builds the other. But the immediate effects of a prison, the confinement of the wretches shut up in it, are disagreeable; and the imagination either does not take time to trace out the remote ones, or sees them at too great a distance to be much affected by them. A prison, therefore, will always be a disagreeable object; and the fitter it is for the purpose for which it was intended, it will be the more so. A palace, on the contrary, will always be agreeable; yet its remote effects may often be inconvenient to the public. It may serve to promote luxury, and set the example of the dissolution of manners. Its immediate effects, however, the conveniency, the pleasure, and the gaiety of the people who live in it, being all agreeable, and suggesting to the imagination a thousand agreeable ideas, that faculty generally rests upon them, and seldom goes further in tracing its more distant consequences. Trophies of the instruments of music or of

agriculture, imitated in painting or in stucco, make a common and an agreeable ornament of our halls and dining-rooms. A trophy of the same kind, composed of the instruments of surgery, of dissecting and amputation-knives, of saws for cutting the bones, of trepanning instruments, etc. would be absurd and shocking. Instruments of surgery, however, are always more finely polished, and generally more nicely adapted to the purposes for which they are intended, than instruments of agriculture. The remote effects of them too, the health of the patient, is agreeable; yet as the immediate effect of them is pain and suffering, the sight of them always displeases us. Instruments of war are agreeable, though their immediate effect may seem to be in the same manner pain and suffering. But then it is the pain and suffering of our enemies, with whom we have no sympathy. With regard to us, they are immediately connected with the agreeable ideas of courage, victory, and honour. They are themselves, therefore, supposed to make one of the noblest parts of dress, and the imitation of them one of the finest ornaments of architecture. It is the same case with the qualities of the mind. The ancient stoics were of opinion, that as the world was governed by the all-ruling providence of a wise, powerful, and good God, every single event ought to be regarded, as making a necessary part of the plan of the universe, and as tending to promote the general order and happiness of the whole: that the vices and follies of mankind, therefore, made as necessary a part of this plan as their wisdom or their virtue; and by that eternal art which educes good from ill, were made to tend equally to the prosperity and perfection of the great system of nature. No speculation of this kind, however, how deeply soever it might be rooted in the mind, could diminish our natural abhorrence for vice, whose immediate effects are so destructive, and whose remote ones are too distant to be traced by the imagination.

It is the same case with those passions we have been just now considering. Their immediate effects are so disagreeable, that even when they are most justly provoked, there is still something about them which disgusts us. These, therefore, are the only passions of which the expressions, as I formerly observed, do not dispose and prepare us to sympathize with them, before we are informed of the cause which excites them. The plaintive voice of misery, when heard at a distance, will not allow us to be indifferent about the person from whom it comes. As soon as it strikes our ear, it interests us in his fortune, and, if continued, forces us almost involuntarily to fly to his assistance. The sight of a smiling countenance, in the same manner, elevates even the

pensive into that gay and airy mood, which disposes him to sympathize with, and share the joy which it expresses; and he feels his heart, which with thought and care was before that shrunk and depressed, instantly expanded and elated. But it is quite otherwise with the expressions of hatred and resentment. The hoarse, boisterous, and discordant voice of anger, when heard at a distance, inspires us either with fear or aversion. We do not fly towards it, as to one who cries out with pain and agony. Women, and men of weak nerves, tremble and are overcome with fear, though sensible that themselves are not the objects of the anger. They conceive fear, however, by putting themselves in the situation of the person who is so. Even those of stouter hearts are disturbed; not indeed enough to make them afraid, but enough to make them angry; for anger is the passion which they would feel in the situation of the other person. It is the same case with hatred. Mere expressions of spite inspire it against nobody, but the man who uses them. Both these passions are by nature the objects of our aversion. Their disagreeable and boisterous appearance never excites, never prepares, and often disturbs our sympathy. Grief does not more powerfully engage and attract us to the person in whom we observe it, than these, while we are ignorant of their cause, disgust and detach us from him. It was, it seems, the intention of Nature, that those rougher and more unamiable emotions, which drive men from one another, should be less easily and more rarely communicated.

When music imitates the modulations of grief or joy, it either actually inspires us with those passions, or at least puts us in the mood which disposes us to conceive them. But when it imitates the notes of anger, it inspires us with fear. Joy, grief, love, admiration, devotion, are all of them passions which are naturally musical. Their natural tones are all soft, clear, and melodious; and they naturally express themselves in periods which are distinguished by regular pauses, and which upon that account are easily adapted to the regular returns of the correspondent airs of a tune. The voice of anger, on the contrary, and of all the passions which are akin to it, is harsh and discordant. Its periods too are all irregular, sometimes very long, and sometimes very short, and distinguished by no regular pauses. It is with difficulty, therefore, that music can imitate any of those passions; and the music which does imitate them is not the most agreeable. A whole entertainment may consist, without any impropriety, of the imitation of the social and agreeable passions. It would be a strange entertainment which consisted altogether of the imitations of hatred and resentment.

If those passions are disagreeable to the spectator, they are not less so to the person who feels them. Hatred and anger are the greatest poison to the happiness of a good mind. There is, in the very feeling of those passions, something harsh, jarring, and convulsive, something that tears and distracts the breast, and is altogether destructive of that composure and tranquillity of mind which is so necessary to happiness, and which is best promoted by the contrary passions of gratitude and love. It is not the value of what they lose by the perfidy and ingratitude of those they live with, which the generous and humane are most apt to regret. Whatever they may have lost, they can generally be very happy without it. What most disturbs them is the idea of perfidy and ingratitude exercised towards themselves; and the discordant and disagreeable passions which this excites, constitute, in their own opinion, the chief part of the injury which they suffer.

How many things are requisite to render the gratification of resentment completely agreeable, and to make the spectator thoroughly sympathize with our revenge? The provocation must first of all be such that we should become contemptible, and be exposed to perpetual insults, if we did not, in some measure, resent it. Smaller offences are always better neglected; nor is there any thing more despicable than that froward and captious humour which takes fire upon every slight occasion of quarrel. We should resent more from a sense of the propriety of resentment, from a sense that mankind expect and require it of us, than because we feel in ourselves the furies of that disagreeable passion. There is no passion, of which the human mind is capable, concerning whose justness we ought to be so doubtful, concerning whose indulgence we ought so carefully to consult our natural sense of propriety, or so diligently to consider what will be the sentiments of the cool and impartial spectator. Magnanimity, or a regard to maintain our own rank and dignity in society, is the only motive which can ennoble the expressions of this disagreeable passion. This motive must characterize our whole stile and deportment. These must be plain, open, and direct; determined without positiveness, and elevated without insolence; not only free from petulance and low scurrility, but generous, candid, and full of all proper regards, even for the person who has offended us. It must appear, in short, from our whole manner, without our labouring affectedly to express it, that passion has not extinguished our humanity; and that if we yield to the dictates of revenge, it is with reluctance, from necessity, and in consequence of great and repeated provocations. When

resentment is guarded and qualified in this manner, it may be admitted to be even generous and noble.

Chap. IV: Of the social Passions

As it is a divided sympathy which renders the whole set of passions just now mentioned, upon most occasions, so ungraceful and disagreeable; so there is another set opposite to these, which a redoubled sympathy renders almost always peculiarly agreeable and becoming. Generosity, humanity, kindness, compassion, mutual friendship and esteem, all the social and benevolent affections, when expressed in the countenance or behaviour, even towards those who are not peculiarly connected with ourselves, please the indifferent spectator upon almost every occasion. His sympathy with the person who feels those passions, exactly coincides with his concern for the person who is the object of them. The interest, which, as a man, he is obliged to take in the happiness of this last, enlivens his fellow-feeling with the sentiments of the other, whose emotions are employed about the same object. We have always, therefore, the strongest disposition to sympathize with the benevolent affections. They appear in every respect agreeable to us. We enter into the satisfaction both of the person who feels them, and of the person who is the object of them. For as to be the object of hatred and indignation gives more pain than all the evil which a brave man can fear from his enemies; so there is a satisfaction in the consciousness of being beloved, which, to a person of delicacy and sensibility, is of more importance to happiness, than all the advantage which he can expect to derive from it. What character is so detestable as that of one who takes pleasure to sow dissension among friends, and to turn their most tender love into mortal hatred? Yet wherein does the atrocity of this so much abhorred injury consist? Is it in depriving them of the frivolous good offices, which, had their friendship continued, they might have expected from one another? It is in depriving them of that friendship itself, in robbing them of each other’s affections, from which both derived so much satisfaction; it is in disturbing the harmony of their hearts, and putting an end to that happy commerce which had before subsisted between them. These affections, that harmony, this commerce, are felt, not only by the tender and the delicate, but by the rudest vulgar of mankind, to be of more importance to happiness than all the little services which could be expected to flow from them.

The sentiment of love is, in itself, agreeable to the person who feels it. It sooths and composes the breast, seems to favour the vital motions, and

to promote the healthful state of the human constitution; and it is rendered still more delightful by the consciousness of the gratitude and satisfaction which it must excite in him who is the object of it. Their mutual regard renders them happy in one another, and sympathy, with this mutual regard, makes them agreeable to every other person. With what pleasure do we look upon a family, through the whole of which reign mutual love and esteem, where the parents and children are companions for one another, without any other difference than what is made by respectful affection on the one side, and kind indulgence on the other. where freedom and fondness, mutual raillery and mutual kindness, show that no opposition of interest divides the brothers, nor any rivalship of favour sets the sisters at variance, and where every thing presents us with the idea of peace, cheerfulness, harmony, and contentment? On the contrary, how uneasy are we made when we go into a house in which jarring contention sets one half of those who dwell in it against the other; where amidst affected smoothness and complaisance, suspicious looks and sudden starts of passion betray the mutual jealousies which burn within them, and which are every moment ready to burst out through all the restraints which the presence of the company imposes?

Those amiable passions, even when they are acknowledged to be excessive, are never regarded with aversion. There is something agreeable even in the weakness of friendship and humanity. The too tender mother, the too indulgent father, the too generous and affectionate friend, may sometimes, perhaps, on account of the softness of their natures, be looked upon with a species of pity, in which, however, there is a mixture of love, but can never be regarded with hatred and aversion, nor even with contempt, unless by the most brutal and worthless of mankind. It is always with concern, with sympathy and kindness, that we blame them for the extravagance of their attachment. There is a helplessness in the character of extreme humanity which more than any thing interests our pity. There is nothing in itself which renders it either ungraceful or disagreeable. We only regret that it is unfit for the world, because the world is unworthy of it, and because it must expose the person who is endowed with it as a prey to the perfidy and ingratitude of insinuating falsehood, and to a thousand pains and uneasinesses, which, of all men, he the least deserves to feel, and which generally too he is, of all men, the least capable of supporting. It is quite otherwise with hatred and resentment. Too violent a propensity to those detestable passions, renders a person the object of universal dread and abhorrence, who, like a wild beast, ought, we think, to be hunted out of all civil society.

Chap. V: Of the selfish Passions

Besides those two opposite sets of passions, the social and unsocial, there is another which holds a sort of middle place between them; is never either so graceful as is sometimes the one set, nor is ever so odious as is sometimes the other. Grief and joy, when conceived upon account of our own private good or bad fortune, constitute this third set of passions. Even when excessive, they are never so disagreeable as excessive resentment, because no opposite sympathy can ever interest us against them: and when most suitable to their objects, they are never so agreeable as impartial humanity and just benevolence; because no double sympathy can ever interest us for them. There is, however, this difference between grief and joy, that we are generally most disposed to sympathize with small joys and great sorrows. The man who, by some sudden revolution of fortune, is lifted up all at once into a condition of life, greatly above what he had formerly lived in, may be assured that the congratulations of his best friends are not all of them perfectly sincere. An upstart, though of the greatest merit, is generally disagreeable, and a sentiment of envy commonly prevents us from heartily sympathizing with his joy. If he has any judgment, he is sensible of this, and instead of appearing to be elated with his good fortune, he endeavours, as much as he can, to smother his joy, and keep down that elevation of mind with which his new circumstances naturally inspire him. He affects the same plainness of dress, and the same modesty of behaviour, which became him in his former station. He redoubles his attention to his old friends, and endeavours more than ever to be humble, assiduous, and complaisant. And this is the behaviour which in his situation we most approve of; because we expect, it seems, that he should have more sympathy with our envy and aversion to his happiness, than we have with his happiness. It is seldom that with all this he succeeds. We suspect the sincerity of his humility, and he grows weary of this constraint. In a little time, therefore, he generally leaves all his old friends behind him, some of the meanest of them excepted, who may, perhaps, condescend to become his dependents: nor does he always acquire any new ones; the pride of his new connections is as much affronted at finding him their equal, as that of his old ones had been by his becoming their superior: and it requires the most obstinate and persevering modesty to atone for this mortification to either. He generally grows weary too soon, and is

provoked, by the sullen and suspicious pride of the one, and by the saucy contempt of the other, to treat the first with neglect, and the second with petulance, till at last he grows habitually insolent, and forfeits the esteem of all. If the chief part of human happiness arises from the consciousness of being beloved, as I believe it does, those sudden changes of fortune seldom contribute much to happiness. He is happiest who advances more gradually to greatness, whom the public destines to every step of his preferment long before he arrives at it, in whom, upon that account, when it comes, it can excite no extravagant joy, and with regard to whom it cannot reasonably create either any jealousy in those he overtakes, or any envy in those he leaves behind.

Mankind, however, more readily sympathize with those smaller joys which flow from less important causes. It is decent to be humble amidst great prosperity; but we can scarce express too much satisfaction in all the little occurrences of common life, in the company with which we spent the evening last night, in the entertainment that was set before us, in what was said and what was done, in all the little incidents of the present conversation, and in all those frivolous nothings which fill up the void of human life. Nothing is more graceful than habitual cheerfulness, which is always founded upon a peculiar relish for all the little pleasures which common occurrences afford. We readily sympathize with it: it inspires us with the same joy, and makes every trifle turn up to us in the same agreeable aspect in which it presents itself to the person endowed with this happy disposition. Hence it is that youth, the season of gaiety, so easily engages our affections. That propensity to joy which seems even to animate the bloom, and to sparkle from the eyes of youth and beauty, though in a person of the same sex, exalts, even the aged, to a more joyous mood than ordinary. They forget, for a time, their infirmities, and abandon themselves to those agreeable ideas and emotions to which they have long been strangers, but which, when the presence of so much happiness recalls them to their breast, take their place there, like old acquaintance, from whom they are sorry to have ever been parted, and whom they embrace more heartily upon account of this long separation.

It is quite otherwise with grief. Small vexations excite no sympathy, but deep affliction calls forth the greatest. The man who is made uneasy by every little disagreeable incident, who is hurt if either the cook or the butler have failed in the least article of their duty, who feels every defect in the highest ceremonial of politeness, whether it be shewn to himself or to any other person, who takes it amiss that his intimate friend did not

bid him good-morrow when they met in the forenoon, and that his brother hummed a tune all the time he himself was telling a story; who is put out of humour by the badness of the weather when in the country, by the badness of the roads when upon a journey, and by the want of company, and dulness of all public diversions when in town; such a person, I say, though he should have some reason, will seldom meet with much sympathy. Joy is a pleasant emotion, and we gladly abandon ourselves to it upon the slightest occasion. We readily, therefore, sympathize with it in others, whenever we are not prejudiced by envy. But grief is painful, and the mind, even when it is our own misfortune, naturally resists and recoils from it. We would endeavour either not to conceive it at all, or to shake it off as soon as we have conceived it. Our aversion to grief will not, indeed, always hinder us from conceiving it in our own case upon very trifling occasions, but it constantly prevents us from sympathizing with it in others when excited by the like frivolous causes: for our sympathetic passions are always less irresistible than our original ones. There is, besides, a malice in mankind, which not only prevents all sympathy with little uneasinesses, but renders them in some measure diverting. Hence the delight which we all take in raillery, and in the small vexation which we observe in our companion, when he is pushed, and urged, and teased upon all sides. Men of the most ordinary good-breeding dissemble the pain which any little incident may give them; and those who are more thoroughly formed to society, turn, of their own accord, all such incidents into raillery, as they know their companions will do for them. The habit which a man, who lives in the world, has acquired of considering how every thing that concerns himself will appear to others, makes those frivolous calamities turn up in the same ridiculous light to him, in which he knows they will certainly be considered by them.

Our sympathy, on the contrary, with deep distress, is very strong and very sincere. It is unnecessary to give an instance. We weep even at the feigned representation of a tragedy. If you labour, therefore, under any signal calamity, if by some extraordinary misfortune you are fallen into poverty, into diseases, into disgrace and disappointment; even though your own fault may have been, in part, the occasion, yet you may generally depend upon the sincerest sympathy of all your friends, and, as far as interest and honour will permit, upon their kindest assistance too. But if your misfortune is not of this dreadful kind, if you have only been a little baulked in your ambition, if you have only been jilted by your

mistress, or are only hen-pecked by your wife, lay your account with the raillery of all your acquaintance.

Section III: Of the Effects of Prosperity and Adversity upon the Judgment of Mankind with regard to the Propriety of Action; and why it is more easy to obtain their Aprobation in the one state than in the other

Chap. I: That though our sympathy with sorrow is generally a more lively sensation than our sympathy with joy, it commonly falls much more short of the violence of what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned

Our sympathy with sorrow, though not more real, has been more taken notice of than our sympathy with joy. The word sympathy, in its most proper and primitive signification, denotes our fellow-feeling with the sufferings, not that with the enjoyments, of others. A late ingenious and subtile philosopher thought it necessary to prove, by arguments, that we had a real sympathy with joy, and that congratulation was a principle of human nature. Nobody, I believe, ever thought it necessary to prove that compassion was such.

First of all, our sympathy with sorrow is, in some sense, more universal than that with joy. Though sorrow is excessive, we may still have some fellow-feeling with it. What we feel does not, indeed, in this case, amount to that complete sympathy, to that perfect harmony and correspondence of sentiments which constitutes approbation. We do not weep, and exclaim, and lament, with the sufferer. We are sensible, on the contrary, of his weak ness and of the extravagance of his passion, and yet often feel a very sensible concern upon his account. But if we do not entirely enter into, and go along with, the joy of another, we have no sort of regard or fellow-feeling for it. The man who skips and dances about with that intemperate and senseless joy which we cannot accompany him in, is the object of our contempt and indignation.

Pain besides, whether of mind or body, is a more pungent sensation than pleasure, and our sympathy with pain, though it falls greatly short of what is naturally felt by the sufferer, is generally a more lively and distinct perception than our sympathy with pleasure, though this last often approaches more nearly, as I shall shew immediately, to the natural vivacity of the original passion.

Over and above all this, we often struggle to keep down our sympathy with the sorrow of others. Whenever we are not under the observation of the sufferer, we endeavour, for our own sake, to suppress it as much as

we can, and we are not always successful. The opposition which we make to it, and the reluctance with which we yield to it, necessarily oblige us to take more particular notice of it. But we never have occasion to make this opposition to our sympathy with joy. If there is any envy in the case, we never feel the least propensity towards it; and if there is none, we give way to it without any reluctance. On the contrary, as we are always ashamed of our own envy, we often pretend, and sometimes really wish to sympathize with the joy of others, when by that disagreeable sentiment we are disqualified from doing so. We are glad, we say on account of our neighbour's good fortune, when in our hearts, perhaps, we are really sorry. We often feel a sympathy with sorrow when we would wish to be rid of it; and we often miss that with joy when we would be glad to have it. The obvious observation, therefore, which it naturally falls in our way to make, is, that our propensity to sympathize with sorrow must be very strong, and our inclination to sympathize with joy very weak.

Notwithstanding this prejudice, however, I will venture to affirm, that, when there is no envy in the case, our propensity to sympathize with joy is much stronger than our propensity to sympathize with sorrow; and that our fellow-feeling for the agreeable emotion approaches much more nearly to the vivacity of what is naturally felt by the persons principally concerned, than that which we conceive for the painful one.

We have some indulgence for that excessive grief which we cannot entirely go along with. We know what a prodigious effort is requisite before the sufferer can bring down his emotions to complete harmony and concord with those of the spectator. Though he fails, therefore, we easily pardon him. But we have no such indulgence for the intemperance of joy; because we are not conscious that any such vast effort is requisite to bring it down to what we can entirely enter into. The man who, under the greatest calamities, can command his sorrow, seems worthy of the highest admiration; but he who, in the fulness of prosperity, can in the same manner master his joy, seems hardly to deserve any praise. We are sensible that there is a much wider interval in the one case than in the other, between what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned, and what the spectator can entirely go along with.

What can he added to the happiness of the man who is in health, who is out of debt, and has a clear conscience? To one in this situation, all accessions of fortune may properly be said to be superfluous; and if he is much elevated upon account of them, it must be the effect of the most frivolous levity. This situation, however, may very well be called the

natural and ordinary state of mankind. Notwithstanding the present misery and depravity of the world, so justly lamented, this really is the state of the greater part of men. The greater part of men, therefore, cannot find any great difficulty in elevating themselves to all the joy which any accession to this situation can well excite in their companion.

But though little can be added to this state, much may be taken from it. Though between this condition and the highest pitch of human prosperity, the interval is but a trifle; between it and the lowest depth of misery the distance is immense and prodigious. Adversity, on this account, necessarily depresses the mind of the sufferer much more below its natural state, than prosperity can elevate him above it. The spectator therefore, must find it much more difficult to sympathize entirely, and keep perfect time, with his sorrow, than thoroughly to enter into his joy, and must depart much further from his own natural and ordinary temper of mind in the one case than in the other. It is on this account, that though our sympathy with sorrow is often a more pungent sensation than our sympathy with joy, it always falls much more short of the violence of what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned.

It is agreeable to sympathize with, joy; and wherever envy does not oppose it, our heart abandons itself with satisfaction to the highest transports of that delightful sentiment. But it is painful to go along with grief, and we always enter into it with reluctance.

When we attend to the representation of a tragedy, we struggle against that sympathetic sorrow which the entertainment inspires as long as we can, and we give way to it at last only when we can no longer avoid it: we even then endeavour to cover our concern from the company. If we shed any tears, we carefully conceal them, and are afraid, lest the spectators, not entering into this excessive tenderness, should regard it as effeminacy and weakness. The wretch whose misfortunes call upon our compassion feels with what reluctance we are likely to enter into his sorrow, and therefore proposes his grief to us with fear and hesitation: he even smothers the half of it, and is ashamed, upon account of this hard-heartedness of mankind, to give vent to the fulness of his affliction. It is otherwise with the man who riots in joy and success. Wherever envy does not interest us against him, he expects our completest sympathy. He does not fear, therefore, to announce himself with shouts of exultation, in full confidence that we are heartily disposed to go along with him.

Why should we be more ashamed to weep than to laugh before company? We may often have as real occasion to do the one as to do the other: but we always feel that the spectators are more likely to go along

with us in the agreeable, than in the painful emotion. It is always miserable to complain, even when we are oppressed by the most dreadful calamities. But the triumph of victory is not always ungraceful. Prudence, indeed, would often advise us to bear our prosperity with more moderation; because prudence would teach us to avoid that envy which this very triumph is, more than any thing, apt to excite.

How hearty are the acclamations of the mob, who never bear any envy to their superiors, at a triumph or a public entry? And how sedate and moderate is commonly their grief at an execution? Our sorrow at a funeral generally amounts to no more than an affected gravity; but our mirth at a christening or a marriage, is always from the heart, and without any affectation. Upon these, and all such joyous occasions, our satisfaction, though not so durable, is often as lively as that of the persons principally concerned. Whenever we cordially congratulate our friends, which, however, to the disgrace of human nature, we do but seldom, their joy literally becomes our joy: we are, for the moment, as happy as they are: our heart swells and overflows with real pleasure: joy and complacency sparkle from our eyes, and animate every feature of our countenance, and every gesture of our body.

But, on the contrary, when we condole with our friends in their afflictions, how little do we feel, in comparison of what they feel? We sit down by them, we look at them, and while they relate to us the circumstances of their misfortune, we listen to them with gravity and attention. But while their narration is every moment interrupted by those natural bursts of passion which often seem almost to choak them in the midst of it; how far are the languid emotions of our hearts from keeping time to the transports of theirs? We may be sensible, at the same time, that their passion is natural, and no greater than what we ourselves might feel upon the like occasion. We may even inwardly reproach ourselves with our own want of sensibility, and perhaps, on that account, work ourselves up into an artificial sympathy, which, however, when it is raised, is always the slightest and most transitory imaginable; and generally, as soon as we have left the room, vanishes, and is gone for ever. Nature, it seems, when she loaded us with our own sorrows, thought that they were enough, and therefore did not command us to take any further share in those of others, than what was necessary to prompt us to relieve them.

It is on account of this dull sensibility to the afflictions of others, that magnanimity amidst great distress appears always so divinely graceful. His behaviour is genteel and agreeable who can maintain his

cheerfulness amidst a number of frivolous disasters. But he appears to be more than mortal who can support in the same manner the most dreadful calamities. We feel what an immense effort is requisite to silence those violent emotions which naturally agitate and distract those in his situation. We are amazed to find that he can command himself so entirely. His firmness, at the same time, perfectly coincides with our insensibility. He makes no demand upon us for that more exquisite degree of sensibility which we find, and which we are mortified to find, that we do not possess. There is the most perfect correspondence between his sentiments and ours, and on that account the most perfect propriety in his behaviour. It is a propriety too, which, from our experience of the usual weakness of human nature, we could not reasonably have expected he should be able to maintain. We wonder with surprise and astonishment at that strength of mind which is capable of so noble and generous an effort. The sentiment of complete sympathy and approbation, mixed and animated with wonder and surprise, constitutes what is properly called admiration, as has already been more than once taken notice of Cato, surrounded on all sides by his enemies, unable to resist them, disdaining to submit to them, and reduced, by the proud maxims of that age, to the necessity of destroying himself; yet never shrinking from his misfortunes, never supplicating with the lamentable voice of wretchedness, those miserable sympathetic tears which we are always so unwilling to give; but on the contrary, arming himself with manly fortitude, and the moment before he executes his fatal resolution, giving, with his usual tranquillity, all necessary orders for the safety of his friends; appears to Seneca, that great preacher of insensibility, a spectacle which even the gods themselves might behold with pleasure and admiration.

Whenever we meet, in common life, with any examples of such heroic magnanimity, we are always extremely affected. We are more apt to weep and shed tears for such as, in this manner, seem to feel nothing for them. and in selves, than for those who give way to all the weakness of sorrow: this particular case, the sympathetic grief of the spectator appears to go beyond the original passion in the person principally concerned. The friends of Socrates all wept when he drank the last potion, while he himself expressed the gayest and most cheerful tranquillity. Upon all such occasions the spectator makes no effort, and has no occasion to make any, in order to conquer his sympathetic sorrow. He is under no fear that it will transport him to any thing that is extravagant and improper; he is rather pleased with the sensibility of his

own heart, and gives way to it with complacence and self-approbation. He gladly indulges, therefore, the most melancholy views which can naturally occur to him, concerning the calamity of his friend, for whom, perhaps, he never felt so exquisitely before, the tender and tearful passion of love. But it is quite otherwise with the person principally concerned. He is obliged, as much as possible, to turn away his eyes from whatever is either naturally terrible or disagreeable in his situation. Too serious an attention to those circumstances, he fears, might make so violent an impression upon him, that he could no longer keep within the bounds of moderation, or render himself the object of the complete sympathy and approbation of the spectators. He fixes his thoughts, therefore, upon those only which are agreeable, the applause and admiration which he is about to deserve by the heroic magnanimity of his behaviour. To feel that he is capable of so noble and generous an effort, to feel that in this dreadful situation he can still act as he would desire to act, animates and transports him with joy, and enables him to support that triumphant gaiety which seems to exult in the victory he thus gains over his misfortunes.

On the contrary, he always appears, in some measure, mean and despicable, who is sunk in sorrow and dejection upon account of any calamity of his own. We cannot bring ourselves to feel for him what he feels for himself, and what, perhaps, we should feel for ourselves if in his situation: we, therefore, despise him; unjustly, perhaps, if any sentiment could be regarded as unjust, to which we are by nature irresistibly determined. The weakness of sorrow never appears in any respect agreeable, except when it arises from what we feel for others more than from what we feel for ourselves. A son, upon the death of an indulgent and respectable father, may give way to it without much blame. His sorrow is chiefly founded upon a sort of sympathy with his departed parent and we readily enter into this humane emotion. But if he should indulge the same weakness upon account of any misfortune which affected himself only, he would no longer meet with any such indulgence. If he should be reduced to beggary and ruin, if he should be exposed to the most dreadful dangers, if he should even be led out to a public execution, and there shed one single tear upon the scaffold, he would disgrace himself for ever in the opinion of all the gallant and generous part of mankind. Their compassion for him, however, would be very strong, and very sincere; but as it would still fall short of this excessive weakness, they would have no pardon for the man who could thus expose himself in the eyes of the world. His behaviour would affect

them with shame rather than with sorrow; and the dishonour which he had thus brought upon himself would appear to them the most lamentable circumstance in his misfortune. How did it disgrace the memory of the intrepid Duke of Biron, who had so often braved death in the field, that he wept upon the scaffold, when he beheld the state to which he was fallen, and remembered the favour and the glory from which his own rashness had so unfortunately thrown him!

Chap. II: Of the origin of Ambition, and of the distinction of Ranks

It is because mankind are disposed to sympathize more entirely with our joy than with our sorrow, that we make parade of our riches, and conceal our poverty. Nothing is so mortifying as to be obliged to expose our distress to the view of the public, and to feel, that though our situation is open to the eyes of all mankind, no mortal conceives for us the half of what we suffer. Nay, it is chiefly from this regard to the sentiments of mankind, that we pursue riches and avoid poverty. For to what purpose is all the toil and bustle of this world? what is the end of avarice and ambition, of the pursuit of wealth, of power, and preheminence? Is it to supply the necessities of nature? The wages of the meanest labourer can supply them. We see that they afford him food and clothing, the comfort of a house, and of a family. If we examined his oeconomy with rigour, we should find that he spends a great part of them upon conveniencies, which may be regarded as superfluities, and that, upon extraordinary occasions, he can give something even to vanity and distinction. What then is the cause of our aversion to his situation, and why should those who have been educated in the higher ranks of life, regard it as worse than death, to be reduced to live, even without labour, upon the same simple fare with him, to dwell under the same lowly roof, and to be clothed in the same humble. attire? Do they imagine that their stomach is better, or their sleep sounder in a palace than in a cottage? The contrary has been so often observed, and, indeed, is so very obvious, though it had never been observed, that there is nobody ignorant of it. From whence, then, arises that emulation which runs through all the different ranks of men, and what are the advantages which we propose by that great purpose of human life which we call bettering our condition? To be observed, to be attended to, to be taken notice of with sympathy, complacency, and approbation, are all the advantages which we can propose to derive from it. It is the vanity, not the ease, or the pleasure, which interests us. But vanity is always founded upon the belief of our being the object of attention and approbation. The rich man glories in his riches, because he feels that they naturally draw upon him the attention of the world, and that mankind are disposed to go along with him in all those agreeable emotions with which the advantages of his situation so readily inspire him. At the thought of this, his heart seems to swell and

dilate itself within him, and he is fonder of his wealth, upon this account, than for all the other advantages it procures him. The poor man, on the contrary, is ashamed of his poverty. He feels that it either places him out of the sight of mankind, or, that if they take any notice of him, they have, however, scarce any fellow-feeling with the misery and distress which he suffers. He is mortified upon both accounts; for though to be overlooked, and to be disapproved of, are things entirely different, yet as obscurity covers us from the daylight of honour and approbation, to feel that we are taken no notice of, necessarily damps the most agreeable hope, and disappoints the most ardent desire, of human nature. The poor man goes out and comes in unheeded, and when in the midst of a crowd is in the same obscurity as if shut up in his own hovel. Those humble cares and painful attentions which occupy those in his situation, afford no amusement to the dissipated and the gay. They turn away their eyes from him, or if the extremity of his distress forces them to look at him, it is only to spurn so disagreeable an object from among them. The fortunate and the proud wonder at the insolence of human wretchedness, that it should dare to present itself before them, and with the loathsome aspect of its misery presume to disturb the serenity of their happiness. The man of rank and distinction, on the contrary, is observed by all the world. Every body is eager to look at him, and to conceive, at least by sympathy, that joy and exultation with which his circumstances naturally inspire him. His actions are the objects of the public care. Scarce a word, scarce a gesture, can fall from him that is altogether neglected. In a great assembly he is the person upon whom all direct their eyes; it is upon him that their passions seem all to wait with expectation, in order to receive that movement and direction which he shall impress upon them; and if his behaviour is not altogether absurd, he has, every moment, an opportunity of interesting mankind, and of rendering himself the object of the observation and fellow-feeling of every body about him. It is this, which, notwithstanding the restraint it imposes, notwithstanding the loss of liberty with which it is attended, renders greatness the object of envy, and compensates, in the opinion of all those mortifications which must mankind, all that toil, all that anxiety, be undergone in the pursuit of it; and what is of yet more consequence, all that leisure, all that ease, all that careless security, which are forfeited for ever by the acquisition.

When we consider the condition of the great, in those delusive colours in which the imagination is apt to paint it. it seems to be almost the abstract idea of a perfect and happy state. It is the very state which, in all our waking dreams and idle reveries, we had sketched out to ourselves as

the final object of all our desires. We feel, therefore, a peculiar sympathy with the satisfaction of those who are in it. We favour all their inclinations, and forward all their wishes. What pity, we think, that any thing should spoil and corrupt so agreeable a situation! We could even wish them immortal; and it seems hard to us, that death should at last put an end to such perfect enjoyment. It is cruel, we think, in Nature to compel them from their exalted stations to that humble, but hospitable home, which she has provided for all her children. Great King, live for ever! is the compliment, which, after the manner of eastern adulation, we should readily make them, if experience did not teach us its absurdity. Every calamity that befals them, every injury that is done them, excites in the breast of the spectator ten times more compassion and resentment than he would have felt, had the same things happened to other men. It is the misfortunes of Kings only which afford the proper subjects for tragedy. They resemble, in this respect, the misfortunes of lovers. Those two situations are the chief which interest us upon the theatre; because, in spite of all that reason and experience can tell us to the contrary, the prejudices of the imagination attach to these two states a happiness superior to any other. To disturb, or to put an end to such perfect enjoyment, seems to be the most atrocious of all injuries. The traitor who conspires against the life of his monarch, is thought a greater monster than any other murderer. All the innocent blood that was shed in the civil wars, provoked less indignation than the death of Charles I. A stranger to human nature, who saw the indifference of men about the misery of their inferiors, and the regret and indignation which they feel for the misfortunes and sufferings of those above them, would be apt to imagine, that pain must be more agonizing, and the convulsions of death more terrible to persons of higher rank, than to those of meaner stations.

Upon this disposition of mankind, to go along with all the passions of the rich and the powerful, is founded the distinction of ranks, and the order of society. Our obsequiousness to our superiors more frequently arises from our admiration for the advantages of their situation, than from any private expectations of benefit from their good-will. Their benefits can extend but to a few. but their fortunes interest almost every body. We are eager to assist them in completing a system of happiness that approaches so near to perfection; and we desire to serve them for their own sake, without any other recompense but the vanity or the honour of obliging them. Neither is our deference to their inclinations founded chiefly, or altogether, upon a regard to the utility of such submission, and to the order of society, which is best supported by it.

Even when the order of society seems to require that we should oppose them, we can hardly bring ourselves to do it. That kings are the servants of the people, to be obeyed, resisted, deposed, or punished, as the public conveniency may require, is the doctrine of reason and philosophy; but it is not the doctrine of Nature. Nature would teach us to submit to them for their own sake, to tremble and bow down before their exalted station, to regard their smile as a reward sufficient to compensate any services, and to dread their displeasure, though no other evil were to follow from it, as the severest of all mortifications. To treat them in any respect as men, to reason and dispute with them upon ordinary occasions, requires such resolution, that there are few men whose magnanimity can support them in it, unless they are likewise assisted by familiarity and acquaintance. The strongest motives, the most furious passions, fear, hatred, and resentment, are scarce sufficient to balance this natural disposition to respect them: and their conduct must, either justly or unjustly, have excited the highest degree of all those passions, before the bulk of the people can be brought to oppose them with violence, or to desire to see them either punished or deposed. Even when the people have been brought this length, they are apt to relent every moment, and easily relapse into their habitual state of deference to those whom they have been accustomed to look upon as their natural superiors. They cannot stand the mortification of their monarch. Compassion soon takes the place of resentment, they forget all past provocations, their old principles of loyalty revive, and they run to re-establish the ruined authority of their old masters, with the same violence with which they had opposed it. The death of Charles I brought about the Restoration of the royal family. Compassion for James II when he was seized by the populace in making his escape on ship-board, had almost prevented the Revolution, and made it go on more heavily than before.

Do the great seem insensible of the easy price at which they may acquire the public admiration; or do they seem to imagine that to them, as to other men, it must be the purchase either of sweat or of blood? By what important accomplishments is the young nobleman instructed to support the dignity of his rank, and to render himself worthy of that superiority over his fellow-citizens, to which the virtue of his ancestors had raised them? Is it by knowledge, by industry, by patience, by self-denial, or by virtue of any kind? As all his words, as all his motions are attended to, he learns an habitual regard to every circumstance of ordinary behaviour, and studies to perform all those small duties with the most exact propriety. As he is conscious how much he is observed, and

how much mankind are disposed to favour all his inclinations, he acts, upon the most indifferent occasions, with that freedom and elevation which the thought of this naturally inspires. His air, his manner, his deportment, all mark that elegant and graceful sense of his own superiority, which those who are born to inferior stations can hardly ever arrive at. These are the arts by which he proposes to make mankind more easily submit to his authority, and to govern their inclinations according to his own pleasure: and in this he is seldom disappointed. These arts, supported by rank and preheminence, are, upon ordinary occasions, sufficient to govern the world. Lewis XIV during the greater part of his reign, was regarded, not only in France, but over all Europe, as the most perfect model of a great prince. But what were the talents and virtues by which he acquired this great reputation? Was it by the scrupulous and inflexible justice of all his undertakings, by the immense dangers and difficulties with which they were attended, or by the unwearied and unrelenting application with which he pursued them? Was it by his extensive knowledge, by his exquisite judgment, or by his heroic valour? It was by none of these qualities. But he was, first of all, the most powerful prince in Europe, and consequently held the highest rank among kings; and then, says his historian, ‘he surpassed all his courtiers in the gracefulness of his shape, and the majestic beauty of his features. The sound of his voice, noble and affecting, gained those hearts which his presence intimidated. He had a step and a deportment which could suit only him and his rank, and which would have been ridiculous in any other person. The embarrassment which he occasioned to those who spoke to him, flattered that secret satisfaction with which he felt his own superiority. The old officer, who was confounded and faultered in asking him a favour, and not being able to conclude his discourse, said to him: Sir, your majesty, I hope, will believe that I do not tremble thus before your enemies: had no difficulty to obtain what he demanded.’ These frivolous accomplishments, supported by his rank, and, no doubt too, by a degree of other talents and virtues, which seems, however, not to have been much above mediocrity, established this prince in the esteem of his own age, and have drawn, even from posterity, a good deal of respect for his memory. Compared with these, in his own times, and in his own presence, no other virtue, it seems, appeared to have any merit. Knowledge, industry, valour, and beneficence, trembled, were abashed, and lost all dignity before them.

But it is not by accomplishments of this kind, that the man of inferior rank must hope to distinguish himself. Politeness is so much the virtue of

the great, that it will do little honour to any body but themselves. The coxcomb, who imitates their manner, and affects to be eminent by the superior propriety of his ordinary behaviour, is rewarded with a double share of contempt for his folly and presumption. Why should the man, whom nobody thinks it worth while to look at, be very anxious about the manner in which he holds up his head, or disposes of his arms while he walks through a room? He is occupied surely with a very superfluous attention, and with an attention too that marks a sense of his own importance, which no other mortal can go along with. The most perfect modesty and plainness, joined to as much negligence as is consistent with the respect due to the company, ought to be the chief characteristics of the behaviour of a private man. If ever he hopes to distinguish himself, it must be by more important virtues. He must acquire dependants to balance the dependants of the great, and he has no other fund to pay them from, but the labour of his body, and the activity of his mind. He must cultivate these therefore: he must acquire superior knowledge in his profession, and superior industry in the exercise of it. He must be patient in labour, resolute in danger, and firm in distress. These talents he must bring into public view, by the difficulty, importance, and, at the same time, good judgment of his undertakings, and by the severe and unrelenting application with which he pursues them. Probity and prudence, generosity and frankness, must characterize his behaviour upon all ordinary occasions; and he must, at the same time, be forward to engage in all those situations, in which it requires the greatest talents and virtues to act with propriety, but in which the greatest applause is to be acquired by those who can acquit themselves with honour. With what impatience does the man of spirit and ambition, who is depressed by his situation, look round for some great opportunity to distinguish himself? No circumstances, which can afford this, appear to him undesirable. He even looks forward with satisfaction to the prospect of foreign war, or civil dissension; and, with secret transport and delight, sees through all the confusion and bloodshed which attend them, the probability of those wished-for occasions presenting themselves, in which he may draw upon himself the attention and admiration of mankind. The man of rank and distinction, on the contrary, whose whole glory consists in the propriety of his ordinary behaviour, who is contented with the humble renown which this can afford him, and has no talents to acquire any other, is unwilling to embarrass himself with what can be attended either with difficulty or distress. To figure at a ball is his great triumph, and to succeed in an intrigue of gallantry, his highest exploit. He has an

aversion to all public confusions, not from the love of mankind, for the great never look upon their inferiors as their fellow-creatures; nor yet from want of courage, for in that he is seldom defective; but from a consciousness that he possesses none of the virtues which are required in such situations, and that the public attention will certainly be drawn away from him by others. He may be willing to expose himself to some little danger, and to make a campaign when it happens to be the fashion. But he shudders with horror at the thought of any situation which demands the continual and long exertion of patience, industry, fortitude, and application of thought. These virtues are hardly ever to be met with in men who are born to those high stations. In all governments accordingly, even in monarchies, the highest offices are generally possessed, and the whole detail of the administration conducted, by men who were educated in the middle and inferior ranks of life, who have been carried forward by their own industry and abilities, though loaded with the jealousy, and opposed by the resentment, of all those who were born their superiors, and to whom the great, after having regarded them first with contempt, and afterwards with envy, are at last contented to truckle with the same abject meanness with which they desire that the rest of mankind should behave to themselves.

It is the loss of this easy empire over the affections of mankind which renders the fall from greatness so insupportable. When the family of the king of Macedon was led in triumph by Paulus Aemilius, their misfortunes, it is said, made them divide with their conqueror the attention of the Roman people. The sight of the royal children, whose tender age rendered them insensible of their situation, struck the spectators, amidst the public rejoicings and prosperity, with the tenderest sorrow and compassion. The king appeared next in the procession; and seemed like one confounded and astonished, and bereft of all sentiment, by the greatness of his calamities. His friends and ministers followed after him. As they moved along, they often cast their eyes upon their fallen sovereign, and always burst into tears at the sight; their whole behaviour demonstrating that they thought not of their own misfortunes, but were occupied entirely by the superior greatness of his. The generous Romans, on the contrary, beheld him with disdain and indignation, and regarded as unworthy of all compassion the man who could be so mean-spirited as to bear to live under such calamities. Yet what did those calamities amount to? According to the greater part of historians, he was to spend the remainder of his days, under the protection of a powerful and humane people, in a state which in itself should seem worthy of

envy, a state of plenty, ease, leisure, and security, from which it was impossible for him even by his own folly to fall. But he was no longer to be surrounded by that admiring mob of fools, flatterers, and dependants, who had formerly been accustomed to attend upon all his motions. He was no longer to be gazed upon by multitudes, nor to have it in his power to render himself the object of their respect, their gratitude, their love, their admiration. The passions of nations were no longer to mould themselves upon his inclinations. This was that insupportable calamity which bereaved the king of all sentiment; which made his friends forget their own misfortunes; and which the Roman magnanimity could scarce conceive how any man could be so mean-spirited as to bear to survive.

‘Love,’ says my Lord Rochfaucault, ‘is commonly succeeded by ambition; but ambition is hardly ever succeeded by love.’ That passion, when once it has got entire possession of the breast, will admit neither a rival nor a successor. To those who have been accustomed to the possession, or even to the hope of public admiration, all other pleasures sicken and decay. Of all the discarded statesmen who for their own ease have studied to get the better of ambition, and to despise those honours which they could no longer arrive at, how few have been able to succeed? The greater part have spent their time in the most listless and insipid indolence, chagrined at the thoughts of their own insignificancy, incapable of being interested in the occupations of private life, without enjoyment, except when they talked of their former greatness, and without satisfaction, except when they were employed in some vain project to recover it. Are you in earnest resolved never to barter your liberty for the lordly servitude of a court, but to live free, fearless, and independent? There seems to be one way to continue in that virtuous resolution; and perhaps but one. Never enter the place from whence so few have been able to return; never come within the circle of ambition; nor ever bring yourself into comparison with those masters of the earth who have already engrossed the attention of half mankind before you.

Of such mighty importance does it appear to be, in the imaginations of men, to stand in that situation which sets them most in the view of general sympathy and attention. And thus, place, that great object which divides the wives of aldermen, is the end of half the labours of human life; and is the cause of all the tumult and bustle, all the rapine and injustice, which avarice and ambition have introduced into this world. People of sense, it is said, indeed despise place; that is, they despise sitting at the head of the table, and are indifferent who it is that is pointed out to the company by that frivolous circumstance, which the smallest

advantage is capable of overbalancing. But rank, distinction pre-eminence, no man despises, unless he is either raised very much above, or sunk very much below, the ordinary standard of human nature; unless he is either so confirmed in wisdom and real philosophy, as to be satisfied that, while the propriety of his conduct renders him the just object of approbation, it is of little consequence though he be neither attended to, nor approved of; or so habituated to the idea of his own meanness, so sunk in slothful and sottish indifference, as entirely to have forgot the desire, and almost the very wish, for superiority.

As to become the natural object of the joyous congratulations and sympathetic attentions of mankind is, in this manner, the circumstance which gives to prosperity all its dazzling splendour; so nothing darkens so much the gloom of adversity as to feel that our misfortunes are the objects, not of the fellow-feeling, but of the contempt and aversion of our brethren. It is upon this account that the most dreadful calamities are not always those which it is most difficult to support. It is often more mortifying to appear in public under small disasters, than under great misfortunes. The first excite no sympathy; but the second, though they may excite none that approaches to the anguish of the sufferer, call forth, however, a very lively compassion. The sentiments of the spectators are, in this last case, less wide of those of the sufferer, and their imperfect fellow-feeling lends him some assistance in supporting his misery. Before a gay assembly, a gentleman would be more mortified to appear covered with filth and rags than with blood and wounds. This last situation would interest their pity; the other would provoke their laughter. The judge who orders a criminal to be set in the pillory, dishonours him more than if he had condemned him to the scaffold. The great prince, who, some years ago, caned a general officer at the head of his army, disgraced him irrecoverably. The punishment would have been much less had he shot him through the body. By the laws of honour, to strike with a cane dishonours, to strike with a sword does not, for an obvious reason. Those slighter punishments, when inflicted on a gentleman, to whom dishonour is the greatest of all evils, come to be regarded among a humane and generous people, as the most dreadful of any. With regard to persons of that rank, therefore, they are universally laid aside, and the law, while it takes their life upon many occasions, respects their honour upon almost all. To scourge a person of quality, or to set him in the pillory, upon account of any crime whatever, is a brutality of which no European government, except that of Russia, is capable.

A brave man is not rendered contemptible by being brought to the scaffold; he is, by being set in the pillory. His behaviour in the one situation may gain him universal esteem and admiration. No behaviour in the other can render him agreeable. The sympathy of the spectators supports him in the one case, and saves him from that shame, that consciousness that his misery is felt by himself only, which is of all sentiments the most unsupportable. There is no sympathy in the other; or, if there is any, it is not with his pain, which is a trifle, but with his consciousness of the want of sympathy with which this pain is attended. It is with his shame, not with his sorrow. Those who pity him, blush and hang down their heads for him. He droops in the same manner, and feels himself irrecoverably degraded by the punishment, though not by the crime. The man, on the contrary, who dies with resolution, as he is naturally regarded with the erect aspect of esteem and approbation, so he wears himself the same undaunted countenance; and, if the crime does not deprive him of the respect of others, the punishment never will. He has no suspicion that his situation is the object of contempt or derision to any body, and he can, with propriety, assume the air, not only of perfect serenity, but of triumph and exultation.

‘Great dangers,’ says the Cardinal de Retz, ‘have their charms, because there is some glory to be got, even when we miscarry. But moderate dangers have nothing but what is horrible, because the loss of reputation always attends the want of success.’ His maxim has the same foundation with what we have been just now observing with regard to punishments.

Human virtue is superior to pain, to poverty, to danger, and to death; nor does it even require its utmost efforts do despise them. But to have its misery exposed to insult and derision, to be led in triumph, to be set up for the hand of scorn to point at, is a situation in which its constancy is much more apt to fail. Compared with the contempt of mankind, all other external evils are easily supported.

Chap. III: Of the corruption of our moral sentiments, which is occasioned by this disposition to admire the rich and the great, and to despise or neglect persons of poor and mean condition

This disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition, though necessary both to establish and to maintain the distinction of ranks and the order of society, is, at the same time, the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments. That wealth and greatness are often regarded with the respect and admiration which are due only to wisdom and virtue; and that the contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often most unjustly bestowed upon poverty and weakness, has been the complaint of moralists in all ages.

We desire both to be respectable and to be respected. We dread both to be contemptible and to be contemned. But, upon coming into the world, we soon find that wisdom and virtue are by no means the sole objects of respect; nor vice and folly, of contempt. We frequently see the respectful attentions of the world more strongly directed towards the rich and the great, than towards the wise and the virtuous. We see frequently the vices and follies of the powerful much less despised than the poverty and weakness of the innocent. To deserve, to acquire, and to enjoy the respect and admiration of mankind, are the great objects of ambition and emulation. Two different roads are presented to us, equally leading to the attainment of this so much desired object; the one, by the study of wisdom and the practice of virtue; the other, by the acquisition of wealth and greatness. Two different characters are presented to our emulation; the one, of proud ambition and ostentatious avidity. the other, of humble modesty and equitable justice. Two different models, two different pictures, are held out to us, according to which we may fashion our own character and behaviour; the one more gaudy and glittering in its colouring; the other more correct and more exquisitely beautiful in its outline: the one forcing itself upon the notice of every wandering eye; the other, attracting the attention of scarce any body but the most studious and careful observer. They are the wise and the virtuous chiefly,

a select, though, I am afraid, but a small party, who are the real and steady admirers of wisdom and virtue. The great mob of mankind are the admirers and worshippers, and, what may seem more extraordinary, most frequently the disinterested admirers and worshippers, of wealth and greatness.

The respect which we feel for wisdom and virtue is, no doubt, different from that which we conceive for wealth and greatness; and it requires no very nice discernment to distinguish the difference. But, notwithstanding this difference, those sentiments bear a very considerable resemblance to one another. In some particular features they are, no doubt, different, but, in the general air of the countenance, they seem to be so very nearly the same, that inattentive observers are very apt to mistake the one for the other.

In equal degrees of merit there is scarce any man who does not respect more the rich and the great, than the poor and the humble. With most men the presumption and vanity of the former are much more admired, than the real and solid merit of the latter. It is scarce agreeable to good morals, or even to good language, perhaps, to say, that mere wealth and greatness, abstracted from merit and virtue, deserve our respect. We must acknowledge, however, that they almost constantly obtain it; and that they may, therefore, be considered as, in some respects, the natural objects of it. Those exalted stations may, no doubt, be completely degraded by vice and folly. But the vice and folly must be very great, before they can operate this complete degradation. The profligacy of a man of fashion is looked upon with much less contempt and aversion, than that of a man of meaner condition. In the latter, a single transgression of the rules of temperance and propriety, is commonly more resented, than the constant and avowed contempt of them ever is in the former.

In the middling and inferior stations of life, the road to virtue and that to fortune, to such fortune, at least, as men in such stations can reasonably expect to acquire, are, happily in most cases, very nearly the same. In all the middling and inferior professions, real and solid professional abilities, joined to prudent, just, firm, and temperate conduct, can very seldom fail of success. Abilities will even sometimes prevail where the conduct is by no means correct. Either habitual imprudence, however, or injustice, or weakness, or profligacy, will always clouD, and sometimes Depress altogether, the most splendid professional abilities. Men in the inferior and middling stations of life, besides, can never be great enough to be above the law, which must

generally overawe them into some sort of respect for, at least, the more important rules of justice. The success of such people, too, almost always depends upon the favour and good opinion of their neighbours and equals; and without a tolerably regular conduct these can very seldom be obtained. The good old proverb, therefore, That honesty is the best policy, holds, in such situations, almost always perfectly true. In such situations, therefore, we may generally expect a considerable degree of virtue; and, fortunately for the good morals of society, these are the situations of by far the greater part of mankind.

In the superior stations of life the case is unhappily not always the same. In the courts of princes, in the drawing-rooms of the great, where success and preferment depend, not upon the esteem of intelligent and well-informed equals, but upon the fanciful and foolish favour of ignorant, presumptuous, and proud superiors; flattery and falsehood too often prevail over merit and abilities. In such societies the abilities to please, are more regarded than the abilities to serve. In quiet and peaceable times, when the storm is at a distance, the prince, or great man, wishes only to be amused, and is even apt to fancy that he has scarce any occasion for the service of any body, or that those who amuse him are sufficiently able to serve him. The external graces, the frivolous accomplishments of that impertinent and foolish thing called a man of fashion, are commonly more admired than the solid and masculine virtues of a warrior, a statesman, a philosopher, or a legislator. All the great and awful virtues, all the virtues which can fit, either for the council, the senate, or the field, are, by the insolent and insignificant flatterers, who commonly figure the most in such corrupted societies, held in the utmost contempt and derision. When the duke of Sully was called upon by Lewis the Thirteenth, to give his advice in some great emergency, he observed the favourites and courtiers whispering to one another, and smiling at his unfashionable appearance. ‘Whenever your majesty’s father,’ said the old warrior and statesman, ‘did me the honour to consult me, he ordered the buffoons of the court to retire into the antechamber.’

It is from our disposition to admire, and consequently to imitate, the rich and the great, that they are enabled to set, or to lead what is called the fashion. Their dress is the fashionable dress; the language of their conversation, the fashionable style; their air and deportment, the fashionable behaviour. Even their vices and follies are fashionable; and the greater part of men are proud to imitate and resemble them in the very qualities which dishonour and degrade them. Vain men often give

themselves airs of a fashionable profligacy, which, in their hearts, they do not approve of, and of which, perhaps, they are really not guilty. They desire to be praised for what they themselves do not think praise-worthy, and are ashamed of unfashionable virtues which they sometimes practise in secret, and for which they have secretly some degree of real veneration. There are hypocrites of wealth and greatness, as well as of religion and virtue; and a vain man is as apt to pretend to be what he is not, in the one way, as a cunning man is in the other. He assumes the equipage and splendid way of living of his superiors, without considering that whatever may be praise-worthy in any of these, derives its whole merit and propriety from its suitableness to that situation and fortune which both require and can easily support the expence. Many a poor man places his glory in being thought rich, without considering that the duties (if one may call such follies by so very venerable a name) which that reputation imposes upon him, must soon reduce him to beggary, and render his situation still more unlike that of those whom he admires and imitates, than it had been originally.

To attain to this envied situation, the candidates for fortune too frequently abandon the paths of virtue; for unhappily, the road which leads to the one, and that which leads to the other, lie sometimes in very opposite directions. But the ambitious man flatters himself that, in the splendid situation to which he advances, he will have so many means of commanding the respect and admiration of mankind, and will be enabled to act with such superior propriety and grace, that the lustre of his future conduct will entirely cover, or efface, the foulness of the steps by which he arrived at that elevation. In many governments the candidates for the highest stations are above the law; and, if they can attain the object of their ambition, they have no fear of being called to account for the means by which they acquired it. They often endeavour, therefore, not only by fraud and falsehood, the ordinary and vulgar arts of intrigue and cabal; but sometimes by the perpetration of the most enormous crimes, by murder and assassination, by rebellion and civil war, to supplant and destroy those who oppose or stand in the way of their greatness. They more frequently miscarry than succeed; and commonly gain nothing but the disgraceful punishment which is due to their crimes. But, though they should be so lucky as to attain that wished-for greatness, they are always most miserably disappointed in the happiness which they expect to enjoy in it. It is not ease or pleasure, but always honour, of one kind or another, though frequently an honour very ill understood, that the ambitious man really pursues. But the honour of his exalted station appears, both in his

own eyes and in those of other people, polluted and defiled by the baseness of the means through which he rose to it. Though by the profusion of every liberal expence; though by excessive indulgence in every profligate pleasure, the wretched, but usual, resource of ruined characters; though by the hurry of public business, or by the prouder and more dazzling tumult of war, he may endeavour to efface, both from his own memory and from that of other people, the remembrance of what he has done; that remembrance never fails to pursue him. He invokes in vain the dark and dismal powers of forgetfulness and oblivion. He remembers himself what he has done, and that remembrance tells him that other people must likewise remember it. Amidst all the gaudy pomp of the most ostentatious greatness; amidst the venal and vile adulation of the great and of the learned; amidst the more innocent, though more foolish, acclamations of the common people; amidst all the pride of conquest and the triumph of successful war, he is still secretly pursued by the avenging furies of shame and remorse; and, while glory seems to surround him on all sides, he himself, in his own imagination, sees black and foul infamy fast pursuing him, and every moment ready to overtake him from behind. Even the great Caesar, though he had the magnanimity to dismiss his guards, could not dismiss his suspicions. The remembrance of Pharsalia still haunted and pursued him. When, at the request of the senate, he had the generosity to pardon Marcellus, he told that assembly, that he was not unaware of the designs which were carrying on against his life; but that, as he had lived long enough both for nature and for glory, he was contented to die, and therefore despised all conspiracies. He had, perhaps, lived long enough for nature. But the man who felt himself the object of such deadly resentment, from those whose favour he wished to gain, and whom he still wished to consider as his friends, had certainly lived too long for real glory; or for all the happiness which he could ever hope to enjoy in the love and esteem of his equals.

Part II: Of Merit and Demerit; or, of the Objects of Reward and Punishment: Consisting of Three Parts

Section I: Of the Sense of Merit and Demerit

Introduction

There is another set of qualities ascribed to the actions and conduct of mankind, distinct from their propriety or impropriety, their decency or ungracefulness, and which are the objects of a distinct species of approbation and disapprobation. These are Merit and Demerit, the qualities of deserving reward, and of deserving punishment.

It has already been observed, that the sentiment or affection of the heart, from which any action proceeds, and upon which its whole virtue or vice depends, may be considered under two different aspects, or in two different relations: first, in relation to the cause or object which excites it; and, secondly, in relation to the end which it proposes, or to the effect which it tends to produce: that upon the suitableness or unsuitableness, upon the proportion or disproportion, which the affection seems to bear to the cause or object which excites it, depends the propriety or impropriety, the decency or ungracefulness of the consequent action; and that upon the beneficial or hurtful effects which the affection proposes or tends to produce, depends the merit or demerit, the good or ill desert of the action to which it gives occasion. Wherein consists our sense of the propriety or impropriety of actions, has been explained in the former part of this discourse. We come now to consider, wherein consists that of their good or ill desert.

Chap. I: That whatever appears to be the proper object of gratitude, appears to deserve reward; and that, in the same manner, whatever appears to be the proper object of resentment appears to deserve punishment

To us, therefore, that action must appear to deserve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that sentiment, which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward, or to do good to another. And in the same manner, that action must appear to deserve punishment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that sentiment which most immediately and directly prompts us to punish, or to inflict evil upon another.

The sentiment which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward, is gratitude; that which most immediately and directly prompts us to punish, is resentment.

To us, therefore, that action must appear to deserve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; as, on the other hand, that action must appear to deserve punishment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of resentment.

To reward, is to recompense, to remunerate, to return good for good received. To punish, too, is to recompense, to remunerate, though in a different manner; it is to return evil for evil that has been done.

There are some other passions, besides gratitude and resentment, which interest us in the happiness or misery of others; but there are none which so directly excite us to be the instruments of either. The love and esteem which grow upon acquaintance and habitual approbation, necessarily lead us to be pleased with the good fortune of the man who is the object of such agreeable emotions, and consequently, to be willing to lend a hand to promote it. Our love, however, is fully satisfied, though his good fortune should be brought about without our assistance. All that this passion desires is to see him happy, without regarding who was the author of his prosperity. But gratitude is not to be satisfied in this manner. If the person to whom we owe many obligations, is made happy without our assistance, though it pleases our love, it does not content our

gratitude. Till we have recompensed him, till we ourselves have been instrumental in promoting his happiness, we feel ourselves still loaded with that debt which his past services have laid upon us.

The hatred and dislike, in the same manner, which grow upon habitual disapprobation, would often lead us to take a malicious pleasure in the misfortune of the man whose conduct and character excite so painful a passion. But though dislike and hatred harden us against all sympathy, and sometimes dispose us even to rejoice at the distress of another, yet, if there is no resentment in the case, if neither we nor our friends have received any great personal provocation, these passions would not naturally lead us to wish to be instrumental in bringing it about. Though we could fear no punishment in consequence of our having had some hand in it, we would rather that it should happen by other means. To one under the dominion of violent hatred it would be agreeable, perhaps, to hear, that the person whom he abhorred and detested was killed by some accident. But if he had the least spark of justice, which, though this passion is not very favourable to virtue, he might still have, it would hurt him excessively to have been himself, even without design, the occasion of this misfortune. Much more would the very thought of voluntarily contributing to it shock him beyond all measure. He would reject with horror even the imagination of so execrable a design; and if he could imagine himself capable of such an enormity, he would begin to regard himself in the same odious light in which he had considered the person who was the object of his dislike. But it is quite otherwise with resentment: if the person who had done us some great injury, who had murdered our father or our brother, for example, should soon afterwards die of a fever, or even be brought to the scaffold upon account of some other crime, though it might sooth our hatred, it would not fully gratify our resentment. Resentment would prompt us to desire, not only that he should be punished, but that he should be punished by our means, and upon account of that particular injury which he had done to us. Resentment cannot be fully gratified, unless the offender is not only made to grieve in his turn, but to grieve for that particular wrong which we have suffered from him. He must be made to repent and be sorry for this very action, that others, through fear of the like punishment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. The natural gratification of this passion tends, of its own accord, to produce all the political ends of punishment; the correction of the criminal, and the example to the public.

Gratitude and resentment, therefore, are the sentiments which most immediately and directly prompt to reward and to punish. To us,

therefore, he must appear to deserve reward, who appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; and he to deserve punishment, who appears to be that of resentment.

Chap. II: Of the proper objects of gratitude and resentment

To be the proper and approved object either of gratitude or resentment, can mean nothing but to be the object of that gratitude, and of that resentment, which naturally seems proper, and is approved of.

But these, as well as all the other passions of human nature, seem proper and are approved of, when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them, when every indifferent by-stander entirely enters into, and goes along with them.

He, therefore, appears to deserve reward, who, to some person or persons, is the natural object of a gratitude which every human heart is disposed to beat time to, and thereby applaud: and he, on the other hand, appears to deserve punishment, who in the same manner is to some person or persons the natural object of a resentment which the breast of every reasonable man is ready to adopt and sympathize with. To us, surely, that action must appear to deserve reward, which every body who knows of it would wish to reward, and therefore delights to see rewarded: and that action must as surely appear to deserve punishment, which every body who hears of it is angry with, and upon that account rejoices to see punished.

1. As we sympathize with the joy of our companions when in prosperity, so we join with them in the complacency and satisfaction with which they naturally regard whatever is the cause of their good fortune. We enter into the love and affection which they conceive for it, and begin to love it too. We should be sorry for their sakes if it was destroyed, or even if it was placed at too great a distance from them, and out of the reach of their care and protection, though they should lose nothing by its absence except the pleasure of seeing it. If it is man who has thus been the fortunate instrument of the happiness of his brethren, this is still more peculiarly the case. When we see one man assisted, protected, relieved by another, our sympathy with the joy of the person who receives the benefit serves only to animate our fellow-feeling with his gratitude towards him who bestows it. When we look upon the person who is the cause of his pleasure with the eyes with which we imagine he must look upon him, his benefactor seems to stand before us in the most engaging and amiable light. We readily therefore sympathize with the grateful affection which he conceives for a person to whom he

has been so much obliged; and consequently applaud the returns which he is disposed to make for the good offices conferred upon him. As we entirely enter into the affection from which these returns proceed, they necessarily seem every way proper and suitable to their object.

2. In the same manner, as we sympathize with the sorrow of our fellow-creature whenever we see his distress, so we likewise enter into his abhorrence and aversion for whatever has given occasion to it. Our heart, as it adopts and beats time to his grief, so is it likewise animated with that spirit by which he endeavours to drive away or destroy the cause of it. The indolent and passive fellow-feeling, by which we accompany him in his sufferings, readily gives way to that more vigorous and active sentiment by which we go along with him in the effort he makes, either to repel them, or to gratify his aversion to what has given occasion to them. This is still more peculiarly the case, when it is man who has caused them. When we see one man oppressed or injured by another, the sympathy which we feel with the distress of the sufferer seems to serve only to animate our fellow-feeling with his resentment against the offender. We are rejoiced to see him attack his adversary in his turn, and are eager and ready to assist him whenever he exerts himself for defence, or even for vengeance within a certain degree. If the injured should perish in the quarrel, we not only sympathize with the real resentment of his friends and relations, but with the imaginary resentment which in fancy we lend to the dead, who is no longer capable of feeling that or any other human sentiment. But as we put ourselves in his situation, as we enter, as it were, into his body, and in our imaginations, in some measure, animate anew the deformed and mangled carcass of the slain, when we bring home in this manner his case to our own bosoms, we feel upon this, as upon many other occasions, an emotion which the person principally concerned is incapable of feeling, and which yet we feel by an illusive sympathy with him. The sympathetic tears which we shed for that immense and irretrievable loss, which in our fancy he appears to have sustained, seem to be but a small part of the duty which we owe him. The injury which he has suffered demands, we think, a principal part of our attention. We feel that resentment which we imagine he ought to feel, and which he would feel, if in his cold and lifeless body there remained any consciousness of what passes upon earth. His blood, we think, calls aloud for vengeance. The very ashes of the dead seem to be disturbed at the thought that his injuries are to pass unrevenged. The horrors which are supposed to haunt the bed of the murderer, the ghosts which, superstition imagines, rise

from their graves to demand vengeance upon those who brought them to an untimely end, all take their origin from this natural sympathy with the imaginary resentment of the slain. And with regard, at least, to this most dreadful of all crimes, Nature, antecedent to all reflections upon the utility of punishment, has in this manner stamped upon the human heart, in the strongest and most indelible characters, an immediate and instinctive approbation of the sacred and necessary law of retaliation.

Chap. III: That where there is no approbation of the conduct of the person who confers the benefit, there is little sympathy with the gratitude of him who receives it: and that, on the contrary, where there is no disapprobation of the motives of the person who does the mischief, there is no sort of sympathy with the resentment of him who suffers it

It is to be observed, however, that, how beneficial soever on the one hand, or how hurtful soever on the other, the actions or intentions of the person who acts may have been to the person who is, if I may say so, acted upon, yet if in the one case there appears to have been no propriety in the motives of the agent, if we cannot enter into the affections which influenced his conduct, we have little sympathy with the gratitude of the person who receives the benefit: or if, in the other case, there appears to have been no impropriety in the motives of the agent, if, on the contrary, the affections which influenced his conduct are such as we must necessarily enter into, we can have no sort of sympathy with the resentment of the person who suffers. Little gratitude seems due in the one case, and all sort of resentment seems unjust in the other. The one action seems to merit little reward, the other to deserve no punishment.

1. First, I say, That wherever we cannot sympathize with the affections of the agent, wherever there seems to be no propriety in the motives which influenced his conduct, we are less disposed to enter into the gratitude of the person who received the benefit of his actions. A very small return seems due to that foolish and profuse generosity which confers the greatest benefits from the most trivial motives, and gives an estate to a man merely because his name and sirname happen to be the same with those of the giver. Such services do not seem to demand any proportionable recompense. Our contempt for the folly of the agent hinders us from thoroughly entering into the gratitude of the person to whom the good office has been done. His benefactor seems unworthy of it. As when we place ourselves in the situation of the person obliged, we

feel that we could conceive no great reverence for such a benefactor, we easily absolve him from a great deal of that submissive veneration and esteem which we should think due to a more respectable character; and provided he always treats his weak friend with kindness and humanity, we are willing to excuse him from many attentions and regards which we should demand to a worthier patron. Those Princes, who have heaped, with the greatest profusion, wealth, power, and honours, upon their favourites, have seldom excited that degree of attachment to their persons which has often been experienced by those who were more frugal of their favours. The well-natured, but injudicious prodigality of James the First of Great Britain seems to have attached nobody to his person; and that Prince, notwithstanding his social and harmless disposition, appears to have lived and died without a friend. The whole gentry and nobility of England exposed their lives and fortunes in the cause of his more frugal and distinguishing son, notwithstanding the coldness and distant severity of his ordinary deportment.

2. Secondly, I say, That wherever the conduct of the agent appears to have been entirely directed by motives and affections which we thoroughly enter into and approve of, we can have no sort of sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer, how great soever the mischief which may have been done to him. When two people quarrel, if we take part with, and entirely adopt the resentment of one of them, it is impossible that we should enter into that of the other. Our sympathy with the person whose motives we go along with, and whom therefore we look upon as in the right, cannot but harden us against all fellow-feeling with the other, whom we necessarily regard as in the wrong. Whatever this last, therefore, may have suffered, while it is no more than what we ourselves should have wished him to suffer, while it is no more than what our own sympathetic indignation would have prompted us to inflict upon him, it cannot either displease or provoke us. When an inhuman murderer is brought to the scaffold, though we have some compassion for his misery, we can have no sort of fellow-feeling with his resentment, if he should be so absurd as to express any against either his prosecutor or his judge. The natural tendency of their just indignation against so vile a criminal is indeed the most fatal and ruinous to him. But it is impossible that we should be displeased with the tendency of a sentiment, which, when we bring the case home to ourselves, we feel that we cannot avoid adopting.

Chap. IV: Recapitulation of the foregoing chapters

1. We do not, therefore, thoroughly and heartily sympathize with the gratitude of one man towards another, merely because this other has been the cause of his good fortune, unless he has been the cause of it from motives which we entirely go along with. Our heart must adopt the principles of the agent, and go along with all the affections which influenced his conduct, before it can entirely sympathize with, and beat time to, the gratitude of the person who has been benefited by his actions. If in the conduct of the benefactor there appears to have been no propriety, how beneficial soever its effects, it does not seem to demand, or necessarily to require, any proportionable recompense.

But when to the beneficent tendency of the action is joined the propriety of the affection from which it proceeds, when we entirely sympathize and go along with the motives of the agent, the love which we conceive for him upon his own account, enhances and enlivens our fellow-feeling with the gratitude of those who owe their prosperity to his good conduct. His actions seem then to demand, and, if I may say so, to call aloud for a proportionable recompense. We then entirely enter into that gratitude which prompts to bestow it. The benefactor seems then to be the proper object of reward, when we thus entirely sympathize with, and approve of, that sentiment which prompts to reward him. When we approve of, and go along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we must necessarily approve of the action, and regard the person towards whom it is directed, as its proper and suitable object.

2. In the same manner, we cannot at all sympathize with the resentment of one man against another, merely because this other has been the cause of his misfortune, unless he has been the cause of it from motives which we cannot enter into. Before we can adopt the resentment of the sufferer, we must disapprove of the motives of the agent, and feel that our heart renounces all sympathy with the affections which influenced his conduct. If there appears to have been no impropriety in these, how fatal soever the tendency of the action which proceeds from them to those against whom it is directed, it does not seem to deserve any punishment, or to be the proper object of any resentment.

But when to the hurtfulness of the action is joined the impropriety of the affection from whence it proceeds, when our heart rejects with

abhorrence all fellow-feeling with the motives of the agent, we then heartily and entirely sympathize with the resentment of the sufferer. Such actions seem then to deserve, and, if I may say so, to call aloud for, a proportionable punishment; and we entirely enter into, and thereby approve of, that resentment which prompts to inflict it. The offender necessarily seems then to be the proper object of punishment, when we thus entirely sympathize with, and thereby approve of, that sentiment which prompts to punish. In this case too, when we approve, and go along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we must necessarily approve of the action, and regard the person against whom it is directed, as its proper and suitable object.

Chap. V: The analysis of the sense of Merit and Demerit

1. As our sense, therefore, of the propriety of conduct arises from what I shall call a direct sympathy with the affections and motives of the person who acts, so our sense of its merit arises from what I shall call an indirect sympathy with the gratitude of the person who is, if I may say so, acted upon.

As we cannot indeed enter thoroughly into the gratitude of the person who receives the benefit, unless we beforehand approve of the motives of the benefactor, so, upon this account, the sense of merit seems to be a compounded sentiment, and to be made up of two distinct emotions; a direct sympathy with the sentiments of the agent, and an indirect sympathy with the gratitude of those who receive the benefit of his actions.

We may, upon many different occasions, plainly distinguish those two different emotions combining and uniting together in our sense of the good desert of a particular character or action. When we read in history concerning actions of proper and beneficent greatness of mind, how eagerly do we enter into such designs? How much are we animated by that high-spirited generosity which directs them? How keen are we for their success? How grieved at their disappointment? In imagination we become the very person whose actions are represented to us: we transport ourselves in fancy to the scenes of those distant and forgotten adventures, and imagine ourselves acting the part of a Scipio or a Camillus, a Timoleon or an Aristides. So far our sentiments are founded upon the direct sympathy with the person who acts. Nor is the indirect sympathy with those who receive the benefit of such actions less sensibly felt. Whenever we place ourselves in the situation of these last, with what warm and affectionate fellow-feeling do we enter into their gratitude towards those who served them so essentially? We embrace, as it were, their benefactor along with them. Our heart readily sympathizes with the highest transports of their grateful affection. No honours, no rewards, we think, can be too great for them to bestow upon him. When they make this proper return for his services, we heartily applaud and go along with them; but are shocked beyond all measure, if by their conduct they appear to have little sense of the obligations conferred upon them. Our whole sense, in short, of the merit and good desert of such actions,

of the propriety and fitness of recompensing them, and making the person who performed them rejoice in his turn, arises from the sympathetic emotions of gratitude and love, with which, when we bring home to our own breast the situation of those principally concerned, we feel ourselves naturally transported towards the man who could act with such proper and noble beneficence.

2. In the same manner as our sense of the impropriety of conduct arises from a want of sympathy, or from a direct antipathy to the affections and motives of the agent, so our sense of its demerit arises from what I shall here too call an indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer.

As we cannot indeed enter into the resentment of the sufferer, unless our heart beforehand disapproves the motives of the agent, and renounces all fellow-feeling with them; so upon this account the sense of demerit, as well as that of merit, seems to be a compounded sentiment, and to be made up of two distinct emotions; a direct antipathy to the sentiments of the agent, and an indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer.

We may here too, upon many different occasions, plainly distinguish those two different emotions combining and uniting together in our sense of the ill desert of a particular character or action. When we read in history concerning the perfidy and cruelty of a Borgia or a Nero, our heart rises up against the detestable sentiments which influenced their conduct, and renounces with horror and abomination all fellow-feeling with such execrable motives. So far our sentiments are founded upon the direct antipathy to the affections of the agent: and the indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferers is still more sensibly felt. When we bring home to ourselves the situation of the persons whom those scourges of mankind insulted, murdered, or betrayed, what indignation do we not feel against such insolent and inhuman oppressors of the earth? Our sympathy with the unavoidable distress of the innocent sufferers is not more real nor more lively, than our fellow-feeling with their just and natural resentment: The former sentiment only heightens the latter, and the idea of their distress serves only to inflame and blow up our animosity against those who occasioned it. When we think of the anguish of the sufferers, we take part with them more earnestly against their oppressors; we enter with more eagerness into all their schemes of vengeance, and feel ourselves every moment wreaking, in imagination, upon such violators of the laws of society, that punishment which our sympathetic indignation tells us is due to their crimes. Our sense of the

horror and dreadful atrocity of such conduct, the delight which we take in hearing that it was properly punished, the indignation which we feel when it escapes this due retaliation, our whole sense and feeling, in short, of its ill desert, of the propriety and fitness of inflicting evil upon the person who is guilty of it, and of making him grieve in his turn, arises from the sympathetic indignation which naturally boils up in the breast of the spectator, whenever he thoroughly brings home to himself the case of the sufferer.

Section II: Of Justice and Beneficence

Chap. I: Comparison of those two virtues

Actions of a beneficent tendency, which proceed from proper motives, seem alone to require reward. because such alone are the approved objects of gratitude, or excite the sympathetic gratitude of the spectator.

Actions of a hurtful tendency, which proceed from improper motives, seem alone to deserve punishment; because such alone are the approved objects of resentment, or excite the sympathetic resentment of the spectator.

Beneficence is always free, it cannot be extorted by force, the mere want of it exposes to no punishment; because the mere want of beneficence tends to do no real positive evil. It may disappoint of the good which might reasonably have been expected, and upon that account it may justly excite dislike and disapprobation: it cannot, however, provoke any resentment which mankind will go along with. The man who does not recompense his benefactor when he has it in his power, and when his benefactor needs his assistance, is, no doubt, guilty of the blackest ingratitude. The heart of every impartial spectator rejects all fellow-feeling with the selfishness of his motives, and he is the proper object of the highest disapprobation. But still he does no positive hurt to any body. He only does not do that good which in propriety he ought to have done. He is the object of hatred, a passion which is naturally excited by impropriety of sentiment and behaviour. not of resentment, a passion which is never properly called forth but by actions which tend to do real and positive hurt to some particular persons. His want of gratitude, therefore, cannot be punished. To oblige him by force to perform what in gratitude he ought to perform, and what every impartial spectator would approve of him for performing, would, if possible, be still more improper than his neglecting to perform it. His benefactor would dishonour himself if he attempted by violence to constrain him to gratitude, and it would be impertinent for any third person, who was not the superior of either, to intermeddle. But of all the duties of beneficence, those which gratitude recommends to us approach nearest to what is called a perfect and complete obligation. What friendship, what generosity, what charity, would prompt us to do with universal approbation, is still more free, and can still less be extorted by force than the duties of gratitude. We talk of the debt of gratitude, not of charity, or generosity, nor even of friendship,

when friendship is mere esteem, and has not been enhanced and complicated with gratitude for good offices.

Resentment seems to have been given us by nature for defence, and for defence only. It is the safeguard of justice and the security of innocence. It prompts us to beat off the mischief which is attempted to be done to us, and to retaliate that which is already done; that the offender may be made to repent of his injustice, and that others, through fear of the like punishment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. It must be reserved therefore for these purposes, nor can the spectator ever go along with it when it is exerted for any other. But the mere want of the beneficent virtues, though it may disappoint us of the good which might reasonably be expected, neither does, not attempts to do, any mischief from which we can have occasion to defend ourselves.

There is, however, another virtue, of which the observance is not left to the freedom of our own wills, which may be extorted by force, and of which the violation exposes to resentment, and consequently to punishment. This virtue is justice: the violation of justice is injury: it does real and positive hurt to some particular persons, from motives which are naturally disapproved of. It is, therefore, the proper object of resentment, and of punishment, which is the natural consequence of resentment. As mankind go along with, and approve of the violence employed to avenge the hurt which is done by injustice, so they much more go along with, and approve of, that which is employed to prevent and beat off the injury, and to restrain the offender from hurting his neighbours. The person himself who meditates an injustice is sensible of this, and feels that force may, with the utmost propriety, be made use of, both by the person whom he is about to injure, and by others, either to obstruct the execution of his crime, or to punish him when he has executed it. And upon this is founded that remarkable distinction between justice and all the other social virtues, which has of late been particularly insisted upon by an author of very great and original genius, that we feel ourselves to be under a stricter obligation to act according to justice, than agreeably to friendship, charity, or generosity; that the practice of these last mentioned virtues seems to be left in some measure to our own choice, but that, somehow or other, we feel ourselves to be in a peculiar manner tied, bound, and obliged to the observation of justice. We feel, that is to say, that force may, with the utmost propriety, and with the approbation of all mankind, be made use of to constrain us to observe the rules of the one, but not to follow the precepts of the other.

We must always, however, carefully distinguish what is only blamable, or the proper object of disapprobation, from what force may be employed either to punish or to prevent. That seems blamable which falls short of that ordinary degree of proper beneficence which experience teaches us to expect of every body; and on the contrary, that seems praise-worthy which goes beyond it. The ordinary degree itself seems neither blamable nor praise-worthy. A father, a son, a brother, who behaves to the correspondent relation neither better nor worse than the greater part of men commonly do, seems properly to deserve neither praise nor blame. He who surprises us by extraordinary and unexpected, though still proper and suitable kindness, or on the contrary by extraordinary and unexpected, as well as unsuitable unkindness, seems praise-worthy in the one case, and blamable in the other.

Even the most ordinary degree of kindness or beneficence, however, cannot, among equals, be extorted by force. Among equals each individual is naturally, and antecedent to the institution of civil government, regarded as having a right both to defend himself from injuries, and to exact a certain degree of punishment for those which have been done to him. Every generous spectator not only approves of his conduct when he does this, but enters so far into his sentiments as often to be willing to assist him. When one man attacks, or robs, or attempts to murder another, all the neighbours take the alarm, and think that they do right when they run, either to revenge the person who has been injured, or to defend him who is in danger of being so. But when a father fails in the ordinary degree of parental affection towards a son; when a son seems to want that filial reverence which might be expected to his father; when brothers are without the usual degree of brotherly affection; when a man shuts his breast against compassion, and refuses to relieve the misery of his fellow-creatures, when he can with the greatest ease; in all these cases, though every body blames the conduct, nobody imagines that those who might have reason, perhaps, to expect more kindness, have any right to extort it by force. The sufferer can only complain, and the spectator can intermeddle no other way than by advice and persuasion. Upon all such occasions, for equals to use force against one another, would be thought the highest degree of insolence and presumption.

A superior may, indeed, sometimes, with universal approbation, oblige those under his jurisdiction to behave, in this respect, with a certain degree of propriety to one another. The laws of all civilized nations oblige parents to maintain their children, and children to maintain

their parents, and impose upon men many other duties of beneficence. The civil magistrate is entrusted with the power not only of preserving the public peace by restraining injustice, but of promoting the prosperity of the commonwealth, by establishing good discipline, and by discouraging every sort of vice and impropriety; he may prescribe rules, therefore, which not only prohibit mutual injuries among fellow-citizens, but command mutual good offices to a certain degree. When the sovereign commands what is merely indifferent, and what, antecedent to his orders, might have been omitted without any blame, it becomes not only blamable but punishable to disobey him. When he commands, therefore, what, antecedent to any such order, could not have been omitted without the greatest blame, it surely becomes much more punishable to be wanting in obedience. Of all the duties of a law-giver, however, this, perhaps, is that which it requires the greatest delicacy and reserve to execute with propriety and judgment. To neglect it altogether exposes the commonwealth to many gross disorders and shocking enormities, and to push it too far is destructive of all liberty, security, and justice.

Though the mere want of beneficence seems to merit no punishment from equals, the greater exertions of that virtue appear to deserve the highest reward. By being productive of the greatest good, they are the natural and approved objects of the liveliest gratitude. Though the breach of justice, on the contrary, exposes to punishment, the observance of the rules of that virtue seems scarce to deserve any reward. There is, no doubt, a propriety in the practice of justice, and it merits, upon that account, all the approbation which is due to propriety. But as it does no real positive good, it is entitled to very little gratitude. Mere justice is, upon most occasions, but a negative virtue, and only hinders us from hurting our neighbour. The man who barely abstains from violating either the person, or the estate, or the reputation of his neighbours, has surely very little positive merit. He fulfils, however, all the rules of what is peculiarly called justice, and does every thing which his equals can with propriety force him to do, or which they can punish him for not doing. We may often fulfil all the rules of justice by sitting still and doing nothing.

As every man doth, so shall it be done to him, and retaliation seems to be the great law which is dictated to us by Nature. Beneficence and generosity we think due to the generous and beneficent. Those whose hearts never open to the feelings of humanity, should, we think, be shut out, in the same manner, from the affections of all their fellow-creatures,

and be allowed to live in the midst of society, as in a great desert where there is nobody to care for them, or to inquire after them. The violator of the laws of justice ought to be made to feel himself that evil which he has done to another; and since no regard to the sufferings of his brethren is capable of restraining him, he ought to be over-awed by the fear of his own. The man who is barely innocent, who only observes the laws of justice with regard to others, and merely abstains from hurting his neighbours, can merit only that his neighbours in their turn should respect his innocence, and that the same laws should be religiously observed with regard to him.

Chap. II: Of the sense of Justice, of Remorse, and of the consciousness of Merit

There can be no proper motive for hurting our neighbour, there can be no incitement to do evil to another, which mankind will go along with, except just indignation for evil which that other has done to us. To disturb his happiness merely because it stands in the way of our own, to take from him what is of real use to him merely because it may be of equal or of more use to us, or to indulge, in this manner, at the expence of other people, the natural preference which every man has for his own happiness above that of other people, is what no impartial spectator can go along with. Every man is, no doubt, by nature, first and principally recommended to his own care; and as he is fitter to take care of himself than of any other person, it is fit and right that it should be so. Every man, therefore, is much more deeply interested in whatever immediately concerns himself, than in what concerns any other man: and to hear, perhaps, of the death of another person, with whom we have no particular connexion, will give us less concern, will spoil our stomach, or break our rest much less than a very insignificant disaster which has befallen ourselves. But though the ruin of our neighbour may affect us much less than a very small misfortune of our own, we must not ruin him to prevent that small misfortune, nor even to prevent our own ruin. We must, here, as in all other cases, view ourselves not so much according to that light in which we may naturally appear to ourselves, as according to that in which we naturally appear to others. Though every man may, according to the proverb, be the whole world to himself, to the rest of mankind he is a most insignificant part of it. Though his own happiness may be of more importance to him than that of all the world besides, to every other person it is of no more consequence than that of any other man. Though it may be true, therefore, that every individual, in his own breast, naturally prefers himself to all mankind, yet he dares not look mankind in the face, and avow that he acts according to this principle. He feels that in this preference they can never go along with him, and that how natural soever it may be to him, it must always appear excessive and extravagant to them. When he views himself in the light in which he is conscious that others will view him, he sees that to them he is but one of the multitude in no respect better than any other in it. If he would act so

as that the impartial spectator may enter into the principles of his conduct, which is what of all things he has the greatest desire to do, he must, upon this, as upon all other occasions, humble the arrogance of his self-love, and bring it down to something which other men can go along with. They will indulge it so far as to allow him to be more anxious about, and to pursue with more earnest assiduity, his own happiness than that of any other person. Thus far, whenever they place themselves in his situation, they will readily go along with him. In the race for wealth, and honours, and preferments, he may run as hard as he can, and strain every nerve and every muscle, in order to outstrip all his competitors. But if he should justle, or throw down any of them, the indulgence of the spectators is entirely at an end. It is a violation of fair play, which they cannot admit of. This man is to them, in every respect, as good as he: they do not enter into that self-love by which he prefers himself so much to this other, and cannot go along with the motive from which he hurt him. They readily, therefore, sympathize with the natural resentment of the injured, and the offender becomes the object of their hatred and indignation. He is sensible that he becomes so, and feels that those sentiments are ready to burst out from all sides against him.

As the greater and more irreparable the evil that is done, the resentment of the sufferer runs naturally the higher; so does likewise the sympathetic indignation of the spectator, as well as the sense of guilt in the agent. Death is the greatest evil which one man can inflict upon another, and excites the highest degree of resentment in those who are immediately connected with the slain. Murder, therefore, is the most atrocious of all crimes which affect individuals only, in the sight both of mankind, and of the person who has committed it. To be deprived of that which we are possessed of, is a greater evil than to be disappointed of what we have only the expectation. Breach of property, therefore, theft and robbery, which take from us what we are possessed of, are greater crimes than breach of contract, which only disappoints us of what we expected. The most sacred laws of justice, therefore, those whose violation seems to call loudest for vengeance and punishment, are the laws which guard the life and person of our neighbour; the next are those which guard his property and possessions; and last of all come those which guard what are called his personal rights, or what is due to him from the promises of others.

The violator of the more sacred laws of justice can never reflect on the sentiments which mankind must entertain with regard to him, without feeling all the agonies of shame, and horror, and consternation. When his

passion is gratified, and he begins coolly to reflect on his past conduct, he can enter into none of the motives which influenced it. They appear now as detestable to him as they did always to other people. By sympathizing with the hatred and abhorrence which other men must entertain for him, he becomes in some measure the object of his own hatred and abhorrence. The situation of the person, who suffered by his injustice, now calls upon his pity. He is grieved at the thought of it; regrets the unhappy effects of his own conduct, and feels at the same time that they have rendered him the proper object of the resentment and indignation of mankind, and of what is the natural consequence of resentment, vengeance and punishment. The thought of this perpetually haunts him, and fills him with terror and amazement. He dares no longer look society in the face, but imagines himself as it were rejected, and thrown out from the affections of all mankind. He cannot hope for the consolation of sympathy in this his greatest and most dreadful distress. The remembrance of his crimes has shut out all fellow-feeling with him from the hearts of his fellow-creatures. The sentiments which they entertain with regard to him, are the very thing which he is most afraid of. Every thing seems hostile, and he would be glad to fly to some inhospitable desert, where he might never more behold the face of a human creature, nor read in the countenance of mankind the condemnation of his crimes. But solitude is still more dreadful than society. His own thoughts can present him with nothing but what is black, unfortunate, and disastrous, the melancholy forebodings of incomprehensible misery and ruin. The horror of solitude drives him back into society, and he comes again into the presence of mankind, astonished to appear before them, loaded with shame and distracted with fear, in order to supplicate some little protection from the countenance of those very judges, who he knows have already all unanimously condemned him. Such is the nature of that sentiment, which is properly called remorse; of all the sentiments which can enter the human breast the most dreadful. It is made up of shame from the sense of the impropriety of past conduct; of grief for the effects of it; of pity for those who suffer by it; and of the dread and terror of punishment from the consciousness of the justly provoked resentment of all rational creatures.

The opposite behaviour naturally inspires the opposite sentiment. The man who, not from frivolous fancy, but from proper motives, has performed a generous action, when he looks forward to those whom he has served, feels himself to be the natural object of their love and gratitude, and, by sympathy with them, of the esteem and approbation of

all mankind. And when he looks backward to the motive from which he acted, and surveys it in the light in which the indifferent spectator will survey it, he still continues to enter into it, and applauds himself by sympathy with the approbation of this supposed impartial judge. In both these points of view his own conduct appears to him every way agreeable. His mind, at the thought of it, is filled with cheerfulness, serenity, and composure. He is in friendship and harmony with all mankind, and looks upon his fellow-creatures with confidence and benevolent satisfaction, secure that he has rendered himself worthy of their most favourable regards. In the combination of all these sentiments consists the consciousness of merit, or of deserved reward.

Chap. III: Of the utility of this constitution of Nature

It is thus that man, who can subsist only in society, was fitted by nature to that situation for which he was made. All the members of human society stand in need of each others assistance, and are likewise exposed to mutual injuries. Where the necessary assistance is reciprocally afforded from love, from gratitude, from friendship, and esteem, the society flourishes and is happy. All the different members of it are bound together by the agreeable bands of love and affection, and are, as it were, drawn to one common centre of mutual good offices.

But though the necessary assistance should not be afforded from such generous and disinterested motives, though among the different members of the society there should be no mutual love and affection, the society, though less happy and agreeable, will not necessarily be dissolved. Society may subsist among different men, as among different merchants, from a sense of its utility, without any mutual love or affection; and though no man in it should owe any obligation, or be bound in gratitude to any other, it may still be upheld by a mercenary exchange of good offices according to an agreed valuation.

Society, however, cannot subsist among those who are at all times ready to hurt and injure one another. The moment that injury begins, the moment that mutual resentment and animosity take place, all the bands of it are broke asunder, and the different members of which it consisted are, as it were, dissipated and scattered abroad by the violence and opposition of their discordant affections. If there is any society among robbers and murderers, they must at least, according to the trite observation, abstain from robbing and murdering one another. Beneficence, therefore, is less essential to the existence of society than justice. Society may subsist, though not in the most comfortable state, without beneficence; hut the prevalence of injustice must utterly destroy it.

Though Nature, therefore, exhorts mankind to acts of beneficence, by the pleasing consciousness of deserved reward, she has not thought it necessary to guard and enforce the practice of it by the terrors of merited punishment in case it should be neglected. It is the ornament which embellishes, not the foundation which supports the building, and which it was, therefore, sufficient to recommend, but by no means necessary to

impose. Justice, on the contrary, is the main pillar that upholds the whole edifice. If it is removed, the great, the immense fabric of human society, that fabric which to raise and support seems in this world, if I may say so, to have been the peculiar and darling care of Nature, must in a moment crumble into atoms. In order to enforce the observation of justice, therefore, Nature has implanted in the human breast that consciousness of ill-desert, those terrors of merited punishment which attend upon its violation, as the great safe-guards of the association of mankind, to protect the weak, to curb the violent, and to chastise the guilty. Men, though naturally sympathetic, feel so little for another, with whom they have no particular connexion, in comparison of what they feel for themselves; the misery of one, who is merely their fellow-creature, is of so little importance to them in comparison even of a small conveniency of their own; they have it so much in their power to hurt him, and may have so many temptations to do so, that if this principle did not stand up within them in his defence, and overawe them into a respect for his innocence, they would, like wild beasts, be at all times ready to fly upon him; and a man would enter an assembly of men as he enters a den of lions.

In every part of the universe we observe means adjusted with the nicest artifice to the ends which they are intended to produce; and in the mechanism of a plant, or animal body, admire how every thing is contrived for advancing the two great purposes of nature, the support of the individual, and the propagation of the species. But in these, and in all such objects, we still distinguish the efficient from the final cause of their several motions and organizations. The digestion of the food, the circulation of the blood, and the secretion of the several juices which are drawn from it, are operations all of them necessary for the great purposes of animal life. Yet we never endeavour to account for them from those purposes as from their efficient causes, nor imagine that the blood circulates, or that the food digests of its own accord, and with a view or intention to the purposes of circulation or digestion. The wheels of the watch are all admirably adjusted to the end for which it was made, the pointing of the hour. All their various motions conspire in the nicest manner to produce this effect. If they were endowed with a desire and intention to produce it, they could not do it better. Yet we never ascribe any such desire or intention to them, but to the watch-maker, and we know that they are put into motion by a spring, which intends the effect it produces as little as they do. But though, in accounting for the operations of bodies, we never fail to distinguish in this manner the efficient from

the final cause, in accounting for those of the mind we are very apt to confound these two different things with one another. When by natural principles we are led to advance those ends, which a refined and enlightened reason would recommend to us, we are very apt to impute to that reason, as to their efficient cause, the sentiments and actions by which we advance those ends, and to imagine that to be the wisdom of man, which in reality is the wisdom of God. Upon a superficial view, this cause seems sufficient to produce the effects which are ascribed to it; and the system of human nature seems to be more simple and agreeable when all its different operations are in this manner deduced from a single principle.

As society cannot subsist unless the laws of justice are tolerably observed, as no social intercourse can take place among men who do not generally abstain from injuring one another; the consideration of this necessity, it has been thought, was the ground upon which we approved of the enforcement of the laws of justice by the punishment of those who violated them. Man, it has been said, has a natural love for society, and desires that the union of mankind should be preserved for its own sake, and though he himself was to derive no benefit from it. The orderly and flourishing state of society is agreeable to him, and he takes delight in contemplating it. Its disorder and confusion, on the contrary, is the object of his aversion, and he is chagrined at whatever tends to produce it. He is sensible too that his own interest is connected with the prosperity of society, and that the happiness, perhaps the preservation of his existence, depends upon its preservation. Upon every account, therefore, he has an abhorrence at whatever can tend to destroy society, and is willing to make use of every means, which can hinder so hated and so dreadful an event. Injustice necessarily tends to destroy it. Every appearance of injustice, therefore, alarms him, and he runs, if I may say so, to stop the progress of what, if allowed to go on, would quickly put an end to every thing that is dear to him. If he cannot restrain it by gentle and fair means, he must beat it down by force and violence, and at any rate must put a stop to its further progress. Hence it is, they say, that he often approves of the enforcement of the laws of justice even by the capital punishment of those who violate them. The disturber of the public peace is hereby removed out of the world, and others are terrified by his fate from imitating his example.

Such is the account commonly given of our approbation of the punishment of injustice. And so far this account is undoubtedly true, that we frequently have occasion to confirm our natural sense of the propriety

and fitness of punishment, by reflecting how necessary it is for preserving the order of society. When the guilty is about to suffer that just retaliation, which the natural indignation of mankind tells them is due to his crimes; when the insolence of his injustice is broken and humbled by the terror of his approaching punishment; when he ceases to be an object of fear, with the generous and humane he begins to be an object of pity. The thought of what he is about to suffer extinguishes their resentment for the sufferings of others to which he has given occasion. They are disposed to pardon and forgive him, and to save him from that punishment, which in all their cool hours they had considered as the retribution due to such crimes. Here, therefore, they have occasion to call to their assistance the consideration of the general interest of society. They counterbalance the impulse of this weak and partial humanity by the dictates of a humanity that is more generous and comprehensive. They reflect that mercy to the guilty is cruelty to the innocent, and oppose to the emotions of compassion which they feel for a particular person, a more enlarged compassion which they feel for mankind.

Sometimes too we have occasion to defend the propriety of observing the general rules of justice by the consideration of their necessity to the support of society. We frequently hear the young and the licentious ridiculing the most sacred rules of morality, and professing, sometimes from the corruption, but more frequently from the vanity of their hearts, the most abominable maxims of conduct. Our indignation rouses, and we are eager to refute and expose such detestable principles. But though it is their intrinsic hatefulness and detestableness, which originally inflames us against them, we are unwilling to assign this as the sole reason why we condemn them, or to pretend that it is merely because we ourselves hate and detest them. The reason, we think, would not appear to be conclusive. Yet why should it not; if we hate and detest them because they are the natural and proper objects of hatred and detestation? But when we are asked why we should not act in such or such a manner, the very question seems to suppose that, to those who ask it, this manner of acting does not appear to be for its own sake the natural and proper object of those sentiments. We must show them, therefore, that it ought to be so for the sake of something else. Upon this account we generally cast about for other arguments, and the consideration which first occurs to us, is the disorder and confusion of society which would result from the universal prevalence of such practices. We seldom fail, therefore, to insist upon this topic.

But though it commonly requires no great discernment to see the destructive tendency of all licentious practices to the welfare of society, it is seldom this consideration which first animates us against them. All men, even the most stupid and unthinking, abhor fraud, perfidy, and injustice, and delight to see them punished. But few men have reflected upon the necessity of justice to the existence of society, how obvious soever that necessity may appear to be.

That it is not a regard to the preservation of society, which originally interests us in the punishment of crimes committed against individuals, may be demonstrated by many obvious considerations. The concern which we take in the fortune and happiness of individuals does not, in common cases, arise from that which we take in the fortune and happiness of society. We are no more concerned for the destruction or loss of a single man, because this man is a member or part of society, and because we should be concerned for the destruction of society, than we are concerned for the loss of a single guinea, because this guinea is a part of a thousand guineas, and because we should be concerned for the loss of the whole sum. In neither case does our regard for the individuals arise from our regard for the multitude: but in both cases our regard for the multitude is compounded and made up of the particular regards which we feel for the different individuals of which it is composed. As when a small sum is unjustly taken from us, we do not so much prosecute the injury from a regard to the preservation of our whole fortune, as from a regard to that particular sum which we have lost; so when a single man is injured, or destroyed, we demand the punishment of the wrong that has been done to him, not so much from a concern for the general interest of society, as from a concern for that very individual who has been injured. It is to be observed, however, that this concern does not necessarily include in it any degree of those exquisite sentiments which are commonly called love, esteem, and affection, and by which we distinguish our particular friends and acquaintance. The concern which is requisite for this, is no more than the general fellow-feeling which we have with every man merely because he is our fellow-creature. We enter into the resentment even of an odious person, when he is injured by those to whom he has given no provocation. Our disapprobation of his ordinary character and conduct does not in this case altogether prevent our fellow-feeling with his natural indignation; though with those who are not either extremely candid, or who have not been accustomed to correct and regulate their natural sentiments by general rules, it is very apt to damp it.

Upon some occasions, indeed, we both punish and approve of punishment, merely from a view to the general interest of society, which, we imagine, cannot otherwise be secured. Of this kind are all the punishments inflicted for breaches of what is called either civil police, or military discipline. Such crimes do not immediately or directly hurt any particular person; but their remote consequences, it is supposed, do produce, or might produce, either a considerable inconveniency, or a great disorder in the society. A centinel, for example, who falls asleep upon his watch, suffers death by the laws of war, because such carelessness might endanger the whole army. This severity may, upon many occasions, appear necessary, and, for that reason, just and proper. When the preservation of an individual is inconsistent with the safety of a multitude, nothing can be more just than that the many should be preferred to the one. Yet this punishment, how necessary soever, always appears to be excessively severe. The natural atrocity of the crime seems to be so little, and the punishment so great, that it is with great difficulty that our heart can reconcile itself to it. Though such carelessness appears very blamable, yet the thought of this crime does not naturally excite any such resentment, as would prompt us to take such dreadful revenge. A man of humanity must recollect himself, must make an effort, and exert his whole firmness and resolution, before he can bring himself either to inflict it, or to go along with it when it is inflicted by others. It is not, however, in this manner, that he looks upon the just punishment of an ungrateful murderer or parricide. His heart, in this case, applauds with ardour, and even with transport, the just retaliation which seems due to such detestable crimes, and which, if, by any accident, they should happen to escape, he would be highly enraged and disappointed. The very different sentiments with which the spectator views those different punishments, is a proof that his approbation of the one is far from being founded upon the same principles with that of the other. He looks upon the centinel as an unfortunate victim, who, indeed, must, and ought to be, devoted to the safety of numbers, but whom still, in his heart, he would be glad to save; and he is only sorry, that the interest of the many should oppose it. But if the murderer should escape from punishment, it would excite his highest indignation, and he would call upon God to avenge, in another world, that crime which the injustice of mankind had neglected to chastise upon earth.

For it well deserves to be taken notice of, that we are so far from imagining that injustice ought to be punished in this life, merely on account of the order of society, which cannot otherwise be maintained,

that Nature teaches us to hope, and religion, we suppose, authorises us to expect, that it will be punished, even in a life to come. Our sense of its ill desert pursues it, if I may say so, even beyond the grave, though the example of its punishment there cannot serve to deter the rest of mankind, who see it not, who know it not, from being guilty of the like practices here. The justice of God, however, we think, still requires, that he should hereafter avenge the injuries of the widow and the fatherless, who are here so often insulted with impunity. In every religion, and in every superstition that the world has ever beheld, accordingly, there has been a Tartarus as well as an Elysium; a place provided for the punishment of the wicked, as well as one for the reward of the just.

Section III: Of the Influence of Fortune upon the Sentiments of Mankind, with regard to the Merit or Demerit of Actions

Whatever praise or blame can be due to any action, must belong either, first, to the intention or affection of the heart, from which it proceeds; or, secondly, to the external action or movement of the body, which this affection gives occasion to; or, lastly, to the good or bad consequences, which actually, and in fact, proceed from it. These three different things constitute the whole nature and circumstances of the action, and must be the foundation of whatever quality can belong to it.

That the two last of these three circumstances cannot be the foundation of any praise or blame, is abundantly evident; nor has the contrary ever been asserted by any body. The external action or movement of the body is often the same in the most innocent and in the most blameable actions. He who shoots a bird, and he who shoots a man, both of them perform the same external movement: each of them draws the trigger of a gun. The consequences which actually, and in fact, happen to proceed from any action, are, if possible, still more indifferent either to praise or blame, than even the external movement of the body. As they depend, not upon the agent, but upon fortune, they cannot be the proper foundation for any sentiment, of which his character and conduct are the objects.

The only consequences for which he can be answerable, or by which he can deserve either approbation or disapprobation of any kind, are those which were someway or other intended, or those which, at least, show some agreeable or disagreeable quality in the intention of the heart, from which he acted. To the intention or affection of the heart, therefore, to the propriety or impropriety, to the beneficence or hurtfulness of the design, all praise or blame, all approbation or disapprobation, of any kind, which can justly be bestowed upon any action, must ultimately belong.

When this maxim is thus proposed, in abstract and general terms, there is nobody who does not agree to it. Its self-evident justice is acknowledged by all the world, and there is not a dissenting voice among all mankind. Every body allows, that how different soever the accidental, the unintended and unforeseen consequences of different actions, yet, if the intentions or affections from which they arose were, on the one hand,

equally proper and equally beneficent, or, on the other, equally improper and equally malevolent, the merit or demerit of the actions is still the same, and the agent is equally the suitable object either of gratitude or of resentment.

But how well soever we may seem to be persuaded of the truth of this equitable maxim, when we consider it after this manner, in abstract, yet when we come to particular cases, the actual consequences which happen to proceed from any action, have a very great effect upon our sentiments concerning its merit or demerit, and almost always either enhance or diminish our sense of both. Scarce, in any one instance, perhaps, will our sentiments be found, after examination, to be entirely regulated by this rule, which we all acknowledge ought entirely to regulate them.

This irregularity of sentiment, which every body feels, which scarce any body is sufficiently aware of, and which nobody is willing to acknowledge, I proceed now to explain; and I shall consider, first, the cause which gives occasion to it, or the mechanism by which nature produces it; secondly, the extent of its influence; and, last of all, the end which it answers, or the purpose which the Author of nature seems to have intended by it.

Chap. I Of the Causes of this Influence of Fortune

The causes of pain and pleasure, whatever they are, or however they operate, seem to be the objects, which, in all animals, immediately excite those two passions of gratitude and resentment. They are excited by inanimated, as well as by animated objects. We are angry, for a moment, even at the stone that hurts us. A child beats it, a dog barks at it, a choleric man is apt to curse it. The least reflection, indeed, corrects this sentiment, and we soon become sensible, that what has no feeling is a very improper object of revenge. When the mischief, however, is very great, the object which caused it becomes disagreeable to us ever after, and we take pleasure to burn or destroy it. We should treat, in this manner, the instrument which had accidentally been the cause of the death of a friend, and we should often think ourselves guilty of a sort of inhumanity, if we neglected to vent this absurd sort of vengeance upon it.

We conceive, in the same manner, a sort of gratitude for those inanimated objects, which have been the causes of great, or frequent pleasure to us. The sailor, who, as soon as he got ashore, should mend his fire with the plank upon which he had just escaped from a shipwreck, would seem to be guilty of an unnatural action. We should expect that he would rather preserve it with care and affection, as a monument that was, in some measure, dear to him. A man grows fond of a snuff-box, of a pen-knife, of a staff which he has long made use of, and conceives something like a real love and affection for them. If he breaks or loses them, he is vexed out of all proportion to the value of the damage. The house which we have long lived in, the tree, whose verdure and shade we have long enjoyed, are both looked upon with a sort of respect that seems due to such benefactors. The decay of the one, or the ruin of the other, affects us with a kind of melancholy, though we should sustain no loss by it. The Dryads and the Lares of the ancients, a sort of genii of trees and houses, were probably first suggested by this sort of affection, which the authors of those superstitions felt for such objects, and which seemed unreasonable, if there was nothing animated about them.

But, before any thing can be the proper object of gratitude or resentment, it must not only be the cause of pleasure or pain, it must likewise be capable of feeling them. Without this other quality, those passions cannot vent themselves with any sort of satisfaction upon it. As

they are excited by the causes of pleasure and pain, so their gratification consists in retaliating those sensations upon what gave occasion to them; which it is to no purpose to attempt upon what has no sensibility. Animals, therefore, are less improper objects of gratitude and resentment than inanimated objects. The dog that bites, the ox that gores, are both of them punished. If they have been the causes of the death of any person, neither the public, nor the relations of the slain, can be satisfied, unless they are put to death in their turn: nor is this merely for the security of the living, but, in some measure, to revenge the injury of the dead. Those animals, on the contrary, that have been remarkably serviceable to their masters, become the objects of a very lively gratitude. We are shocked at the brutality of that officer, mentioned in the Turkish Spy, who stabbed the horse that had carried him across an arm of the sea, lest that animal should afterwards distinguish some other person by a similar adventure.

But, though animals are not only the causes of pleasure and pain, but are also capable of feeling those sensations, they are still far from being complete and perfect objects, either of gratitude or resentment; and those passions still feel, that there is something wanting to their entire gratification. What gratitude chiefly desires, is not only to make the benefactor feel pleasure in his turn, but to make him conscious that he meets with this reward on account of his past conduct, to make him pleased with that conduct, and to satisfy him that the person upon whom he bestowed his good offices was not unworthy of them. What most of all charms us in our benefactor, is the concord between his sentiments and our own, with regard to what interests us so nearly as the worth of our own character, and the esteem that is due to us. We are delighted to find a person who values us as we value ourselves, and distinguishes us from the rest of mankind, with an attention not unlike that with which we distinguish ourselves. To maintain in him these agreeable and flattering sentiments, is one of the chief ends proposed by the returns we are disposed to make to him. A generous mind often disdains the interested thought of extorting new favours from its benefactor, by what may be called the importunities of its gratitude. But to preserve and to increase his esteem, is an interest which the greatest mind does not think unworthy of its attention. And this is the foundation of what I formerly observed, that when we cannot enter into the motives of our benefactor, when his conduct and character appear unworthy of our approbation, let his services have been ever so great, our gratitude is always sensibly diminished. We are less flattered by the distinction. and to preserve the

esteem of so weak, or so worthless a patron, seems to be an object which does not deserve to be pursued for its own sake.

The object, on the contrary, which resentment is chiefly intent upon, is not so much to make our enemy feel pain in his turn, as to make him conscious that he feels it upon account of his past conduct, to make him repent of that conduct, and to make him sensible, that the person whom he injured did not deserve to be treated in that manner. What chiefly enrages us against the man who injures or insults us, is the little account which he seems to make of us, the unreasonable preference which he gives to himself above us, and that absurd self-love, by which he seems to imagine, that other people may be sacrificed at any time, to his conveniency or his humour. The glaring impropriety of this conduct, the gross insolence and injustice which it seems to involve in it, often shock and exasperate us more than all the mischief which we have suffered. To bring him back to a more just sense of what is due to other people, to make him sensible of what he owes us, and of the wrong that he has done to us, is frequently the principal end proposed in our revenge, which is always imperfect when it cannot accomplish this. When our enemy appears to have done us no injury, when we are sensible that he acted quite properly, that, in his situation, we should have done the same thing, and that we deserved from him all the mischief we met with; in that case, if we have the least spark either of candour or justice, we can entertain no sort of resentment.

Before any thing, therefore, can be the complete and proper object, either of gratitude or resentment, it must possess three different qualifications. First, it must be the cause of pleasure in the one case, and of pain in the other. Secondly, it must be capable of feeling those sensations. And, thirdly, it must not only have produced those sensations, but it must in have produced them from design, and from a design that is approved of the one case, and disapproved of in the other. It is by the first qualification, that any object is capable of exciting those passions: it is by the second, that it is in any respect capable of gratifying them: the third qualification is not only necessary for their complete satisfaction, but as it gives a pleasure or pain that is both exquisite and peculiar, it is likewise an additional exciting cause of those passions.

As what gives pleasure or pain, either in one way or another, is the sole exciting cause of gratitude and resentment; though the intentions of any person should be ever so proper and beneficent on the one hand, or ever so improper and malevolent on the other; yet, if he has failed in producing either the good or the evil which he intended, as one of the

exciting causes is wanting in both cases, less gratitude seems due to him in the one, and less resentment in the other. And, on the contrary, though in the intentions of any person, there was either no laudable degree of benevolence on the one hand, or no blameable degree of malice on the other; yet, if his actions should produce either great good or great evil, as one of the exciting causes takes place upon both these occasions, some gratitude is apt to arise towards him in the one, and some resentment in the other. A shadow of merit seems to fall upon him in the first, a shadow of demerit in the second. And, as the consequences of actions are altogether under the empire of Fortune, hence arises her influence upon the sentiments of mankind with regard to merit and demerit.

Chap. II Of the extent of this Influence of Fortune

The effect of this influence of fortune is, first, to diminish our sense of the merit or demerit of those actions which arose from the most laudable or blamable intentions, when they fail of producing their proposed effects: and, secondly, to increase our sense of the merit or demerit of actions, beyond what is due to the motives or affections from which they proceed, when they accidentally give occasion either to extraordinary pleasure or pain.

1. First, I say, though the intentions of any person should be ever so proper and beneficent, on the one hand, or ever so improper and malevolent, on the other, yet, if they fail in producing their effects, his merit seems imperfect in the one case, and his demerit incomplete in the other. Nor is this irregularity of sentiment felt only by those who are immediately affected by the consequences of any action. It is felt, in some measure, even by the impartial spectator. The man who solicits an office for another, without obtaining it, is regarded as his friend, and seems to deserve his love and affection. But the man who not only solicits, but procures it, is more peculiarly considered as his patron and benefactor, and is entitled to his respect and gratitude. The person obliged, we are apt to think, may, with some justice, imagine himself on a level with the first: but we cannot enter into his sentiments, if he does not feel himself inferior to the second. It is common indeed to say, that we are equally obliged to the man who has endeavoured to serve us, as to him who actually did so. It is the speech which we constantly make upon every unsuccessful attempt of this kind; but which, like all other fine speeches, must be understood with a grain of allowance. The sentiments which a man of generosity entertains for the friend who fails, may often indeed be nearly the same with those which he conceives for him who succeeds: and the more generous he is, the more nearly will those sentiments approach to an exact level. With the truly generous, to be beloved, to be esteemed by those whom they themselves think worthy of esteem, gives more pleasure, and thereby excites more gratitude, than all the advantages which they can ever expect from those sentiments. When they lose those advantages therefore, they seem to lose but a trifle, which is scarce worth regarding. They still however lose something. Their pleasure therefore, and consequently their gratitude, is not perfectly

complete: and accordingly if, between the friend who fails and the friend who succeeds, all other circumstances are equal, there will, even in the noblest and the best mind, be some little difference of affection in favour of him who succeeds. Nay, so unjust are mankind in this respect, that though the intended benefit should be procured, yet if it is not procured by the means of a particular benefactor, they are apt to think that less gratitude is due to the man, who with the best intentions in the world could do no more than help it a little forward. As their gratitude is in this case divided among the different persons who contributed to their pleasure, a smaller share of it seems due to any one. Such a person, we hear men commonly say, intended no doubt to serve us; and we really believe exerted himself to the utmost of his abilities for that purpose. We are not, however, obliged to him for this benefit; since, had it not been for the concurrence of others, all that he could have done would never have brought it about. This consideration, they imagine, should, even in the eyes of the impartial spectator, diminish the debt which they owe to him. The person himself who has unsuccessfully endeavoured to confer a benefit, has by no means the same dependency upon the gratitude of the man whom he meant to oblige, nor the same sense of his own merit towards him, which he would have had in the case of success.

Even the merit of talents and abilities which some accident has hindered from producing their effects, seems in some measure imperfect, even to those who are fully convinced of their capacity to produce them. The general who has been hindered by the envy of ministers from gaining some great advantage over the enemies of his country, regrets the loss of the opportunity for ever after. Nor is it only upon account of the public that he regrets it. He laments that he was hindered from performing an action which would have added a new lustre to his character in his own eyes, as well as in those of every other person. It satisfies neither himself nor others to reflect that the plan or design was all that depended on him, that no greater capacity was required to execute it than what was necessary to concert it: that he was allowed to be every way capable of executing it, and that had he been permitted to go on, success was infallible. He still did not execute it; and though he might deserve all the approbation which is due to a magnanimous and great design, he still wanted the actual merit of having performed a great action. To take the management of any affair of public concern from the man who has almost brought it to a conclusion, is regarded as the most invidious injustice. As he had done so much, he should, we think, have been allowed to acquire the complete merit of putting an end to it. It was

objected to Pompey, that he came in upon the victories of Lucullus, and gathered those laurels which were due to the fortune and valour of another. The glory of Lucullus, it seems, was less complete even in the opinion of his own friends, when he was not permitted to finish that conquest which his conduct and courage had put in the power of almost any man to finish. It mortifies an architect when his plans are either not executed at all, or when they are so far altered as to spoil the effect of the building. The plan, however, is all that depends upon the architect. The whole of his genius is, to good judges, as completely discovered in that as in the actual execution. But a plan does not, even to the most intelligent, give the same pleasure as a noble and magnificent building. They may discover as much both of taste and genius in the one as in the other. But their effects are still vastly different, and the amusement derived from the first, never approaches to the wonder and admiration which are sometimes excited by the second. We may believe of many men, that their talents are superior to those of Caesar and Alexander; and that in the same situations they would perform still greater actions. In the mean time, however, we do not behold them with that astonishment and admiration with which those two heroes have been regarded in all ages and nations. The calm judgments of the mind may approve of them more, but they want the splendour of great actions to dazzle and transport it. The superiority of virtues and talents has not, even upon those who acknowledge that superiority, the same effect with the superiority of achievements.

As the merit of an unsuccessful attempt to do good seems thus, in the eyes of ungrateful mankind, to be diminished by the miscarriage, so does likewise the demerit of an unsuccessful attempt to do evil. The design to commit a crime, how clearly soever it may be proved, is scarce ever punished with the same severity as the actual commission of it. The case of treason is perhaps the only exception. That crime immediately affecting the being of the government itself, the government is naturally more jealous of it than of any other. In the punishment of treason, the sovereign resents the injuries which are immediately done to himself: in the punishment of other crimes, he resents those which are done to other men. It is his own resentment which he indulges in the one case: it is that of his subjects which by sympathy he enters into in the other. In the first case, therefore, as he judges in his own cause, he is very apt to be more violent and sanguinary in his punishments than the impartial spectator can approve of. His resentment too rises here upon smaller occasions, and does not always, as in other cases, wait for the perpetration of the

crime, or even for the attempt to commit it. A treasonable concert, though nothing has been done, or even attempted in consequence of it, nay, a treasonable conversation, is in many countries punished in the same manner as the actual commission of treason. With regard to all other crimes, the mere design, upon which no attempt has followed, is seldom punished at all, and is never punished severely. A criminal design, and a criminal action, it may be said indeed, do not necessarily suppose the same degree of depravity, and ought not therefore to be subjected to the same punishment. We are capable, it may be said, of resolving, and even of taking measures to execute, many things which, when it comes to the point, we feel ourselves altogether incapable of executing. But this reason can have no place when the design has been carried the length of the last attempt. The man, however, who fires a pistol at his enemy but misses him, is punished with death by the laws of scarce any country. By the old law of Scotland, though he should wound him, yet, unless death ensues within a certain time, the assassin is not liable to the last punishment. The resentment of mankind, however, runs so high against this crime, their terror for the man who shows himself capable of committing it, is so great, that the mere attempt to commit it ought in all countries to be capital. The attempt to commit smaller crimes is almost always punished very lightly, and sometimes is not punished at all. The thief, whose hand has been caught in his neighbour’s pocket before he had taken any thing out of it, is punished with ignominy only. If he had got time to take away an handkerchief, he would have been put to death. The house-breaker, who has been found setting a ladder to his neighbour’s window, but had not got into it, is not exposed to the capital punishment. The attempt to ravish is not punished as a rape. The attempt to seduce a married woman is not punished at all, though seduction is punished severely. Our resentment against the person who only attempted to do a mischief, is seldom so strong as to bear us out in inflicting the same punishment upon him, which we should have thought due if he had actually done it. In the one case, the joy of our deliverance alleviates our sense of the atrocity of his conduct; in the other, the grief of our misfortune increases it. His real demerit, however, is undoubtedly the same in both cases, since his intentions were equally criminal; and there is in this respect, therefore, an irregularity in the sentiments of all men, and a consequent relaxation of discipline in the laws of, I believe, all nations, of the most civilized, as well as of the most barbarous. The humanity of a civilized people disposes them either to dispense with, or to mitigate punishments wherever their natural indignation is not goaded

on by the consequences of the crime. Barbarians, on the other hand, when no actual consequence has happened from any action, are not apt to be very delicate or inquisitive about the motives.

The person himself who either from passion, or from the influence of bad company, has resolved, and perhaps taken measures to perpetrate some crime, but who has fortunately been prevented by an accident which put it out of his power, is sure, if he has any remains of conscience, to regard this event all his life after as a great and signal deliverance. He can never think of it without returning thanks to Heaven for having been thus graciously pleased to save him from the guilt in which he was just ready to plunge himself, and to hinder him from rendering all the rest of his life a scene of horror, remorse, and repentance. But though his hands are innocent, he is conscious that his heart is equally guilty as if he had actually executed what he was so fully resolved upon. It gives great ease to his conscience, however, to consider that the crime was not executed, though he knows that the failure arose from no virtue in him. He still considers himself as less deserving of punishment and resentment; and this good fortune either diminishes, or takes away altogether, all sense of guilt. To remember how much he was resolved upon it, has no other effect than to make him regard his escape as the greater and more miraculous: for he still fancies that he has escaped, and he looks back upon the danger to which his peace of mind was exposed, with that terror, with which one who is in safety may sometimes remember the hazard he was in of falling over a precipice, and shudder with horror at the thought.

2. The second effect of this influence of fortune, is to increase our sense of the merit or demerit of actions beyond what is due to the motives or affection from which they proceed, when they happen to give occasion to extraordinary pleasure or pain. The agreeable or disagreeable effects of the action often throw a shadow of merit or demerit upon the agent, though in his intention there was nothing that deserved either praise or blame, or at least that deserved them in the degree in which we are apt to bestow them. Thus, even the messenger of bad news is disagreeable to us, and, on the contrary, we feel a sort of gratitude for the man who brings us good tidings. For a moment we look upon them both as the authors, the one of our good, the other of our bad fortune, and regard them in some measure as if they had really brought about the events which they only give an account of. The first author of our joy is naturally the object of a transitory gratitude: we embrace him with warmth and affection, and should be glad, during the instant of our

prosperity, to reward him as for some signal service. By the custom of all courts, the officer, who brings the news of a victory, is entitled to considerable preferments, and the general always chuses one of his principal favourites to go upon so agreeable an errand. The first author of our sorrow is, on the contrary, just as naturally the object of a transitory resentment. We can scarce avoid looking upon him with chagrin and uneasiness; and the rude and brutal are apt to vent upon him that spleen which his intelligence gives occasion to. Tigranes, king of Armenia, struck off the head of the man who brought him the first account of the approach of a formidable enemy. To punish in this manner the author of bad tidings, seems barbarous and inhuman: yet, to reward the messenger of good news, is not disagreeable to us; we think it suitable to the bounty of kings. But why do we make this difference, since, if there is no fault in the one, neither is there any merit in the other? It is because any sort of reason seems sufficient to authorize the exertion of the social and benevolent affections. but it requires the most solid and substantial to make us enter into that of the unsocial and malevolent.

But though in general we are averse to enter into the unsocial and malevolent affections, though we lay it down for a rule that we ought never to approve of their gratification, unless so far as the malicious and unjust intention of the person, against whom they are directed, renders him their proper object; yet, upon some occasions, we relax of this severity. When the negligence of one man has occasioned some unintended damage to another, we generally enter so far into the resentment of the sufferer, as to approve of his inflicting a punishment upon the offender much beyond what the offence would have appeared to deserve, had no such unlucky consequence followed from it.

There is a degree of negligence, which would appear to deserve some chastisement though it should occasion no damage to any body. Thus, if a person should throw a large stone over a wall into a public street without giving warning to those who might be passing by, and without regarding where it was likely to fall, he would undoubtedly deserve some chastisement. A very accurate police would punish so absurd an action, even though it had done no mischief. The person who has been guilty of it, shows an insolent contempt of the happiness and safety of others. There is real injustice in his conduct. He wantonly exposes his neighbour to what no man in his senses would chuse to expose himself, and evidently wants that sense of what is due to his fellow-creatures which is the basis of justice and of society. Gross negligence therefore is, in the law, said to be almost equal to malicious design. When any unlucky

consequences happen from such carelessness, the person who has been guilty of it is often punished as if he had really intended those consequences; and his conduct, which was only thoughtless and insolent, and what deserved some chastisement, is considered as atrocious, and as liable to the severest punishment. Thus if, by the imprudent action above-mentioned, he should accidentally kill a man, he is, by the laws of many countries, particularly by the old law of Scotland, liable to the last punishment. And though this is no doubt excessively severe, it is not altogether inconsistent with our natural sentiments. Our just indignation against the folly and inhumanity of his conduct is exasperated by our sympathy with the unfortunate sufferer. Nothing, however, would appear more shocking to our natural sense of equity, than to bring a man to the scaffold merely for having thrown a stone carelessly into the street without hurting any body. The folly and inhumanity of his conduct, however, would in this case be the same; but still our sentiments would be very different. The consideration of this difference may satisfy us how much the indignation, even of the spectator, is apt to be animated by the actual consequences of the action. In cases of this kind there will, if I am not mistaken, be found a great degree of severity in the laws of almost all nations; as I have already observed that in those of an opposite kind there was a very general relaxation of discipline.

There is another degree of negligence which does not involve in it any sort of injustice. The person who is guilty of it treats his neighbours as he treats himself, means no harm to any body, and is far from entertaining any insolent contempt for the safety and happiness of others. He is not, however, so careful and circumspect in his conduct as he ought to be, and deserves upon this account some degree of blame and censure, but no sort of punishment. Yet if by a negligence of this kind he should occasion some damage to another person, he is by the laws of, I believe, all countries, obliged to compensate it. And though this is no doubt a real punishment, and what no mortal would have thought of inflicting upon him, had it not been for the unlucky accident which his conduct gave occasion to; yet this decision of the law is approved of by the natural sentiments of all mankind. Nothing, we think, can be more just than that one man should not suffer by the carelessness of another; and that the damage occasioned by blamable negligence, should be made up by the person who was guilty of it.

There is another species of negligence, which consists merely in a want of the most anxious timidity and circumspection, with regard to all the possible consequences of our actions. The want of this painful

attention, when no bad consequences follow from it, is so far from being regarded as blamable, that the contrary quality is rather considered as such. That timid circumspection which is afraid of every thing, is never regarded as a virtue, but as a quality which more than any other incapacitates for action and business. Yet when, from a want of this excessive care, a person happens to occasion some damage to another, he is often by the law obliged to compensate it. Thus, by the Aquilian law, the man, who not being able to manage a horse that had accidentally taken fright, should happen to ride down his neighbour' s slave, is obliged to compensate the damage. When an accident of this kind happens, we are apt to think that he ought not to have rode such a horse, and to regard his attempting it as an unpardonable levity; though without this accident we should not only have made no such reflection, but should have regarded his refusing it as the effect of timid weakness, and of an anxiety about merely possible events, which it is to no purpose to be aware of. The person himself, who by an accident even of this kind has involuntarily hurt another, seems to have some sense of his own ill desert, with regard to him. He naturally runs up to the sufferer to express his concern for what has happened, and to make every acknowledgment in his power. If he has any sensibility, he necessarily desires to compensate the damage, and to do every thing he can to appease that animal resentment, which he is sensible will be apt to arise in the breast of the sufferer. To make no apology, to offer no atonement, is regarded as the highest brutality. Yet why should he make an apology more than any other person? Why should he, since he was equally innocent with any other bystander, be thus singled out from among all mankind, to make up for the bad fortune of another? This task would surely never be imposed upon him, did not even the impartial spectator feel some indulgence for what may be regarded as the unjust resentment of that other.

Chap. III Of the final cause of this Irregularity of Sentiments

Such is the effect of the good or bad consequences of actions upon the sentiments both of the person who performs them, and of others; and thus, Fortune, which governs the world, has some influence where we should be least willing to allow her any, and directs in some measure the sentiments of mankind, with regard to the character and conduct both of themselves and others. That the world judges by the event, and not by the design, has been in all ages the complaint, and is the great discouragement of virtue. Every body agrees to the general maxim, that as the event does not depend on the agent, it ought to have no influence upon our sentiments, with regard to the merit or propriety of his conduct. But when we come to particulars, we find that our sentiments are scarce in any one instance exactly conformable to what this equitable maxim would direct. The happy or unprosperous event of any action, is not only apt to give us a good or bad opinion of the prudence with which it was conducted, but almost always too animates our gratitude or resentment, our sense of the merit or demerit of the design.

Nature, however, when she implanted the seeds of this irregularity in the human breast, seems, as upon all other occasions, to have intended the happiness and perfection of the species. If the hurtfulness of the design, if the malevolence of the affection, were alone the causes which excited our resentment, we should feel all the furies of that passion against any person in whose breast we suspected or believed such designs or affections were harboured, though they had never broke out into any action. Sentiments, thoughts, intentions, would become the objects of punishment; and if the indignation of mankind run as high against them as against actions; if the baseness of the thought which had given birth to no action, seemed in the eyes of the world as much to call aloud for vengeance as the baseness of the action, every court of judicature would become a real inquisition. There would be no safety for the most innocent and circumspect conduct. Bad wishes, bad views, bad designs, might still be suspected; and while these excited the same indignation with bad conduct, while bad intentions were as much resented as bad actions, they would equally expose the person to punishment and resentment. Actions, therefore, which either produce actual evil, or attempt to produce it, and thereby put us in the immediate

fear of it, are by the Author of nature rendered the only proper and approved objects of human punishment and resentment. Sentiments, designs, affections, though it is from these that according to cool reason human actions derive their whole merit or demerit, are placed by the great Judge of hearts beyond the limits of every human jurisdiction, and are reserved for the cognizance of his own unerring tribunal. That necessary rule of justice, therefore, that men in this life are liable to punishment for their actions only, not for their designs and intentions, is founded upon this salutary and useful irregularity in human sentiments concerning merit or demerit, which at first sight appears so absurd and unaccountable. But every part of nature, when attentively surveyed, equally demonstrates the providential care of its Author, and we may admire the wisdom and goodness of God even in the weakness and folly of man.

Nor is that irregularity of sentiments altogether without its utility, by which the merit of an unsuccessful attempt to serve, and much more that of mere good inclinations and kind wishes, appears to be imperfect. Man was made for action, and to promote by the exertion of his faculties such changes in the external circumstances both of himself and others, as may seem most favourable to the happiness of all. He must not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, nor fancy himself the friend of mankind, because in his heart he wishes well to the prosperity of the world. That he may call forth the whole vigour of his soul, and strain every nerve, in order to produce those ends which it is the purpose of his being to advance, Nature has taught him, that neither himself nor mankind can be fully satisfied with his conduct, nor bestow upon it the full measure of applause, unless he has actually produced them. He is made to know, that the praise of good intentions, without the merit of good offices, will be but of little avail to excite either the loudest acclamations of the world, or even the highest degree of self-applause. The man who has performed no single action of importance, but whose whole conversation and deportment express the justest, the noblest, and most generous sentiments, can be entitled to demand no very high reward, even though his inutility should be owing to nothing but the want of an opportunity to serve. We can still refuse it him without blame. We can still ask him, What have you done? What actual service can you produce, to entitle you to so great a recompense? We esteem you, and love you; but we owe you nothing. To reward indeed that latent virtue which has been useless only for want of an opportunity to serve, to bestow upon it those honours and preferments, which, though in some measure it may be said to

deserve them, it could not with propriety have insisted upon, is the effect of the most divine benevolence. To punish, on the contrary, for the affections of the heart only, where no crime has been committed, is the most insolent and barbarous tyranny. The benevolent affections seem to deserve most praise, when they do not wait till it becomes almost a crime for them not to exert themselves. The malevolent, on the contrary, can scarce be too tardy, too slow, or deliberate.

It is even of considerable importance, that the evil which is done without design should be regarded as a misfortune to the doer as well as to the sufferer. Man is thereby taught to reverence the happiness of his brethren, to tremble lest he should, even unknowingly, do any thing that can hurt them, and to dread that animal resentment which, he feels, is ready to burst out against him, if he should, without design, be the unhappy instrument of their calamity. As, in the ancient heathen religion, that holy ground which had been consecrated to some god, was not to be trod upon but upon solemn and necessary occasions, and the man who had even ignorantly violated it, became piacular from that moment, and, until proper atonement should be made, incurred the vengeance of that powerful and invisible being to whom it had been set apart; so, by the wisdom of Nature, the happiness of every innocent man is, in the same manner, rendered holy, consecrated, and hedged round against the approach of every other man; not to be wantonly trod upon, not even to be, in any respect, ignorantly and involuntarily violated, without requiring some expiation, some atonement in proportion to the greatness of such undesigned violation. A man of humanity, who accidentally, and without the smallest degree of blamable negligence, has been the cause of the death of another man, feels himself piacular, though not guilty. During his whole life he considers this accident as one of the greatest misfortunes that could have befallen him. If the family of the slain is poor, and he himself in tolerable circumstances, he immediately takes them under his protection, and, without any other merit, thinks them entitled to every degree of favour and kindness. If they are in better circumstances, he endeavours by every submission, by every expression of sorrow, by rendering them every good office which he can devise or they accept of, to atone for what has happened, and to propitiate, as much as possible, their, perhaps natural, though no doubt most unjust resentment, for the great, though involuntary, offence which he has given them.

The distress which an innocent person feels, who, by some accident, has been led to do something which, if it had been done with knowledge

and design, would have justly exposed him to the deepest reproach, has given occasion to some of the finest and most interesting scenes both of the ancient and of the modern drama. It is this fallacious sense of guilt, if I may call it so, which constitutes the whole distress of Oedipus and Jocasta upon the Greek, of Monimia and Isabella upon the English, theatre. They are all of them in the highest degree piacular, though not one of them is in the smallest degree guilty.

Notwithstanding, however, all these seeming irregularities of sentiment, if man should unfortunately either give occasion to those evils which he did not intend, or fail in producing that good which he intended, Nature has not left his innocence altogether without consolation, nor his virtue altogether without reward. He then calls to his assistance that just and equitable maxim, That those events which did not depend upon our conduct, ought not to diminish the esteem that is due to us. He summons up his whole magnanimity and firmness of soul, and strives to regard himself, not in the light in which he at present appears, but in that in which he ought to appear, in which he would have appeared had his generous designs been crowned with success, and in which he would still appear, notwithstanding their miscarriage, if the sentiments of mankind were either altogether candid and equitable, or even perfectly consistent with themselves. The more candid and humane part of mankind entirely go along with the effort which he thus makes to support himself in his own opinion. They exert their whole generosity and greatness of mind, to correct in themselves this irregularity of human nature, and endeavour to regard his unfortunate magnanimity in the same light in which, had it been successful, they would, without any such generous exertion, have naturally been disposed to consider it.

Notes

1. To ascribe in this manner our natural sense of the ill desert of human actions to a sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer, may seem, to the greater part of people, to be a degradation of that sentiment. Resentment is commonly regarded as so odious a passion, that they will be apt to think it impossible that so laudable a principle, as the sense of the ill desert of vice, should in any respect be founded upon it. They will be more willing, perhaps, to admit that our sense of the merit of good actions is founded upon a sympathy with the gratitude of the persons who receive the benefit of them; because gratitude, as well as all the other benevolent passions, is regarded as an amiable principle, which can take nothing from the worth of whatever is founded upon it. Gratitude and resentment, however, are in every respect, it is evident, counterparts to one another; and if our sense of merit arises from a sympathy with the one, our sense of demerit can scarce miss to proceed from a fellow-feeling with the other.

Let it be considered too that resentment, though, in the degrees in which we too often see it, the most odious, perhaps, of all the passions, is not disapproved of when properly humbled and entirely brought down to the level of the sympathetic indignation of the spectator. When we, who are the bystanders, feel that our own animosity entirely corresponds with that of the sufferer, when the resentment of this last does not in any respect go beyond our own, when no word, no gesture, escapes him that denotes an emotion more violent than what we can keep time to, and when he never aims at inflicting any punishment beyond what we should rejoice to see inflicted, or what we ourselves would upon this account even desire to be the instruments of inflicting, it is impossible that we should not entirely approve of his sentiments. Our own emotion in this case must, in our eyes, undoubtedly justify his. And as experience teaches us how much the greater part of mankind are incapable of this moderation, and how great an effort must be made in order to bring down the rude and undisciplined impulse of resentment to this suitable temper, we cannot avoid conceiving a considerable degree of esteem and admiration for one who appears capable of exerting so much self-command over one of the most ungovernable passions of his nature. When indeed the animosity of the sufferer exceeds, as it almost always does, what we can go along with, as we cannot enter into it, we

necessarily disapprove of it. We even disapprove of it more than we should of an equal excess of almost any other passion derived from the imagination. And this too violent resentment, instead of carrying us along with it, becomes itself the object of our resentment and indignation. We enter into the opposite resentment of the person who is the object of this unjust emotion, and who is in danger of suffering from it. Revenge, therefore, the excess of resentment, appears to be the most detestable of all the passions, and is the object of the horror and indignation of every body. And as in the way in which this passion commonly discovers itself among mankind, it is excessive a hundred times for once that it is moderate, we are very apt to consider it as altogether odious and detestable, because in its most ordinary appearances it is so. Nature, however, even in the present depraved state of mankind, does not seem to have dealt so unkindly with us, as to have endowed us with any principle which is wholly and in every respect evil, or which, in no degree and in no direction, can be the proper object of praise and approbation. Upon some occasions we are sensible that this passion, which is generally too strong, may likewise be too weak. We sometimes complain that a particular person shows too little spirit, and has too little sense of the injuries that have been done to him; and we are as ready to despise him for the defect, as to hate him for the excess of this passion.

The inspired writers would not surely have talked so frequently or so strongly of the wrath and anger of God, if they had regarded every degree of those passions as vicious and evil, even in so weak and imperfect a creature as man.

Let it be considered too, that the present inquiry is not concerning a matter of right, if I may say so, but concerning a matter of fact. We are not at present examining upon what principles a perfect being would approve of the punishment of bad actions; but upon what principles so weak and imperfect a creature as man actually and in fact approves of it. The principles which I have just now mentioned, it is evident, have a very great effect upon his sentiments; and it seems wisely ordered that it should be so. The very existence of society requires that unmerited and unprovoked malice should be restrained by proper punishments; and consequently, that to inflict those punishments should be regarded as a proper and laudable action. Though man, therefore, be naturally endowed with a desire of the welfare and preservation of society, yet the Author of nature has not entrusted it to his reason to find out that a certain application of punishments is the proper means of attaining this

end; but has endowed him with an immediate and instinctive approbation of that very application which is most proper to attain it. The oeconomy of nature is in this respect exactly of a piece with what it is upon many other occasions. With regard to all those ends which, upon account of their peculiar importance, may be regarded, if such an expression is allowable, as the favourite ends of nature, she has constantly in this manner not only endowed mankind with an appetite for the end which she proposes, but likewise with an appetite for the means by which alone this end can be brought about, for their own sakes, and independent of their tendency to produce it. Thus self-preservation, and the propagation of the species, are the great ends which Nature seems to have proposed in the formation of all animals. Mankind are endowed with a desire of those ends, and an aversion to the contrary; with a love of life, and a dread of dissolution; with a desire of the continuance and perpetuity of the species, and with an aversion to the thoughts of its intire extinction. But though we are in this manner endowed with a very strong desire of those ends, it has not been intrusted to the slow and uncertain determinations of our reason, to find out the proper means of bringing them about. Nature has directed us to the greater part of these by original and immediate instincts. Hunger, thirst, the passion which unites the two sexes, the love of pleasure, and the dread of pain, prompt us to apply those means for their own sakes, and without any consideration of their tendency to those beneficent ends which the great Director of nature intended to produce by them. Before I conclude this note, I must take notice of a difference between the approbation of propriety and that of merit or beneficence. Before we approve of the sentiments of any person as proper and suitable to their objects, we must not only be affected in the same manner as he is, but we must perceive this harmony and correspondence of sentiments between him and ourselves. Thus, though upon hearing of a misfortune that had befallen my friend, I should conceive precisely that degree of concern which he gives way to; yet till I am informed of the manner in which he behaves, till I perceive the harmony between his emotions and mine, I cannot be said to approve of the sentiments which influence his behaviour. The approbation of propriety therefore requires, not only that we should entirely sympathize with the person who acts, but that we should perceive this perfect concord between his sentiments and our own. On the contrary, when I hear of a benefit that has been bestowed upon another person, let him who has received it be affected in what manner he pleases, if, by bringing his case home to myself, I feel gratitude arise in my own breast,

I necessarily approve of the conduct of his benefactor, and regard it as meritorious, and the proper object of reward. Whether the person who has received the benefit conceives gratitude or not, cannot, it is evident, in any degree alter our sentiments with regard to the merit of him who has bestowed it. No actual correspondence of sentiments, therefore, is here required. It is sufficient that if he was grateful, they would correspond; and our sense of merit is often founded upon one of those illusive sympathies, by which, when we bring home to ourselves the case of another, we are often affected in a manner in which the person principally concerned is incapable of being affected. There is a similar difference between our disapprobation of demerit, and that of impropriety.

2. Lata culpa prope dolum est.
3. Culpa levis.
4. Culpa levissima.

Part III: Of the Foundation of our Judgments concerning our own Sentiments and Conduct, and of the Sense of Duty Consisting of One Section

Chap. I : Of the Principle of Self-approbation and of Self-disapprobation

In the two foregoing parts of this discourse, I have chiefly considered the origin and foundation of our judgments concerning the sentiments and conduct of others. I come now to consider more particularly the origin of those concerning our own. The principle by which we naturally either approve or disapprove of our own conduct, seems to be altogether the same with that by which we exercise the like judgments concerning the conduct of other people. We either approve or disapprove of the conduct of another man according as we feel that, when we bring his case home to ourselves, we either can or cannot entirely sympathize with the sentiments and motives which directed it. And, in the same manner, we either approve or disapprove of our own conduct, according as we feel that, when we place ourselves in the situation of another man, and view it, as it were, with his eyes and from his station, we either can or cannot entirely enter into and sympathize with the sentiments and motives which influenced it. We can never survey our own sentiments and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them; unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station, and endeavour to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. Whatever judgment we can form concerning them, accordingly, must always bear some secret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be the judgment of others. We endeavour to examine our own conduct as we imagine any other fair and impartial spectator would examine it. If, upon placing ourselves in his situation, we thoroughly enter into all the passions and motives which influenced it, we approve of it, by sympathy with the approbation of this supposed equitable judge. If otherwise, we enter into his disapprobation, and condemn it.

Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All these are objects which he cannot easily see, which naturally he does not look at,

and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror which can present them to his view. Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. It is placed in the countenance and behaviour of those he lives with, which always mark when they enter into, and when they disapprove of his sentiments; and it is here that he first views the propriety and impropriety of his own passions, the beauty and deformity of his own mind. To a man who from his birth was a stranger to society, the objects of his passions, the external bodies which either pleased or hurt him, would occupy his whole attention. The passions themselves, the desires or aversions, the joys or sorrows, which those objects excited, though of all things the most immediately present to him, could scarce ever be the objects of his thoughts. The idea of them could never interest him so much as to call upon his attentive consideration. The consideration of his joy could in him excite no new joy, nor that of his sorrow any new sorrow, though the consideration of the causes of those passions might often excite both. Bring him into society, and all his own passions will immediately become the causes of new passions. He will observe that mankind approve of some of them, and are disgusted by others. He will be elevated in the one case, and cast down in the other; his desires and aversions, his joys and sorrows, will now often become the causes of new desires and new aversions, new joys and new sorrows: they will now, therefore, interest him deeply, and often call upon his most attentive consideration.

Our first ideas of personal beauty and deformity, are drawn from the shape and appearance of others, not from our own. We soon become sensible, however, that others exercise the same criticism upon us. We are pleased when they approve of our figure, and are disobliged when they seem to be disgusted. We become anxious to know how far our appearance deserves either their blame or approbation. We examine our persons limb by limb, and by placing ourselves before a looking-glass, or by some such expedient, endeavour, as much as possible, to view ourselves at the distance and with the eyes of other people. If, after this examination, we are satisfied with our own appearance, we can more easily support the most disadvantageous judgments of others. If, on the contrary, we are sensible that we are the natural objects of distaste, every appearance of their disapprobation mortifies us beyond all measure. A man who is tolerably handsome, will allow you to laugh at any little irregularity in his person; but all such jokes are commonly unsupportable to one who is really deformed. It is evident, however, that we are anxious

about our own beauty and deformity, only upon account of its effect upon others. If we had no connexion with society, we should be altogether indifferent about either.

In the same manner our first moral criticisms are exercised upon the characters and conduct of other people; and we are all very forward to observe how each of these affects us. But we soon learn, that other people are equally frank with regard to our own. We become anxious to know how far we deserve their censure or applause, and whether to them we must necessarily appear those agreeable or disagreeable creatures which they represent us. We begin, upon this account, to examine our own passions and conduct, and to consider how these must appear to them, by considering how they would appear to us if in their situation. We suppose ourselves the spectators of our own behaviour, and endeavour to imagine what effect it would, in this light, produce upon us. This is the only looking-glass by which we can, in some measure, with the eyes of other people, scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct. If in this view it pleases us, we are tolerably satisfied. We can be more indifferent about the applause, and, in some measure, despise the censure of the world. secure that, however misunderstood or misrepresented, we are the natural and proper objects of approbation. On the contrary, if we are doubtful about it, we are often, upon that very account, more anxious to gain their approbation, and, provided we have not already, as they say, shaken hands with infamy, we are altogether distracted at the thoughts of their censure, which then strikes us with double severity.

When I endeavour to examine my own conduct, when I endeavour to pass sentence upon it, and either to approve or condemn it, it is evident that, in all such cases, I divide myself, as it were, into two persons; and that I, the examiner and judge, represent a different character from that other I, the person whose conduct is examined into and judged of. The first is the spectator, whose sentiments with regard to my own conduct I endeavour to enter into, by placing myself in his situation, and by considering how it would appear to me, when seen from that particular point of view. The second is the agent, the person whom I properly call myself, and of whose conduct, under the character of a spectator, I was endeavouring to form some opinion. The first is the judge; the second the person judged of. But that the judge should, in every respect, be the same with the person judged of, is as impossible, as that the cause should, in every respect, be the same with the effect.

To be amiable and to be meritorious; that is, to deserve love and to deserve reward, are the great characters of virtue; and to be odious and

punishable, of vice. But all these characters have an immediate reference to the sentiments of others. Virtue is not said to be amiable, or to be meritorious, because it is the object of its own love, or of its own gratitude; but because it excites those sentiments in other men. The consciousness that it is the object of such favourable regards, is the source of that inward tranquillity and self-satisfaction with which it is naturally attended, as the suspicion of the contrary gives occasion to the torments of vice. What so great happiness as to be beloved, and to know that we deserve to be beloved? What so great misery as to be hated, and to know that we deserve to be hated?

Chap. II : Of the love of Praise, and of that of Praise-worthiness; and of the dread of Blame, and of that of Blame-worthiness

Man naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of love. He naturally dreads, not only to be hated, but to be hateful; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of hatred. He desires, not only praise, but praiseworthiness; or to be that thing which, though it should be praised by nobody, is, however, the natural and proper object of praise. He dreads, not only blame, but blame-worthiness; or to be that thing which, though it should be blamed by nobody, is, however, the natural and proper object of blame.

The love of praise-worthiness is by no means derived altogether from the love of praise. Those two principles, though they resemble one another, though they are connected, and often blended with one another, are yet, in many respects, distinct and independent of one another.

The love and admiration which we naturally conceive for those whose character and conduct we approve of, necessarily dispose us to desire to become ourselves the objects of the like agreeable sentiments, and to be as amiable and as admirable as those whom we love and admire the most. Emulation, the anxious desire that we ourselves should excel, is originally founded in our admiration of the excellence of others. Neither can we be satisfied with being merely admired for what other people are admired. We must at least believe ourselves to be admirable for what they are admirable. But, in order to attain this satisfaction, we must become the impartial spectators of our own character and conduct. We must endeavour to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. When seen in this light, if they appear to us as we wish, we are happy and contented. But it greatly confirms this happiness and contentment when we find that other people, viewing them with those very eyes with which we, in imagination only, were endeavouring to view them, see them precisely in the same light in which we ourselves had seen them. Their approbation necessarily confirms our own self-approbation. Their praise necessarily strengthens our own sense of our own praiseworthiness. In this case, so far is the love of praise-worthiness from being derived altogether from that of praise; that the

love of praise seems, at least in a great measure, to be derived from that of praise-worthiness.

The most sincere praise can give little pleasure when it cannot be considered as some sort of proof of praise-worthiness. It is by no means sufficient that, from ignorance or mistake, esteem and admiration should, in some way or other, be bestowed upon us. If we are conscious that we do not deserve to be so favourably thought of, and that if the truth were known, we should be regarded with very different sentiments, our satisfaction is far from being complete. The man who applauds us either for actions which we did not perform, or for motives which had no sort of influence upon our conduct, applauds not us, but another person. We can derive no sort of satisfaction from his praises. To us they should be more mortifying than any censure, and should perpetually call to our minds, the most humbling of all reflections, the reflection of what we ought to be, but what we are not. A woman who paints, could derive, one should imagine, but little vanity from the compliments that are paid to her complexion. These, we should expect, ought rather to put her in mind of the sentiments which her real complexion would excite, and mortify her the more by the contrast. To be pleased with such groundless applause is a proof of the most superficial levity and weakness. It is what is properly called vanity, and is the foundation of the most ridiculous and contemptible vices, the vices of affectation and common lying; follies which, if experience did not teach us how common they are, one should imagine the least spark of common sense would save us from. The foolish liar, who endeavours to excite the admiration of the company by the relation of adventures which never had any existence; the important coxcomb, who gives himself airs of rank and distinction which he well knows he has no just pretensions to; are both of them, no doubt, pleased with the applause which they fancy they meet with. But their vanity arises from so gross an illusion of the imagination, that it is difficult to conceive how any rational creature should be imposed upon by it. When they place themselves in the situation of those whom they fancy they have deceived, they are struck with the highest admiration for their own persons. They look upon themselves, not in that light in which, they know, they ought to appear to their companions, but in that in which they believe their companions actually look upon them. Their superficial weakness and trivial folly hinder them from ever turning their eyes inwards, or from seeing themselves in that despicable point of view in which their own consciences must tell them that they would appear to every body, if the real truth should ever come to be known.

As ignorant and groundless praise can give no solid joy, no satisfaction that will bear any serious examination, so, on the contrary, it often gives real comfort to reflect, that though no praise should actually be bestowed upon us, our conduct, however, has been such as to deserve it, and has been in every respect suitable to those measures and rules by which praise and approbation are naturally and commonly bestowed. We are pleased, not only with praise, but with having done what is praise-worthy. We are pleased to think that we have rendered ourselves the natural objects of approbation, though no approbation should ever actually be bestowed upon us: and we are mortified to reflect that we have justly merited the blame of those we live with, though that sentiment should never actually be exerted against us. The man who is conscious to himself that he has exactly observed those measures of conduct which experience informs him are generally agreeable, reflects with satisfaction on the propriety of his own behaviour. When he views it in the light in which the impartial spectator would view it, he thoroughly enters into all the motives which influenced it. He looks back upon every part of it with pleasure and approbation, and though mankind should never be acquainted with what he has done, he regards himself, not so much according to the light in which they actually regard him, as according to that in which they would regard him if they were better informed. He anticipates the applause and admiration which in this case would be bestowed upon him, and he applauds and admires himself by sympathy with sentiments, which do not indeed actually take place, but which the ignorance of the public alone hinders from taking place, which he knows are the natural and ordinary effects of such conduct, which his imagination strongly connects with it, and which he has acquired a habit of conceiving as something that naturally and in propriety ought to follow from it. Men have voluntarily thrown away life to acquire after death a renown which they could no longer enjoy. Their imagination, in the mean time, anticipated that fame which was in future times to be bestowed upon them. Those applauses which they were never to hear rung in their ears; the thoughts of that admiration, whose effects they were never to feel, played about their hearts, banished from their breasts the strongest of all natural fears, and transported them to perform actions which seem almost beyond the reach of human nature. But in point of reality there is surely no great difference between that approbation which is not to be bestowed till we can no longer enjoy it, and that which, indeed, is never to be bestowed, but which would be bestowed, if the world was ever made to understand properly the real circumstances of

our behaviour. If the one often produces such violent effects, we cannot wonder that the other should always be highly regarded.

Nature, when she formed man for society, endowed him with an original desire to please, and an original aversion to offend his brethren. She taught him to feel pleasure in their favourable, and pain in their unfavourable regard. She rendered their approbation most flattering and most agreeable to him for its own sake; and their disapprobation most mortifying and most offensive.

But this desire of the approbation, and this aversion to the disapprobation of his brethren, would not alone have rendered him fit for that society for which he was made. Nature, accordingly, has endowed him, not only with a desire of being approved of, but with a desire of being what ought to be approved of; or of being what he himself approves of in other men. The first desire could only have made him wish to appear to be fit for society. The second was necessary in order to render him anxious to be really fit. The first could only have prompted him to the affectation of virtue, and to the concealment of vice. The second was necessary in order to inspire him with the real love of virtue, and with the real abhorrence of vice. In every well-formed mind this second desire seems to be the strongest of the two. It is only the weakest and most superficial of mankind who can be much delighted with that praise which they themselves know to be altogether unmerited. A weak man may sometimes be pleased with it, but a wise man rejects it upon all occasions. But, though a wise man feels little pleasure from praise where he knows there is no praise-worthiness, he often feels the highest in doing what he knows to be praise-worthy, though he knows equally well that no praise is ever to be bestowed upon it. To obtain the approbation of mankind, where no approbation is due, can never be an object of any importance to him. To obtain that approbation where it is really due, may sometimes be an object of no great importance to him. But to be that thing which deserves approbation, must always be an object of the highest.

To desire, or even to accept of praise, where no praise is due, can be the effect only of the most contemptible vanity. To desire it where it is really due, is to desire no more than that a most essential act of justice should be done to us. The love of just fame, of true glory, even for its own sake, and independent of any advantage which he can derive from it, is not unworthy even of a wise man. He sometimes, however, neglects, and even despises it; and he is never more apt to do so than when he has the most perfect assurance of the perfect propriety of every

part of his own conduct. His self-approbation, in this case, stands in need of no confirmation from the approbation of other men. It is alone sufficient, and he is contented with it. This self-approbation, if not the only, is at least the principal object, about which he can or ought to be anxious. The love of it, is the love of virtue.

As the love and admiration which we naturally conceive for some characters, dispose us to wish to become ourselves the proper objects of such agreeable sentiments; so the hatred and contempt which we as naturally conceive for others, dispose us, perhaps still more strongly, to dread the very thought of resembling them in any respect. Neither is it, in this case, too, so much the thought of being hated and despised that we are afraid of, as that of being hateful and despicable. We dread the thought of doing any thing which can render us the just and proper objects of the hatred and contempt of our fellow-creatures; even though we had the most perfect security that those sentiments were never actually to be exerted against us. The man who has broke through all those measures of conduct, which can alone render him agreeable to mankind, though he should have the most perfect assurance that what he had done was for ever to be concealed from every human eye, it is all to no purpose. When he looks back upon it, and views it in the light in which the impartial spectator would view it, he finds that he can enter into none of the motives which influenced it. He is abashed and confounded at the thoughts of it, and necessarily feels a very high degree of that shame which he would be exposed to, if his actions should ever come to be generally known. His imagination, in this case too, anticipates the contempt and derision from which nothing saves him but the ignorance of those he lives with. He still feels that he is the natural object of these sentiments, and still trembles at the thought of what he would suffer, if they were ever actually exerted against him. But if what he had been guilty of was not merely one of those improprieties which are the objects of simple disapprobation, but one of those enormous crimes which excite detestation and resentment, he could never think of it, as long as he had any sensibility left, without feeling all the agony of horror and remorse; and though he could be assured that no man was ever to know it, and could even bring himself to believe that there was no God to revenge it, he would still feel enough of both these sentiments to embitter the whole of his life: he would still regard himself as the natural object of the hatred and indignation of all his fellow-creatures; and, if his heart was not grown callous by the habit of crimes, he could not think without terror and astonishment even of the manner in which mankind

would look upon him, of what would be the expression of their countenance and of their eyes, if the dreadful truth should ever come to be known. These natural pangs of an affrighted conscience are the daemons, the avenging furies, which, in this life, haunt the guilty, which allow them neither quiet nor repose, which often drive them to despair and distraction, from which no assurance of secrecy can protect them, from which no principles of irreligion can entirely deliver them, and from which nothing can free them but the vilest and most abject of all states, a complete insensibility to honour and infamy, to vice and virtue. Men of the most detestable characters, who, in the execution of the most dreadful crimes, had taken their measures so coolly as to avoid even the suspicion of guilt, have sometimes been driven, by the horror of their situation, to discover, of their own accord, what no human sagacity could ever have investigated. By acknowledging their guilt, by submitting themselves to the resentment of their offended fellow-citizens, and, by thus satiating that vengeance of which they were sensible that they had become the proper objects, they hoped, by their death to reconcile themselves, at least in their own imagination, to the natural sentiments of mankind; to be able to consider themselves as less worthy of hatred and resentment; to atone, in some measure, for their crimes, and by thus becoming the objects, rather of compassion than of horror, if possible to die in peace and with the forgiveness of all their fellow-creatures. Compared to what they felt before the discovery, even the thought of this, it seems, was happiness.

In such cases, the horror of blame-worthiness seems, even in persons who cannot be suspected of any extraordinary delicacy or sensibility of character, completely to conquer the dread of blame. In order to allay that horror, in order to pacify, in some degree, the remorse of their own consciences, they voluntarily submitted themselves both to the reproach and to the punishment which they knew were due to their crimes, but which, at the same time, they might easily have avoided.

They are the most frivolous and superficial of mankind only who can be much delighted with that praise which they themselves know to be altogether unmerited. Unmerited reproach, however, is frequently capable of mortifying very severely even men of more than ordinary constancy. Men of the most ordinary constancy, indeed, easily learn to despise those foolish tales which are so frequently circulated in society, and which, from their own absurdity and falsehood, never fail to die away in the course of a few weeks, or of a few days. But an innocent man, though of more than ordinary constancy, is often, not only shocked,

but most severely mortified by the serious, though false, imputation of a crime; especially when that imputation happens unfortunately to be supported by some circumstances which give it an air of probability. He is humbled to find that any body should think so meanly of his character as to suppose him capable of being guilty of it. Though perfectly conscious of his own innocence, the very imputation seems often, even in his own imagination, to throw a shadow of disgrace and dishonour upon his character. His just indignation, too, at so very gross an injury, which, however, it may frequently be improper, and sometimes even impossible to revenge, is itself a very painful sensation. There is no greater tormentor of the human breast than violent resentment which cannot be gratified. An innocent man, brought to the scaffold by the false imputation of an infamous or odious crime, suffers the most cruel misfortune which it is possible for innocence to suffer. The agony of his mind may, in this case, frequently be greater than that of those who suffer for the like crimes, of which they have been actually guilty. Profligate criminals, such as common thieves and highwaymen, have frequently little sense of the baseness of their own conduct, and consequently no remorse. Without troubling themselves about the justice or injustice of the punishment, they have always been accustomed to look upon the gibbet as a lot very likely to fall to them. When it does fall to them, therefore, they consider themselves only as not quite so lucky as some of their companions, and submit to their fortune, without any other uneasiness than what may arise from the fear of death; a fear which, even by such worthless wretches, we frequently see, can be so easily, and so very completely conquered. The innocent man, on the contrary, over and above the uneasiness which this fear may occasion, is tormented by his own indignation at the injustice which has been done to him. He is struck with horror at the thoughts of the infamy which the punishment may shed upon his memory, and foresees, with the most exquisite anguish, that he is hereafter to be remembered by his dearest friends and relations, not with regret and affection, but with shame, and even with horror for his supposed disgraceful conduct: and the shades of death appear to close round him with a darker and more melancholy gloom than naturally belongs to them. Such fatal accidents, for the tranquillity of mankind, it is to be hoped, happen very rarely in any country; but they happen sometimes in all countries, even in those where justice is in general very well administered. The unfortunate Calas, a man of much more than ordinary constancy (broke upon the wheel and burnt at Tholouse for the supposed murder of his own son, of which he was perfectly innocent),

seemed, with his last breath, to deprecate, not so much the cruelty of the punishment, as the disgrace which the imputation might bring upon his memory. After he had been broke, and was just going to be thrown into the fire, the monk, who attended the execution, exhorted him to confess the crime for which he had been condemned. My Father, said Calas, can you yourself bring yourself to believe that I am guilty?

To persons in such unfortunate circumstances, that humble philosophy which confines its views to this life, can afford, perhaps, but little consolation. Every thing that could render either life or death respectable is taken from them. They are condemned to death and to everlasting infamy. Religion can alone afford them any effectual comfort. She alone can tell them, that it is of little importance what man may think of their conduct, while the all-seeing Judge of the world approves of it. She alone can present to them the view of another world; a world of more candour, humanity, and justice, than the present; where their innocence is in due time to be declared, and their virtue to be finally rewarded: and the same great principle which can alone strike terror into triumphant vice, affords the only effectual consolation to disgraced and insulted innocence.

In smaller offences, as well as in greater crimes, it frequently happens that a person of sensibility is much more hurt by the unjust imputation, than the real criminal is by the actual guilt. A woman of gallantry laughs even at the well-founded surmises which are circulated concerning her conduct. The worst founded surmise of the same kind is a mortal stab to an innocent virgin. The person who is deliberately guilty of a disgraceful action, we may lay it down, I believe, as a general rule, can seldom have much sense of the disgrace; and the person who is habitually guilty of it, can scarce ever have any.

When every man, even of middling understanding, so readily despises unmerited applause, how it comes to pass that unmerited reproach should often be capable of mortifying so severely men of the soundest and best judgment, may, perhaps, deserve some consideration.

Pain, I have already had occasion to observe, is, in almost all cases, a more pungent sensation than the opposite and correspondent pleasure. The one, almost always, depresses us much more below the ordinary, or what may be called the natural state of our happiness, than the other ever raises us above it. A man of sensibility is apt to be more humiliated by just censure than he is ever elevated by just applause. Unmerited applause a wise man rejects with contempt upon all occasions; but he often feels very severely the injustice of unmerited censure. By suffering himself to be applauded for what he has not performed, by assuming a

merit which does not belong to him, he feels that he is guilty of a mean falsehood, and deserves, not the admiration, but the contempt of those very persons who, by mistake, had been led to admire him. It may, perhaps, give him some well-founded pleasure to find that he has been, by many people, thought capable of performing what he did not perform. But, though he may be obliged to his friends for their good opinion, he would think himself guilty of the greatest baseness if he did not immediately undeceive them. It gives him little pleasure to look upon himself in the light in which other people actually look upon him, when he is conscious that, if they knew the truth, they would look upon him in a very different light. A weak man, however, is often much delighted with viewing himself in this false and delusive light. He assumes the merit of every laudable action that is ascribed to him, and pretends to that of many which nobody ever thought of ascribing to him. He pretends to have done what he never did, to have written what another wrote, to have invented what another discovered; and is led into all the miserable vices of plagiarism and common lying. But though no man of middling good sense can derive much pleasure from the imputation of a laudable action which he never performed, yet a wise man may suffer great pain from the serious imputation of a crime which he never committed. Nature, in this case, has rendered the pain, not only more pungent than the opposite and correspondent pleasure, but she has rendered it so in a much greater than the ordinary degree. A denial rids a man at once of the foolish and ridiculous pleasure; but it will not always rid him of the pain. When he refuses the merit which is ascribed to him, nobody doubts his veracity. It may be doubted when he denies the crime which he is accused of. He is at once enraged at the falsehood of the imputation, and mortified to find that any credit should be given to it. He feels that his character is not sufficient to protect him. He feels that his brethren, far from looking upon him in that light in which he anxiously desires to be viewed by them, think him capable of being guilty of what he is accused of. He knows perfectly that he has not been guilty. He knows perfectly what he has done; but, perhaps, scarce any man can know perfectly what he himself is capable of doing. What the peculiar constitution of his own mind may or may not admit of, is, perhaps, more or less a matter of doubt to every man. The trust and good opinion of his friends and neighbours, tends more than any thing to relieve him from this most disagreeable doubt; their distrust and unfavourable opinion to increase it. He may think himself very confident that their unfavourable judgment is wrong: but this confidence can seldom be so great as to

hinder that judgment from making some impression upon him; and the greater his sensibility, the greater his delicacy, the greater his worth in short, this impression is likely to be the greater.

The agreement or disagreement both of the sentiments and judgments of other people with our own, is, in all cases, it must be observed, of more or less importance to us, exactly in proportion as we ourselves are more or less uncertain about the propriety of our own sentiments, about the accuracy of our own judgments.

A man of sensibility may sometimes feel great uneasiness lest he should have yielded too much even to what may be called an honourable passion; to his just indignation, perhaps, at the injury which may have been done either to himself or to his friend. He is anxiously afraid lest, meaning only to act with spirit, and to do justice, he may, from the too great vehemence of his emotion, have done a real injury to some other person; who, though not innocent, may not have been altogether so guilty as he at first apprehended. The opinion of other people becomes, in this case, of the utmost importance to him. Their approbation is the most healing balsam; their disapprobation, the bitterest and most tormenting poison that can be poured into his uneasy mind. When he is perfectly satisfied with every part of his own conduct, the judgment of other people is often of less importance to him.

There are some very noble and beautiful arts, in which the degree of excellence can be determined only by a certain nicety of taste, of which the decisions, however, appear always, in some measure, uncertain. There are others, in which the success admits, either of clear demonstration, or very satisfactory proof. Among the candidates for excellence in those different arts, the anxiety about the public opinion is always much greater in the former than in the latter.

The beauty of poetry is a matter of such nicety, that a young beginner can scarce ever be certain that he has attained it. Nothing delights him so much, therefore, as the favourable judgments of his friends and of the public; and nothing mortifies him so severely as the contrary. The one establishes, the other shakes, the good opinion which he is anxious to entertain concerning his own performances. Experience and success may in time give him a little more confidence in his own judgment. He is at all times, however, liable to be most severely mortified by the unfavourable judgments of the public. Racine was so disgusted by the indifferent success of his Phaedra, the finest tragedy, perhaps, that is extant in any language, that, though in the vigour of his life, and at the height of his abilities, he resolved to write no more for the stage. That

great poet used frequently to tell his son, that the most paltry and impertinent criticism had always given him more pain, than the highest and justest eulogy had ever given him pleasure. The extreme sensibility of Voltaire to the slightest censure of the same kind is well known to every body. The Dunciad of Mr Pope is an everlasting monument of how much the most correct, as well as the most elegant and harmonious of all the English poets, had been hurt by the criticisms of the lowest and most contemptible authors. Gray (who joins to the sublimity of Milton the elegance and harmony of Pope, and to whom nothing is wanting to render him, perhaps, the first poet in the English language, but to have written a little more) is said to have been so much hurt, by a foolish and impertinent parody of two of his finest odes, that he never afterwards attempted any considerable work. Those men of letters who value themselves upon what is called fine writing in prose, approach somewhat to the sensibility of poets.

Mathematicians, on the contrary, who may have the most perfect assurance, both of the truth and of the importance of their discoveries, are frequently very indifferent about the reception which they may meet with from the public. The two greatest mathematicians that I ever have had the honour to be known to, and, I believe, the two greatest that have lived in my time, Dr Robert Simpson of Glasgow, and Dr Matthew Stewart of Edinburgh, never seemed to feel even the slightest uneasiness from the neglect with which the ignorance of the public received some of their most valuable works. The great work of Sir Isaac Newton, his Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy, I have been told, was for several years neglected by the public. The tranquillity of that great man, it is probable, never suffered, upon that account, the interruption of a single quarter of an hour. Natural philosophers, in their independency upon the public opinion, approach nearly to mathematicians, and, in their judgments concerning the merit of their own discoveries and observations, enjoy some degree of the same security and tranquillity.

The morals of those different classes of men of letters are, perhaps, sometimes somewhat affected by this very great difference in their situation with regard to the public.

Mathematicians and natural philosophers, from their independency upon the public opinion, have little temptation to form themselves into factions and cabals, either for the support of their own reputation, or for the depression of that of their rivals. They are almost always men of the most amiable simplicity of manners, who live in good harmony with one another, are the friends of one another’s reputation, enter into no intrigue

in order to secure the public applause, but are pleased when their works are approved of, without being either much vexed or very angry when they are neglected.

It is not always the same case with poets, or with those who value themselves upon what is called fine writing. They are very apt to divide themselves into a sort of literary factions; each cabal being often avowedly, and almost always secretly, the mortal enemy of the reputation of every other, and employing all the mean arts of intrigue and solicitation to preoccupy the public opinion in favour of the works of its own members, and against those of its enemies and rivals. In France, Despreaux and Racine did not think it below them to set themselves at the head of a literary cabal, in order to depress the reputation, first of Quinault and Perreault, and afterwards of Fontenelle and La Motte, and even to treat the good La Fontaine with a species of most disrespectful kindness. In England, the amiable Mr Addison did not think it unworthy of his gentle and modest character to set himself at the head of a little cabal of the same kind, in order to keep down the rising reputation of Mr Pope. Mr Fontenelle, in writing the lives and characters of the members of the academy of sciences, a society of mathematicians and natural philosophers, has frequent opportunities of celebrating the amiable simplicity of their manners; a quality which, he observes, was so universal among them as to be characteristical, rather of that whole class of men of letters, than of any individual Mr D'Alembert, in writing the lives and characters of the members of the French academy, a society of poets and fine writers, or of those who are supposed to be such, seems not to have had such frequent opportunities of making any remark of this kind, and nowhere pretends to represent this amiable quality as characteristical of that class of men of letters whom he celebrates.

Our uncertainty concerning our own merit, and our anxiety to think favourably of it, should together naturally enough make us desirous to know the opinion of other people concerning it; to be more than ordinarily elevated when that opinion is favourable, and to be more than ordinarily mortified when it is otherwise: but they should not make us desirous either of obtaining the favourable, or of avoiding the unfavourable opinion, by intrigue and cabal. When a man has bribed all the judges, the most unanimous decision of the court, though it may gain him his law-suit, cannot give him any assurance that he was in the right: and had he carried on his lawsuit merely to satisfy himself that he was in the right, he never would have bribed the judges. But though he wished to find himself in the right, he wished likewise to gain his law-suit; and

therefore he bribed the judges. If praise were of no consequence to us, but as a proof of our own praiseworthiness, we never should endeavour to obtain it by unfair means. But, though to wise men it is, at least in doubtful cases, of principal consequence upon this account; it is likewise of some consequence upon its own account: and therefore (we cannot, indeed, upon such occasions, call them wise men, but) men very much above the common level have sometimes attempted both to obtain praise, and to avoid blame, by very unfair means.

Praise and blame express what actually are; praise-worthiness and blameworthiness, what naturally ought to be the sentiments of other people with regard to our character and conduct. The love of praise is the desire of obtaining the favourable sentiments of our brethren. The love of praiseworthiness is the desire of rendering ourselves the proper objects of those sentiments. So far those two principles resemble and are akin to one another. The like affinity and resemblance take place between the dread of blame and that of blame-worthiness.

The man who desires to do, or who actually does, a praise-worthy action, may likewise desire the praise which is due to it, and sometimes, perhaps, more than is due to it. The two principles are in this case blended together. How far his conduct may have been influenced by the one, and how far by the other, may frequently be unknown even to himself. It must almost always be so to other people. They who are disposed to lessen the merit of his conduct, impute it chiefly or altogether to the mere love of praise, or to what they call mere vanity. They who are disposed to think more favourably of it, impute it chiefly or altogether to the love of praise-worthiness; to the love of what is really honourable and noble in human conduct; to the desire, not merely of obtaining, but of deserving the approbation and applause of his brethren. The imagination of the spectator throws upon it either the one colour or the other, according either to his habits of thinking, or to the favour or dislike which he may bear to the person whose conduct he is considering.

Some splenetic philosophers, in judging of human nature, have done as peevish individuals are apt to do in judging of the conduct of one another, and have imputed to the love of praise, or to what they call vanity , every action which ought to be ascribed to that of praise-worthiness. I shall hereafter have occasion to give an account of some of their systems, and shall not at present stop to examine them.

Very few men can be satisfied with their own private consciousness that they have attained those qualities, or performed those actions, which

they admire and think praise-worthy in other people; unless it is, at the same time, generally acknowledged that they possess the one, or have performed the other; or, in other words, unless they have actually obtained that praise which they think due both to the one and to the other. In this respect, however, men differ considerably from one another. Some seem indifferent about the praise, when, in their own minds, they are perfectly satisfied that they have attained the praise-worthiness. Others appear much less anxious about the praise-worthiness than about the praise.

No man can be completely, or even tolerably satisfied, with having avoided every thing blame-worthy in his conduct; unless he has likewise avoided the blame or the reproach. A wise man may frequently neglect praise, even when he has best deserved it; but, in all matters of serious consequence, he will most carefully endeavour so to regulate his conduct as to avoid, not only blame-worthiness, but, as much as possible, every probable imputation of blame. He will never, indeed, avoid blame by doing any thing which he judges blame-worthy; by omitting any part of his duty, or by neglecting any opportunity of doing any thing which he judges to be really and greatly praise-worthy. But, with these modifications, he will most anxiously and carefully avoid it. To show much anxiety about praise, even for praise-worthy actions, is seldom a mark of great wisdom, but generally of some degree of weakness. But, in being anxious to avoid the shadow of blame or reproach, there may be no weakness, but frequently the most praise-worthy prudence.

‘Many people,’ says Cicero, ‘despise glory, who are yet most severely mortified by unjust reproach; and that most inconsistently.’ This inconsistency, however, seems to be founded in the unalterable principles of human nature.

The all-wise Author of Nature has, in this manner, taught man to respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren; to be more or less pleased when they approve of his conduct, and to be more or less hurt when they disapprove of it. He has made man, if I may say so, the immediate judge of mankind; and has, in this respect, as in many others, created him after his own image, and appointed him his vicegerent upon earth, to superintend the behaviour of his brethren. They are taught by nature, to acknowledge that power and jurisdiction which has thus been conferred upon him, to be more or less humbled and mortified when they have incurred his censure, and to be more or less elated when they have obtained his applause.

But though man has, in this manner, been rendered the immediate judge of mankind, he has been rendered so only in the first instance; and an appeal lies from his sentence to a much higher tribunal, to the tribunal of their own consciences, to that of the supposed impartial and well-informed spectator, to that of the man within the breast, the great judge and arbiter of their conduct. The jurisdictions of those two tribunals are founded upon principles which, though in some respects resembling and akin, are, however, in reality different and distinct. The jurisdiction of the man without, is founded altogether in the desire of actual praise, and in the aversion to actual blame. The jurisdiction of the man within, is founded altogether in the desire of praise-worthiness, and in the aversion to blame-worthiness; in the desire of possessing those qualities, and performing those actions, which we love and admire in other people; and in the dread of possessing those qualities, and performing those actions, which we hate and despise in other people. If the man without should applaud us, either for actions which we have not performed, or for motives which had no influence upon us; the man within can immediately humble that pride and elevation of mind which such groundless acclamations might otherwise occasion, by telling us, that as we know that we do not deserve them, we render ourselves despicable by accepting them. If, on the contrary, the man without should reproach us, either for actions which we never performed, or for motives which had no influence upon those which we may have performed; the man within may immediately correct this false judgment, and assure us, that we are by no means the proper objects of that censure which has so unjustly been bestowed upon us. But in this and in some other cases, the man within seems sometimes, as it were, astonished and confounded by the vehemence and clamour of the man without. The violence and loudness, with which blame is sometimes poured out upon us, seems to stupify and benumb our natural sense of praise-worthiness and blame-worthiness; and the judgments of the man within, though not, perhaps, absolutely altered or perverted, are, however, so much shaken in the steadiness and firmness of their decision, that their natural effect, in securing the tranquillity of the mind, is frequently in a great measure destroyed. We scarce dare to absolve ourselves, when all our brethren appear loudly to condemn us. The supposed impartial spectator of our conduct seems to give his opinion in our favour with fear and hesitation; when that of all the real spectators, when that of all those with whose eyes and from whose station he endeavours to consider it, is unanimously and violently against us. In such cases, this demigod within the breast appears, like the

demigods of the poets, though partly of immortal, yet partly too of mortal extraction. When his judgments are steadily and firmly directed by the sense of praiseworthiness and blame-worthiness, he seems to act suitably to his divine extraction: But when he suffers himself to be astonished and confounded by the judgments of ignorant and weak man, he discovers his connexion with mortality, and appears to act suitably, rather to the human, than to the divine, part of his origin.

In such cases, the only effectual consolation of humbled and afflicted man lies in an appeal to a still higher tribunal, to that of the all-seeing Judge of the world, whose eye can never be deceived, and whose judgments can never be perverted. A firm confidence in the unerring rectitude of this great tribunal, before which his innocence is in due time to be declared, and his virtue to be finally rewarded, can alone support him under the weakness and despondency of his own mind, under the perturbation and astonishment of the man within the breast, whom nature has set up as, in this life, the great guardian, not only of his innocence, but of his tranquillity. Our happiness in this life is thus, upon many occasions, dependent upon the humble hope and expectation of a life to come: a hope and expectation deeply rooted in human nature; which can alone support its lofty ideas of its own dignity; can alone illumine the dreary prospect of its continually approaching mortality, and maintain its cheerfulness under all the heaviest calamities to which, from the disorders of this life, it may sometimes be exposed. That there is a world to come, where exact justice will be done to every man, where every man will be ranked with those who, in the moral and intellectual qualities, are really his equals; where the owner of those humble talents and virtues which, from being depressed by fortune, had, in this life, no opportunity of displaying themselves; which were unknown, not only to the public, but which he himself could scarce be sure that he possessed, and for which even the man within the breast could scarce venture to afford him any distinct and clear testimony; where that modest, silent, and unknown merit, will be placed upon a level, and sometimes above those who, in this world, had enjoyed the highest reputation, and who, from the advantage of their situation, had been enabled to perform the most splendid and dazzling actions; is a doctrine, in every respect so venerable, so comfortable to the weakness, so flattering to the grandeur of human nature, that the virtuous man who has the misfortune to doubt of it, cannot possibly avoid wishing most earnestly and anxiously to believe it. It could never have been exposed to the derision of the scoffer, had not the distributions of rewards and punishments, which some of its

most zealous assertors have taught us was to be made in that world to come, been too frequently in direct opposition to all our moral sentiments.

That the assiduous courtier is often more favoured than the faithful and active servant; that attendance and adulation are often shorter and surer roads to preferment than merit or service; and that a campaign at Versailles or St James's is often worth two either in Germany or Flanders, is a complaint which we have all heard from many a venerable, but discontented, old officer. But what is considered as the greatest reproach even to the weakness of earthly sovereigns, has been ascribed, as an act of justice, to divine perfection; and the duties of devotion, the public and private worship of the Deity, have been represented, even by men of virtue and abilities, as the sole virtues which can either entitle to reward or exempt from punishment in the life to come. They were the virtues, perhaps, most suitable to their station, and in which they themselves chiefly excelled; and we are all naturally disposed to over-rate the excellencies of our own characters. In the discourse which the eloquent and philosophical Massillon pronounced, on giving his benediction to the standards of the regiment of Catinat, there is the following address to the officers: 'What is most deplorable in your situation, Gentlemen, is, that in a life hard and painful, in which the services and the duties sometimes go beyond the rigour and severity. of the most austere cloisters; you suffer always in vain for the life to come, and frequently even for this life. Alas! the solitary monk in his cell, obliged to mortify the flesh and to subject it to the spirit, is supported by the hope of an assured recompence, and by the secret unction of that grace which softens the yoke of the Lord. But you, on the bed of death, can you dare to represent to Him your fatigues and the daily hardships of your employment? can you dare to solicit Him for any recompence? and in all the exertions that you have made, in all the violences that you have done to yourselves, what is there that He ought to place to His own account? The best days of your life, however, have been sacrificed to your profession, and ten years service has more worn out your body, than would, perhaps, have done a whole life of repentance and mortification. Alas! my brother, one single day of those sufferings, consecrated to the Lord, would, perhaps, have obtained you an eternal happiness. One single action, painful to nature, and offered up to Him, would, perhaps, have secured to you the inheritance of the Saints. And you have done all this, and in vain, for this world.'

To compare, in this manner, the futile mortifications of a monastery, to the ennobling hardships and hazards of war; to suppose that one day, or one hour, employed in the former should, in the eye of the great Judge of the world, have more merit than a whole life spent honourably in the latter, is surely contrary to all our moral sentiments; to all the principles by which nature has taught us to regulate our contempt or admiration. It is this spirit, however, which, while it has reserved the celestial regions for monks and friars, or for those whose conduct and conversation resembled those of monks and friars, has condemned to the infernal all the heroes, all the statesmen and lawgivers, all the poets and philosophers of former ages; all those who have invented, improved, or excelled in the arts which contribute to the subsistence, to the conveniency, or to the ornament of human life; all the great protectors, instructors, and benefactors of mankind; all those to whom our natural sense of praise-worthiness forces us to ascribe the highest merit and most exalted virtue. Can we wonder that so strange an application of this most respectable doctrine should sometimes have exposed it to contempt and derision; with those at least who had themselves, perhaps, no great taste or turn for the devout and contemplative virtues?

Chap. III: Of the Influences and Authority of Conscience

But though the approbation of his own conscience can scarce, upon some extraordinary occasions, content the weakness of man; though the testimony of the supposed impartial spectator, of the great inmate of the breast, cannot always alone support him; yet the influence and authority of this principle is, upon all occasions, very great; and it is only by consulting this judge within, that we can ever see what relates to ourselves in its proper shape and dimensions; or that we can ever make any proper comparison between our own interests and those of other people.

As to the eye of the body, objects appear great or small, not so much according to their real dimensions, as according to the nearness or distance of their situation; so do they likewise to what may be called the natural eye of the mind: and we remedy the defects of both these organs pretty much in the same manner. In my present situation an immense landscape of lawns, and woods, and distant mountains, seems to do no more than cover the little window which I write by and to be out of all proportion less than the chamber in which I am sitting. I can form a just comparison between those great objects and the little objects around me, in no other way, than by transporting myself, at least in fancy, to a different station, from whence I can survey both at nearly equal distances, and thereby form some judgment of their real proportions. Habit and experience have taught me to do this so easily and so readily, that I am scarce sensible that I do it; and a man must be, in some measure, acquainted with the philosophy of vision, before he can be thoroughly convinced, how little those distant objects would appear to the eye, if the imagination, from a knowledge of their real magnitudes, did not swell and dilate them.

In the same manner, to the selfish and original passions of human nature, the loss or gain of a very small interest of our own, appears to be of vastly more importance, excites a much more passionate joy or sorrow, a much more ardent desire or aversion, than the greatest concern of another with whom we have no particular connexion. His interests, as long as they are surveyed from this station, can never be put into the balance with our own, can never restrain us from doing. whatever may tend to promote our own, how ruinous soever to him. Before we can

make any proper comparison of those opposite interests, we must change our position. We must view them, neither from our own place nor yet from his, neither with our own eyes nor yet with his, but from the place and with the eyes of a third person, who has no particular connexion with either, and who judges with impartiality between us. Here, too, habit and experience have taught us to do this so easily and so readily, that we are scarce sensible that we do it; and it requires, in this case too, some degree of reflection, and even of philosophy, to convince us, how little interest we should take in the greatest concerns of our neighbour, how little we should be affected by whatever relates to him, if the sense of propriety and justice did not correct the otherwise natural inequality of our sentiments.

Let us suppose that the great empire of China, with all its myriads of inhabitants, was suddenly swallowed up by an earthquake, and let us consider how a man of humanity in Europe, who had no sort of connexion with that part of the world, would be affected upon receiving intelligence of this dreadful calamity. He would, I imagine, first of all, express very strongly his sorrow for the misfortune of that unhappy people, he would make many melancholy reflections upon the precariousness of human life, and the vanity of all the labours of man, which could thus be annihilated in a moment. He would too, perhaps, if he was a man of speculation, enter into many reasonings concerning the effects which this disaster might produce upon the commerce of Europe, and the trade and business of the world in general. And when all this fine philosophy was over, when all these humane sentiments had been once fairly expressed, he would pursue his business or his pleasure, take his repose or his diversion, with the same ease and tranquillity, as if no such accident had happened. The most frivolous disaster which could befal himself would occasion a more real disturbance. If he was to lose his little finger to-morrow, he would not sleep to-night; but, provided he never saw them, he will snore with the most profound security over the ruin of a hundred millions of his brethren, and the destruction of that immense multitude seems plainly an object less interesting to him, than this paltry misfortune of his own. To prevent, therefore, this paltry misfortune to himself, would a man of humanity be willing to sacrifice the lives of a hundred millions of his brethren, provided he had never seen them? Human nature startles with horror at the thought, and the world, in its greatest depravity and corruption, never produced such a villain as could be capable of entertaining it. But what makes this difference? When our passive feelings are almost always so sordid and

so selfish, how comes it that our active principles should often be so generous and so noble? When we are always so much more deeply affected by whatever concerns ourselves, than by whatever concerns other men; what is it which prompts the generous, upon all occasions, and the mean upon many, to sacrifice their own interests to the greater interests of others? It is not the soft power of humanity, it is not that feeble spark of benevolence which Nature has lighted up in the human heart, that is thus capable of counteracting the strongest impulses of self-love. It is a stronger power, a more forcible motive, which exerts itself upon such occasions. It is reason, principle, conscience, the inhabitant of the breast, the man within, the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. It is he who, whenever we are about to act so as to affect the happiness of others, calls to us, with a voice capable of astonishing the most presumptuous of our passions, that we are but one of the multitude, in no respect better than any other in it; and that when we prefer ourselves so shamefully and so blindly to others, we become the proper objects of resentment, abhorrence, and execration. It is from him only that we learn the real littleness of ourselves, and of whatever relates to ourselves, and the natural misrepresentations of self-love can be corrected only by the eye of this impartial spectator. It is he who shows us the propriety of generosity and the deformity of injustice; the propriety of resigning the greatest interests of our own, for the yet greater interests of others, and the deformity of doing the smallest injury to another, in order to obtain the greatest benefit to ourselves. It is not the love of our neighbour, it is not the love of mankind, which upon many occasions prompts us to the practice of those divine virtues. It is a stronger love, a more powerful affection, which generally takes place upon such occasions; the love of what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur, and dignity, and superiority of our own characters.

When the happiness or misery of others depends in any respect upon our conduct, we dare not, as self-love might suggest to us, prefer the interest of one to that of many. The man within immediately calls to us, that we value ourselves too much and other people too little, and that, by doing so, we render ourselves the proper object of the contempt and indignation of our brethren. Neither is this sentiment confined to men of extraordinary magnanimity and virtue. It is deeply impressed upon every tolerably good soldier, who feels that he would become the scorn of his companions, if he could be supposed capable of shrinking from danger, or of hesitating, either to expose or to throw away his life, when the good of the service required it.

One individual must never prefer himself so much even to any other individual, as to hurt or injure that other, in order to benefit himself, though the benefit to the one should be much greater than the hurt or injury to the other. The poor man must neither defraud nor steal from the rich, though the acquisition might be much more beneficial to the one than the loss could be hurtful to the other. The man within immediately calls to him, in this case too, that he is no better than his neighbour, and that by this unjust preference he renders himself the proper object of the contempt and indignation of mankind; as well as of the punishment which that contempt and indignation must naturally dispose them to inflict, for having thus violated one of those sacred rules, upon the tolerable observation of which depend the whole security and peace of human society. There is no commonly honest man who does not more dread the inward disgrace of such an action, the indelible stain which it would for ever stamp upon his own mind, than the greatest external calamity which, without any fault of his own, could possibly befal him; and who does not inwardly feel the truth of that great stoical maxim, that for one man to deprive another unjustly of any thing, or unjustly to promote his own advantage by the loss or disadvantage of another, is more contrary to nature, than death, than poverty, than pain, than all the misfortunes which can affect him, either in his body, or in his external circumstances.

When the happiness or misery of others, indeed, in no respect depends upon our conduct, when our interests are altogether separated and detached from theirs, so that there is neither connexion nor competition between them, we do not always think it so necessary to restrain, either our natural and, perhaps, improper anxiety about our own affairs, or our natural and, perhaps, equally improper indifference about those of other men. The most vulgar education teaches us to act, upon all important occasions, with some sort of impartiality between ourselves and others, and even the ordinary commerce of the world is capable of adjusting our active principles to some degree of propriety. But it is the most artificial and refined education only, it has been said, which can correct the inequalities of our passive feelings; and we must for this purpose, it has been pretended, have recourse to the severest, as well as to the profoundest philosophy.

Two different sets of philosophers have attempted to teach us this hardest of all the lessons of morality. One set have laboured to increase our sensibility to the interests of others; another, to diminish that to our own. The first would have us feel for others as we naturally feel for

ourselves. The second would have us feel for ourselves as we naturally feel for others. Both, perhaps, have carried their doctrines a good deal beyond the just standard of nature and propriety.

The first are those whining and melancholy moralists, who are perpetually reproaching us with our happiness, while so many of our brethren are in misery, who regard as impious the natural joy of prosperity, which does not think of the many wretches that are at every instant labouring under all sorts of calamities, in the languor of poverty, in the agony of disease, in the horrors of death, under the insults and oppression of their enemies. Commiseration for those miseries which we never saw, which we never heard of, but which we may be assured are at all times infesting such numbers of our fellow-creatures, ought, they think, to damp the pleasures of the fortunate, and to render a certain melancholy dejection habitual to all men. But first of all, this extreme sympathy with misfortunes which we know nothing about, seems altogether absurd and unreasonable. Take the whole earth at an average, for one man who suffers pain or misery, you will find twenty in prosperity and joy, or at least in tolerable circumstances. No reason, surely, can be assigned why we should rather weep with the one than rejoice with the twenty. This artificial commiseration, besides, is not only absurd, but seems altogether unattainable; and those who affect this character have commonly nothing but a certain affected and sentimental sadness, which, without reaching the heart, serves only to render the countenance and conversation impertinently dismal and disagreeable. And last of all, this disposition of mind, though it could be attained, would be perfectly useless, and could serve no other purpose than to render miserable the person who possessed it. Whatever interest we take in the fortune of those with whom we have no acquaintance or connexion, and who are placed altogether out of the sphere of our activity, can produce only anxiety to ourselves, without any manner of advantage to them. To what purpose should we trouble ourselves about the world in the moon? All men, even those at the greatest distance, are no doubt entitled to our good wishes, and our good wishes we naturally give them. But if, notwithstanding, they should be unfortunate, to give ourselves any anxiety upon that account, seems to be no part of our duty. That we should be but little interested, therefore, in the fortune of those whom we can neither serve nor hurt, and who are in every respect so very remote from us, seems wisely ordered by Nature; and if it were possible to alter in this respect the original constitution of our frame, we could yet gain nothing by the change.

It is never objected to us that we have too little fellow-feeling with the joy of success. Wherever envy does not prevent it, the favour which we bear to prosperity is rather apt to be too great; and the same moralists who blame us for want of sufficient sympathy with the miserable, reproach us for the levity with which we are too apt to admire and almost to worship the fortunate, the powerful, and the rich.

Among the moralists who endeavour to correct the natural inequality of our passive feelings by diminishing our sensibility to what peculiarly concerns ourselves, we may count all the ancient sects of philosophers, but particularly the ancient Stoics. Man, according to the Stoics, ought to regard himself, not as something separated and detached, but as a citizen of the world, a member of the vast commonwealth of nature. To the interest of this great community, he ought at all times to be willing that his own little interest should be sacrificed. Whatever concerns himself, ought to affect him no more than whatever concerns any other equally important part of this immense system. We should view ourselves, not in the light in which our own selfish passions are apt to place us, but in the light in which any other citizen of the world would view us. What befalls ourselves we should regard as what befalls our neighbour, or, what comes to the same thing, as our neighbour regards what befalls us. ‘When our neighbour,’ says Epictetus, ‘loses his wife, or his son, there is nobody who is not sensible that this is a human calamity, a natural event altogether according to the ordinary course of things; but, when the same thing happens to ourselves, then we cry out, as if we had suffered the most dreadful misfortune. We ought, however, to remember how we were affected when this accident happened to another, and such as we were in his case, such ought we to be in our own.’

Those private misfortunes, for which our feelings are apt to go beyond the bounds of propriety, are of two different kinds. They are either such as affect us only indirectly, by affecting, in the first place, some other persons who are particularly dear to us; such as our parents, our children, our brothers and sisters, our intimate friends; or they are such as affect ourselves immediately and directly, either in our body, in our fortune, or in our reputation; such as pain, sickness, approaching death, poverty, disgrace, etc.

In misfortunes of the first kind, our emotions may, no doubt, go very much beyond what exact propriety will admit of; but they may likewise fall short of it, and they frequently do so. The man who should feel no more for the death or distress of his own father, or son, than for those of any other man’s father or son, would appear neither a good son nor a

good father. Such unnatural indifference, far from exciting our applause, would incur our highest disapprobation. Of those domestic affections, however, some are most apt to offend by their excess, and others by their defect. Nature, for the wisest purposes, has rendered, in most men, perhaps in all men, parental tenderness a much stronger affection than filial piety. The continuance and propagation of the species depend altogether upon the former, and not upon the latter. In ordinary cases, the existence and preservation of the child depend altogether upon the care of the parents. Those of the parents seldom depend upon that of the child. Nature, therefore, has rendered the former affection so strong, that it generally requires not to be excited, but to be moderated; and moralists seldom endeavour to teach us how to indulge, but generally how to restrain our fondness, our excessive attachment, the unjust preference which we are disposed to give to our own children above those of other people. They exhort us, on the contrary, to an affectionate attention to our parents, and to make a proper return to them, in their old age, for the kindness which they had shown to us in our infancy and youth. In the Decalogue we are commanded to honour our fathers and mothers. No mention is made of the love of our children. Nature had sufficiently prepared us for the performance of this latter duty. Men are seldom accused of affecting to be fonder of their children than they really are. THey have sometimes been suspected of displaying their piety to their parents with too much ostentation. The ostentatious sorrow of widows has, for a like reason, been suspected of insincerity. We should respect, could we believe it sincere, even the excess of such kind affections; and though we might not perfectly approve, we should not severely condemn it. That it appears praise-worthy, at least in the eyes of those who affect it, the very affectation is a proof.

Even the excess of those kind affections which are most apt to offend by their excess, though it may appear blameable, never appears odious. We blame the excessive fondness and anxiety of a parent, as something which may, in the end, prove hurtful to the child, and which, in the mean time, is excessively inconvenient to the parent; but we easily pardon it, and never regard it with hatred and detestation. But the defect of this usually excessive affection appears always peculiarly odious. The man who appears to feel nothing for his own children, but who treats them upon all occasions with unmerited severity and harshness, seems of all brutes the most detestable. The sense of propriety, so far from requiring us to eradicate altogether that extraordinary sensibility, which we naturally feel for the misfortunes of our nearest connections, is always

much more offended by the defect, than it ever is by the excess of that sensibility. The stoical apathy is, in such cases, never agreeable, and all the metaphysical sophisms by which it is supported can seldom serve any other purpose than to blow up the hard insensibility of a coxcomb to ten times its native impertinence. The poets and romance writers, who best paint the refinements and delicacies of love and friendship, and of all other private and domestic affections, Racine and Voltaire; Richardson, Maurivaux, and Riccoboni; are, in such cases, much better instructors than Zeno, Chrysippus, or Epictetus.

That moderated sensibility to the misfortunes of others, which does not disqualify us for the performance of any duty; the melancholy and affectionate remembrance of our departed friends; the pang, as Gray says, to secret sorrow dear; are by no means undelicious sensations. Though they outwardly wear the features of pain and grief, they are all inwardly stamped with the ennobling characters of virtue and self-approbation.

It is otherwise in the misfortunes which affect ourselves immediately and directly, either in our body, in our fortune, or in our reputation. The sense of propriety is much more apt to be offended by the excess, than by the defect of our sensibility, and there are but very few cases in which we can approach too near to the stoical apathy and indifference.

That we have very little fellow-feeling with any of the passions which take their origin from the body, has already been observed. That pain which is occasioned by an evident cause; such as, the cutting or tearing of the flesh; is, perhaps, the affection of the body with which the spectator feels the most lively sympathy. The approaching death of his neighbour, too, seldom fails to affect him a good deal. In both cases, however, he feels so very little in comparison of what the person principally concerned feels, that the latter can scarce ever offend the former by appearing to suffer with too much ease.

The mere want of fortune, mere poverty, excites little compassion. Its complaints are too apt to be the objects rather of contempt than of fellow-feeling. We despise a beggar; and, though his importunities may extort an alms from us, he is scarce ever the object of any serious commiseration. The fall from riches to poverty, as it commonly occasions the most real distress to the sufferer, so it seldom fails to excite the most sincere commiseration in the spectator. Though, in the present state of society, this misfortune can seldom happen without some misconduct, and some very considerable misconduct too, in the sufferer; yet he is almost always so much pitied that he is scarce ever allowed to

fall into the lowest state of poverty; but by the means of his friends, frequently by the indulgence of those very creditors who have much reason to complain of his imprudence, is almost always supported in some degree of decent, though humble, mediocrity. To persons under such misfortunes, we could, perhaps, easily pardon some degree of weakness; but, at the same time, they who carry the firmest countenance, who accommodate themselves with the greatest ease to their new situation, who seem to feel no humiliation from the change, but to rest their rank in the society, not upon their fortune, but upon their character and conduct, are always the most approved of, and never fail to command our highest and most affectionate admiration.

As, of all the external misfortunes which can affect an innocent man immediately and directly, the undeserved loss of reputation is certainly the greatest; so a considerable degree of sensibility to whatever can bring on so great a calamity, does not always appear ungraceful or disagreeable. We often esteem a young man the more, when he resents, though with some degree of violence, any unjust reproach that may have been thrown upon his character or his honour. The affliction of an innocent young lady, on account of the groundless surmises which may have been circulated concerning her conduct, appears often perfectly amiable. Persons of an advanced age, whom long experience of the folly and injustice of the world, has taught to pay little regard, either to its censure or to its applause, neglect and despise obloquy, and do not even deign to honour its futile authors with any serious resentment. This indifference, which is founded altogether on a firm confidence in their own well-tried and well-established characters, would be disagreeable in young people, who neither can nor ought to have any such confidence. It might in them be supposed to forebode, in their advancing years, a most improper insensibility to real honour and infamy.

In all other private misfortunes which affect ourselves immediately and directly, we can very seldom offend by appearing to be too little affected. We frequently remember our sensibility to the misfortunes of others with pleasure and satisfaction. We can seldom remember that to our own, without some degree of shame and humiliation.

If we examine the different shades and gradations of weakness and self-command, as we meet with them in common life, we shall very easily satisfy ourselves that this control of our passive feelings must be acquired, not from the abstruse syllogisms of a quibbling dialectic, but from that great discipline which Nature has established for the

acquisition of this and of every other virtue; a regard to the sentiments of the real or supposed spectator of our conduct.

A very young child has no self-command; but, whatever are its emotions, whether fear, or grief, or anger, it endeavours always, by the violence of its outcries, to alarm, as much as it can, the attention of its nurse, or of its parents. While it remains under the custody of such partial protectors, its anger is the first and, perhaps, the only passion which it is taught to moderate. By noise and threatening they are, for their own ease, often obliged to frighten it into good temper; and the passion which incites it to attack, is restrained by that which teaches it to attend to its own safety. When it is old enough to go to school, or to mix with its equals, it soon finds that they have no such indulgent partiality. It naturally wishes to gain their favour, and to avoid their hatred or contempt. Regard even to its own safety teaches it to do so; and it soon finds that it can do so in no other way than by moderating, not only its anger, but all its other passions, to the degree which its play-fellows and companions are likely to be pleased with. It thus enters into the great school of self-command, it studies to be more and more master of itself, and begins to exercise over its own feelings a discipline which the practice of the longest life is very seldom sufficient to bring to complete perfection.

In all private misfortunes, in pain, in sickness, in sorrow, the weakest man, when his friend, and still more when a stranger visits him, is immediately impressed with the view in which they are likely to look upon his situation. Their view calls off his attention from his own view; and his breast is, in some measure, becalmed the moment they come into his presence. This effect is produced instantaneously and, as it were, mechanically; but, with a weak man, it is not of long continuance. His own view of his situation immediately recurs upon him. He abandons himself, as before, to sighs and tears and lamentations; and endeavours, like a child that has not yet gone to school, to produce some sort of harmony between his own grief and the compassion of the spectator, not by moderating the former, but by importunately calling upon the latter.

With a man of a little more firmness, the effect is somewhat more permanent. He endeavours, as much as he can, to fix his attention upon the view which the company are likely to take of his situation. He feels, at the same time, the esteem and approbation which they naturally conceive for him when he thus preserves his tranquillity; and, though under the pressure of some recent and great calamity, appears to feel for himself no more than what they really feel for him. He approves and

applauds himself by sympathy with their approbation, and the pleasure which he derives from this sentiment supports and enables him more easily to continue this generous effort. In most cases he avoids mentioning his own misfortune; and his company, if they are tolerably well bred, are careful to say nothing which can put him in mind of it. He endeavours to entertain them, in his usual way, upon indifferent subjects, or, if he feels himself strong enough to venture to mention his misfortune, he endeavours to talk of it as, he thinks, they are capable of talking of it, and even to feel it no further than they are capable of feeling it. If he has not, however, been well inured to the hard discipline of self-command, he soon grows weary of this restraint. A long visit fatigues him; and, towards the end of it, he is constantly in danger of doing, what he never fails to do the moment it is over, of abandoning himself to all the weakness of excessive sorrow. Modern good manners, which are extremely indulgent to human weakness, forbid, for some time, the visits of strangers to persons under great family distress, and permit those only of the nearest relations and most intimate friends. The presence of the latter, it is thought, will impose less restraint than that of the former; and the sufferers can more easily accommodate themselves to the feelings of those, from whom they have reason to expect a more indulgent sympathy. Secret enemies, who fancy that they are not known to be such, are frequently fond of making those charitable visits as early as the most intimate friends. The weakest man in the world, in this case, endeavours to support his manly countenance, and, from indignation and contempt of their malice, to behave with as much gaiety and ease as he can.

The man of real constancy and firmness, the wise and just man who has been thoroughly bred in the great school of self-command, in the bustle and business of the world, exposed, perhaps, to the violence and injustice of faction, and to the hardships and hazards of war, maintains this control of his passive feelings upon all occasions; and whether in solitude or in society, wears nearly the same countenance, and is affected very nearly in the same manner. In success and in disappointment, in prosperity and in adversity, before friends and before enemies, he has often been under the necessity of supporting this manhood. He has never dared to forget for one moment the judgment which the impartial spectator would pass upon his sentiments and conduct. He has never dared to suffer the man within the breast to be absent one moment from his attention. With the eyes of this great inmate he has always been accustomed to regard whatever relates to himself. This habit has become perfectly familiar to him. He has been in the constant practice, and,

indeed, under the constant necessity, of modelling, or of endeavouring to model, not only his outward conduct and behaviour, but, as much as he can, even his inward sentiments and feelings, according to those of this awful and respectable judge. He does not merely affect the sentiments of the impartial spectator. He really adopts them. He almost identifies himself with, he almost becomes himself that impartial spectator, and scarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to feel.

The degree of the self-approbation with which every man, upon such occasions, surveys his own conduct, is higher or lower, exactly in proportion to the degree of self-command which is necessary in order to obtain that self-approbation. Where little self-command is necessary, little self-approbation is due. The man who has only scratched his finger, cannot much applaud himself, though he should immediately appear to have forgot this paltry misfortune. The man who has lost his leg by a cannon shot, and who, the moment after, speaks and acts with his usual coolness and tranquillity, as he exerts a much higher degree of self-command, so he naturally feels a much higher degree of self-approbation. With most men, upon such an accident, their own natural view of their own misfortune would force itself upon them with such a vivacity and strength of colouring, as would entirely efface all thought of every other view. They would feel nothing, they could attend to nothing, but their own pain and their own fear; and not only the judgment of the ideal man within the breast, but that of the real spectators who might happen to be present, would be entirely overlooked and disregarded.

The reward which Nature bestows upon good behaviour under misfortune, is thus exactly proportioned to the degree of that good behaviour. The only compensation she could possibly make for the bitterness of pain and distress is thus too, in equal degrees of good behaviour, exactly proportioned to the degree of that pain and distress. In proportion to the degree of the self-command which is necessary in order to conquer our natural sensibility, the pleasure and pride of the conquest are so much the greater; and this pleasure and pride are so great that no man can be altogether unhappy who completely enjoys them. Misery and wretchedness can never enter the breast in which dwells complete self-satisfaction; and though it may be too much, perhaps, to say, with the Stoics, that, under such an accident as that above mentioned, the happiness of a wise man is in every respect equal to what it could have been under any other circumstances; yet it must be acknowledged, at least, that this complete enjoyment of his own self-applause, though it

may not altogether extinguish, must certainly very much alleviate his sense of his own sufferings.

In such paroxysms of distress, if I may be allowed to call them so, the wisest and firmest man, in order to preserve his equanimity, is obliged, I imagine, to make a considerable, and even a painful exertion. His own natural feeling of his own distress, his own natural view of his own situation, presses hard upon him, and he cannot, without a very great effort, fix his attention upon that of the impartial spectator. Both views present themselves to him at the same time. His sense of honour, his regard to his own dignity, directs him to fix his whole attention upon the one view. His natural, his untaught and undisciplined feelings, are continually calling it off to the other. He does not, in this case, perfectly identify himself with the ideal man within the breast, he does not become himself the impartial spectator of his own conduct. The different views of both characters exist in his mind separate and distinct from one another, and each directing him to a behaviour different from that to which the other directs him. When he follows that view which honour and dignity point out to him, Nature does not, indeed, leave him without a recompense. He enjoys his own complete self-approbation, and the applause of every candid and impartial spectator. By her unalterable laws, however, he still suffers; and the recompense which she bestows, though very considerable, is not sufficient completely to compensate the sufferings which those laws inflict. Neither is it fit that it should. If it did completely compensate them, he could, from self-interest, have no motive for avoiding an accident which must necessarily diminish his utility both to himself and to society; and Nature, from her parental care of both, meant that he should anxiously avoid all such accidents. He suffers, therefore, and though, in the agony of the paroxysm, he maintains, not only the manhood of his countenance, but the sedateness and sobriety of his judgment, it requires his utmost and most fatiguing exertions, to do so.

By the constitution of human nature, however, agony can never be permanent; and, if he survives the paroxysm, he soon comes, without any effort, to enjoy his ordinary tranquillity. A man with a wooden leg suffers, no doubt, and foresees that he must continue to suffer during the reminder of his life, a very considerable inconveniency. He soon comes to view it, however, exactly as every impartial spectator views it; as an inconveniency under which he can enjoy all the ordinary pleasures both of solitude and of society. He soon identifies himself with the ideal man within the breast, he soon becomes himself the impartial spectator of his

own situation. He no longer weeps, he no longer laments, he no longer grieves over it, as a weak man may sometimes do in the beginning. The view of the impartial spectator becomes so perfectly habitual to him, that, without any effort, without any exertion, he never thinks of surveying his misfortune in any other view.

The never-failing certainty with which all men, sooner or later, accommodate themselves to whatever becomes their permanent situation, may, perhaps, induce us to think that the Stoics were, at least, thus far very nearly in the right; that, between one permanent situation and another, there was, with regard to real happiness, no essential difference: or that, if there were any difference, it was no more than just sufficient to render some of them the objects of simple choice or preference; but not of any earnest or anxious desire: and others, of simple rejection, as being fit to be set aside or avoided; but not of any earnest or anxious aversion. Happiness consists in tranquillity and enjoyment. Without tranquillity there can be no enjoyment; and where there is perfect tranquillity there is scarce any thing which is not capable of amusing. But in every permanent situation, where there is no expectation of change, the mind of every man, in a longer or shorter time, returns to its natural and usual state of tranquillity. In prosperity, after a certain time, it falls back to that state; in adversity, after a certain time, it rises up to it. In the confinement and solitude of the Bastile, after a certain time, the fashionable and frivolous Count de Lauzun recovered tranquillity enough to be capable of amusing himself with feeding a spider. A mind better furnished would, perhaps, have both sooner recovered its tranquillity, and sooner found, in its own thoughts, a much better amusement.

The great source of both the misery and disorders of human life, seems to arise from over-rating the difference between one permanent situation and another. Avarice over-rates the difference between poverty and riches: ambition, that between a private and a public station: vain-glory, that between obscurity and extensive reputation. The person under the influence of any of those extravagant passions, is not only miserable in his actual situation, but is often disposed to disturb the peace of society, in order to arrive at that which he so foolishly admires. The slightest observation, however, might satisfy him, that, in all the ordinary situations of human life, a well-disposed mind may be equally calm, equally cheerful, and equally contented. Some of those situations may, no doubt, deserve to be preferred to others: but none of them can deserve to be pursued with that passionate ardour which drives us to violate the

rules either of prudence or of justice; or to corrupt the future tranquillity of our minds, either by shame from the remembrance of our own folly, or by remorse from the horror of our own injustice. Wherever prudence does not direct, wherever justice does not permit, the attempt to change our situation, the man who does attempt it, plays at the most Unequal of all games of hazard, and stakes every thing against scarce any thing. What the favourite of the king of Epirus said to his master, may be applied to men in all the ordinary situations of human life. When the King had recounted to him, in their proper order, all the conquests which he proposed to make, and had come to the last of them; And what does your Majesty propose to do then? said the Favourite. — I propose then, said the King, to enjoy myself with my friends, and endeavour to be good company over a bottle. — And what hinders your Majesty from doing so now? replied the Favourite. In the most glittering and exalted situation that our idle fancy can hold out to us, the pleasures from which we propose to derive our real happiness, are almost always the same with those which, in our actual, though humble station, we have at all times at hand, and in our power. except the frivolous pleasures of vanity and superiority, we may find, in the most humble station, where there is only personal liberty, every other which the most exalted can afford; and the pleasures of vanity and superiority are seldom consistent with perfect tranquillity, the principle and foundation of all real and satisfactory enjoyment. Neither is it always certain that, in the splendid situation which we aim at, those real and satisfactory pleasures can be enjoyed with the same security as in the humble one which we are so very eager to abandon. examine the records of history, recollect what has happened within the circle of your own experience, consider with attention what has been the conduct of almost all the greatly unfortunate, either in private or public life, whom you may have either read of, or heard of, or remember; and you will find that the misfortunes of by far the greater part of them have arisen from their not knowing when they were well, when it was proper for them to sit still and to be contented. The inscription upon the tomb-stone of the man who had endeavoured to mend a tolerable constitution by taking physic; ‘I was well, I wished to be better; here I am; may generally be applied with great justness to the distress of disappointed avarice and ambition.

It may be thought a singular, but I believe it to be a just observation, that, in the misfortunes which admit of some remedy, the greater part of men do not either so readily or so universally recover their natural and usual tranquillity, as in those which plainly admit of none. In misfortunes

of the latter kind, it is chiefly in what may be called the paroxysm, or in the first attack, that we can discover any sensible difference between the sentiments and behaviour of the wise and those of the weak man. In the end, Time, the great and universal comforter, gradually composes the weak man to the same degree of tranquillity which a regard to his own dignity and manhood teaches the wise man to assume in the beginning. The case of the man with the wooden leg is an obvious example of this. In the irreparable misfortunes occasioned by the death of children, or of friends and relations, even a wise man may for some time indulge himself in some degree of moderated sorrow. An affectionate, but weak woman, is often, upon such occasions, almost perfectly distracted. Time, however, in a longer or shorter period, never fails to compose the weakest woman to the same degree of tranquillity as the strongest man. In all the irreparable calamities which affect himself immediately and directly, a wise man endeavours, from the beginning, to anticipate and to enjoy before-hand, that tranquillity which he foresees the course of a few months, or a few years, will certainly restore to him in the end.

In the misfortunes for which the nature of things admits, or seems to admit, of a remedy, but in which the means of applying that remedy are not within the reach of the sufferer, his vain and fruitless attempts to restore himself to his former situation, his continual anxiety for their success, his repeated disappointments upon their miscarriage, are what chiefly hinder him from resuming his natural tranquillity, and frequently render miserable, during the whole of his life, a man to whom a greater misfortune, but which plainly admitted of no remedy, would not have given a fortnight’s disturbance. In the fall from royal favour to disgrace, from power to insignificancy, from riches to poverty, from liberty to confinement, from strong health to some lingering, chronical, and perhaps incurable disease, the man who struggles the least, who most easily and readily acquiesces in the fortune which has fallen to him, very soon recovers his usual and natural tranquility, and surveys the most disagreeable circumstances of his actual situation in the same light, or, perhaps, in a much less unfavourable light, than that in which the most indifferent spectator is disposed to survey them. Faction, intrigue, and cabal, disturb the quiet of the unfortunate statesman. extravagant projects, visions of gold mines, interrupt the repose of the ruined bankrupt. The prisoner, who is continually plotting to escape from his confinement, cannot enjoy that careless security which even a prison can afford him. The medicines of the physician are often the greatest torment of the incurable patient. The monk who, in order to comfort Joanna of

Castile, upon the death of her husband Philip, told her of a King, who, fourteen years after his decease, had been restored to life again, by the prayers of his afflicted queen, was not likely, by his legendary tale, to restore sedateness to the distempered mind of that unhappy Princess. She endeavoured to repeat the same experiment in hopes of the same success; resisted for a long time the burial of her husband, soon after raised his body from the grave, attended it almost constantly herself, and watched, with all the impatient anxiety of frantic expectation, the happy moment when her wishes were to be gratified by the revival of her beloved Philip.

Our sensibility to the feelings of others, so far from being inconsistent with the manhood of self-command, is the very principle upon which that manhood is founded. The very same principle or instinct which, in the misfortune of our neighbour, prompts us to compassionate his sorrow; in our own misfortune, prompts us to restrain the abject and miserable lamentations of our own sorrow. The same principle or instinct which, in his prosperity and success, prompts us to congratulate his joy; in our own prosperity and success, prompts us to restrain the levity and intemperance of our own joy. In both cases, the propriety of our own sentiments and feelings seems to be exactly in proportion to the vivacity and force with which we enter into and conceive his sentiments and feelings.

The man of the most perfect virtue, the man whom we naturally love and revere the most, is he who joins, to the most perfect command of his own original and selfish feelings, the most exquisite sensibility both to the original and sympathetic feelings of others. The man who, to all the soft, the amiable, and the gentle virtues, joins all the great, the awful, and the respectable, must surely be the natural and proper object of our highest love and admiration.

The person best fitted by nature for acquiring the former of those two sets of virtues, is likewise best fitted for acquiring the latter. The man who feels the most for the joys and sorrows of others, is best fitted for acquiring the most complete control of his own joys and sorrows. The man of the most exquisite humanity, is naturally the most capable of acquiring the highest degree of self-command. He may not, however, always have acquired it; and it very frequently happens that he has not. He may have lived too much in ease and tranquillity. He may have never been exposed to the violence of faction, or to the hardships and hazards of war. He may have never experienced the insolence of his superiors, the jealous and malignant envy of his equals, or the pilfering injustice of his inferiors. When, in an advanced age, some accidental change of

fortune exposes him to all these, they all make too great an impression upon him. He has the disposition which fits him for acquiring the most perfect self-command; but he has never had the opportunity of acquiring it. exercise and practice have been wanting; and without these no habit can ever be tolerably established. Hardships, dangers, injuries, misfortunes, are the only masters under whom we can learn the exercise of this virtue. But these are all masters to whom nobody willingly puts himself to school.

The situations in which the gentle virtue of humanity can be most happily cultivated, are by no means the same with those which are best fitted for forming the austere virtue of self-command. The man who is himself at ease can best attend to the distress of others. The man who is himself exposed to hardships is most immediately called upon to attend to, and to control his own feelings. In the mild sunshine of undisturbed tranquillity, in the calm retirement of undissipated and philosophical leisure, the soft virtue of humanity flourishes the most, and is capable of the highest improvement. But, in such situations, the greatest and noblest exertions of self-command have little exercise. Under the boisterous and stormy sky of war and faction, of public tumult and confusion, the sturdy severity of self-command prospers the most, and can be the most successfully cultivated. But, in such situations, the strongest suggestions of humanity must frequently be stifled or neglected; and every such neglect necessarily tends to weaken the principle of humanity. As it may frequently be the duty of a soldier not to take, so it may sometimes be his duty not to give quarter; and the humanity of the man who has been several times under the necessity of submitting to this disagreeable duty, can scarce fail to suffer a considerable diminution. For his own ease, he is too apt to learn to make light of the misfortunes which he is so often under the necessity of occasioning; and the situations which call forth the noblest exertions of self-command, by imposing the necessity of violating sometimes the property, and sometimes the life of our neighbour, always tend to diminish, and too often to extinguish altogether, that sacred regard to both, which is the foundation of justice and humanity. It is upon this account, that we so frequently find in the world men of great humanity who have little self-command, but who are indolent and irresolute, and easily disheartened, either by difficulty or danger, from the most honourable pursuits; and, on the contrary men of the most perfect self-command, whom no difficulty can discourage, no danger appal, and who are at all times ready for the most daring and

desperate enterprises, but who, at the same time, seem to be hardened against all sense either of justice or humanity.

In solitude, we are apt to feel too strongly whatever relates to ourselves: we are apt to over-rate the good offices we may have done, and the injuries we may have suffered: we are apt to be too much elated by our own good, and too much dejected by our own bad fortune. The conversation of a friend brings us to a better, that of a stranger to a still better temper. The man within the breast, the abstract and ideal spectator of our sentiments and conduct, requires often to be awakened and put in mind of his duty, by the presence of the real spectator: and it is always from that spectator, from whom we can expect the least sympathy and indulgence, that we are likely to learn the most complete lesson of self-command.

Are you in adversity? Do not mourn in the darkness of solitude, do not regulate your sorrow according to the indulgent sympathy of your intimate friends; return, as soon as possible, to the day-light of the world and of society. Live with strangers, with those who know nothing, or care nothing about your misfortune; do not even shun the company of enemies; but give yourself the pleasure of mortifying their malignant joy, by making them feel how little you are affected by your calamity, and how much you are above it.

Are you in prosperity? Do not confine the enjoyment of your good fortune to your own house, to the company of your own friends, perhaps of your flatterers, of those who build upon your fortune the hopes of mending their own; frequent those who are independent of you, who can value you only for your character and conduct, and not for your fortune. Neither seek nor shun, neither intrude yourself into nor run away from the society of those who were once your superiors, and who may be hurt at finding you their equal, or, perhaps, even their superior. The impertinence of their pride may, perhaps, render their company too disagreeable: but if it should not, be assured that it is the best company you can possibly keep; and if, by the simplicity of your unassuming demeanour, you can gain their favour and kindness, you may rest satisfied that you are modest enough, and that your head has been in no respect turned by your good fortune.

The propriety of our moral sentiments is never so apt to be corrupted, as when the indulgent and partial spectator is at hand, while the indifferent and impartial one is at a great distance.

Of the conduct of one independent nation towards another, neutral nations are the only indifferent and impartial spectators. But they are

placed at so great a distance that they are almost quite out of sight. When two nations are at variance, the citizen of each pays little regard to the sentiments which foreign nations may entertain concerning his conduct. His whole ambition is to obtain the approbation of his own fellow-citizens; and as they are all animated by the same hostile passions which animate himself, he can never please them so much as by enraging and offending their enemies. The partial spectator is at hand: the impartial one at a great distance. In war and negotiation, therefore, the laws of justice are very seldom observed. Truth and fair dealing are almost totally disregarded. Treaties are violated; and the violation, if some advantage is gained by it, sheds scarce any dishonour upon the violator. The ambassador who dupes the minister of a foreign nation, is admired and applauded. The just man who disdains either to take or to give any advantage, but who would think it less dishonourable to give than to take one; the man who, in all private transactions, would be the most beloved and the most esteemed; in those public transactions is regarded as a fool and an idiot, who does not understand his business; and he incurs always the contempt, and sometimes even the detestation of his fellow-citizens. In war, not only what are called the laws of nations, are frequently violated, without bringing (among his own fellow-citizens, whose judgments he only regards) any considerable dishonour upon the violator; but those laws themselves are, the greater part of them, laid down with very little regard to the plainest and most obvious rules of justice. That the innocent, though they may have some connexion or dependency upon the guilty (which, perhaps, they themselves cannot help), should not, upon that account, suffer or be punished for the guilty, is one of the plainest and most obvious rules of justice. In the most unjust war, however, it is commonly the sovereign or the rulers only who are guilty. The subjects are almost always perfectly innocent. Whenever it suits the conveniency of a public enemy, however, the goods of the peaceable citizens are seized both at land and at sea; their lands are laid waste, their houses are burnt, and they themselves, if they presume to make any resistance, are murdered or led into captivity; and all this in the most perfect conformity to what are called the laws of nations.

The animosity of hostile factions, whether civil or ecclesiastical, is often still more furious than that of hostile nations; and their conduct towards one another is often still more atrocious. What may be called the laws of faction have often been laid down by grave authors with still less regard to the rules of justice than what are called the laws of nations. The most ferocious patriot never stated it as a serious question, Whether faith

ought to be kept with public enemies? — Whether faith ought to be kept with rebels? Whether faith ought to be kept with heretics? are questions which have been often furiously agitated by celebrated doctors both civil and ecclesiastical. It is needless to observe, I presume, that both rebels and heretics are those unlucky persons, who, when things have come to a certain degree of violence, have the misfortune to be of the weaker party. In a nation distracted by faction, there are, no doubt, always a few, though commonly but a very few, who preserve their judgment untainted by the general contagion. They seldom amount to more than, here and there, a solitary individual, without any influence, excluded, by his own candour, from the confidence of either party, and who, though he may be one of the wisest, is necessarily, upon that very account, one of the most insignificant men in the society. All such people are held in contempt and derision, frequently in detestation, by the furious zealots of both parties. A true party-man hates and despises candour; and, in reality, there is no vice which could so effectually disqualify him for the trade of a party-man as that single virtue. The real, revered, and impartial spectator, therefore, is, upon no occasion, at a greater distance than amidst the violence and rage of contending parties. To them, it may be said, that such a spectator scarce exists any where in the universe. Even to the great Judge of the universe, they impute all their own prejudices, and often view that Divine Being as animated by all their own vindictive and implacable passions. Of all the corrupters of moral sentiments, therefore, faction and fanaticism have always been by far the greatest.

Concerning the subject of self-command, I shall only observe further, that our admiration for the man who, under the heaviest and most unexpected misfortunes, continues to behave with fortitude and firmness, always supposes that his sensibility to those misfortunes is very great, and such as it requires a very great effort to conquer or command. The man who was altogether insensible to bodily pain, could deserve no applause from enduring the torture with the most perfect patience and equanimity. The man who had been created without the natural fear of death, could claim no merit from preserving his coolness and presence of mind in the midst of the most dreadful dangers. It is one of the extravagancies of Seneca, that the Stoical wise man was, in this respect, superior even to a God; that the security of the God was altogether the benefit of nature, which had exempted him from suffering; but that the security of the wise man was his own benefit, and derived altogether from himself and from his own exertions.

The sensibility of some men, however, to some of the objects which immediately affect themselves, is sometimes so strong as to render all self-command impossible. No sense of honour can control the fears of the man who is weak enough to faint, or to fall into convulsions, upon the approach of danger. Whether such weakness of nerves, as it has been called, may not, by gradual exercise and proper discipline, admit of some cure, may, perhaps, be doubtful. It seems certain that it ought never to be trusted or employed.

Chap. IV: Of the Nature of Self-deceit, and of the Origin and Use of general Rules

In order to pervert the rectitude of our own judgments concerning the propriety of our own conduct, it is not always necessary that the real and impartial spectator should be at a great distance. When he is at hand, when he is present, the violence and injustice of our own selfish passions are sometimes sufficient to induce the man within the breast to make a report very different from what the real circumstances of the case are capable of authorising.

There are two different occasions upon which we examine our own conduct, and endeavour to view it in the light in which the impartial spectator would view it: first, when we are about to act; and secondly, after we have acted. Our views are apt to be very partial in both cases; but they are apt to be most partial when it is of most importance that they should be otherwise.

When we are about to act, the eagerness of passion will seldom allow us to consider what we are doing, with the candour of an indifferent person. The violent emotions which at that time agitate us, discolour our views of things; even when we are endeavouring to place ourselves in the situation of another, and to regard the objects that interest us in the light in which they will naturally appear to him, the fury of our own passions constantly calls us back to our own place, where every thing appears magnified and misrepresented by self-love. Of the manner in which those objects would appear to another, of the view which he would take of them, we can obtain, if I may say so, but instantaneous glimpses, which vanish in a moment, and which, even while they last, are not altogether just. We cannot even for that moment divest ourselves entirely of the heat and keenness with which our peculiar situation inspires us, nor consider what we are about to do with the complete impartiality of an equitable judge. The passions, upon this account, as father Malebranche says, all justify themselves, and seem reasonable and proportioned to their objects, as long as we continue to feel them.

When the action is over, indeed, and the passions which prompted it have subsided, we can enter more coolly into the sentiments of the indifferent spectator. What before interested us is now become almost as indifferent to us as it always was to him, and we can now examine our own conduct with his candour and impartiality. The man of to-day is no

longer agitated by the same passions which distracted the man of yesterday: and when the paroxysm of emotion, in the same manner as when the paroxysm of distress, is fairly over, we can identify ourselves, as it were, with the ideal man within the breast, and, in our own character, view, as in the one case, our own situation, so in the other, our own conduct, with the severe eVes of the most impartial spectator. But our judgments now are often of little importance in comparison of what they were before; and can frequently produce nothing but vain regret and unavailing repentance; without always securing us from the like errors in time to come. It is seldom, however, that they are quite candid even in this case. The opinion which we entertain of our own character depends entirely on our judgments concerning our past conduct. It is so disagreeable to think ill of ourselves, that we often purposely turn away our view from those circumstances which might render that judgment unfavourable. He is a bold surgeon, they say, whose hand does not tremble when he performs an operation upon his own person; and he is often equally bold who does not hesitate to pull off the mysterious veil of self-delusion, which covers from his view the deformities of his own conduct. Rather than see our own behaviour under so disagreeable an aspect, we too often, foolishly and weakly, endeavour to exasperate anew those unjust passions which had formerly misled us; we endeavour by artifice to awaken our old hatreds, and irritate afresh our almost forgotten resentments: we even exert ourselves for this miserable purpose, and thus persevere in injustice, merely because we once were unjust, and because we are ashamed and afraid to see that we were so.

So partial are the views of mankind with regard to the propriety of their own conduct, both at the time of action and after it; and so difficult is it for them to view it in the light in which any indifferent spectator would consider it. But if it was by a peculiar faculty, such as the moral sense is supposed to be, that they judged of their own conduct, if they were endued with a particular power of perception, which distinguished the beauty or deformity of passions and affections; as their own passions would be more immeDiately exposed to the view of this faculty, it would judge with more accuracy concerning them, than concerning those of other men, of which it had only a more distant prospect.

This self-deceit, this fatal weakness of mankind, is the source of half the disorders of human life. If we saw ourselves in the light in which others see us, or in which they would see us if they knew all, a reformation would generally be unavoidable. We could not otherwise endure the sight.

Nature, however, has not left this weakness, which is of so much importance, altogether without a remedy; nor has she abandoned us entirely to the delusions of self-love. Our continual observations upon the conduct of others, insensibly lead us to form to ourselves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done or to be avoided. Some of their actions shock all our natural sentiments. We hear every body about us express the like detestation against them. This still further confirms, and even exasperates our natural sense of their deformity. It satisfies us that we view them in the proper light, when we see other people view them in the same light. We resolve never to be guilty of the like, nor ever, upon any account, to render ourselves in this manner the objects of universal disapprobation. We thus naturally lay down to ourselves a general rule, that all such actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or punishable, the objects of all those sentiments for which we have the greatest dread and aversion. Other actions, on the contrary, call forth our approbation, and we hear every body around us express the same favourable opinion concerning them. Every body is eager to honour and reward them. They excite all those sentiments for which we have by nature the strongest desire; the love, the gratitude, the admiration of mankind. We become ambitious of performing the like; and thus naturally lay down to ourselves a rule of another kind, that every opportunity of acting in this manner is carefully to be sought after.

It is thus that the general rules of morality are formed. They are ultimately founded upon experience of what, in particular instances, our moral faculties, our natural sense of merit and propriety, approve, or disapprove of. We do not originally approve or condemn particular actions; because, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconsistent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding from experience, that all actions of a certain kind, or circumstanced in a certain manner, are approved or disapproved of. To the man who first saw an inhuman murder, committed from avarice, envy, or unjust resentment, and upon one too that loved and trusted the murderer, who beheld the last agonies of the dying person, who heard him, with his expiring breath, complain more of the perfidy and ingratitude of his false friend, than of the violence which had been done to him, there could be no occasion, in order to conceive how horrible such an action was, that he should reflect, that one of the most sacred rules of conduct was what prohibited the taking away the life of an innocent person, that this was a plain violation of that rule, and

consequently a very blamable action. His detestation of this crime, it is evident, would arise instantaneously and antecedent to his having formed to himself any such general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, which he might afterwards form, would be founded upon the detestation which he felt necessarily arise in his own breast, at the thought of this, and every other particular action of the same kind.

When we read in history or romance, the account of actions either of generosity or of baseness, the admiration which we conceive for the one, and the contempt which we feel for the other, neither of them arise from reflecting that there are certain general rules which declare all actions of the one kind admirable, and all actions of the other contemptible. Those general rules, on the contrary, are all formed from the experience we have had of the effects which actions of all different kinds naturally produce upon us.

An amiable action, a respectable action, an horrid action, are all of them actions which naturally excite for the person who performs them, the love, the respect, or the horror of the spectator. The general rules which determine what actions are, and what are not, the objects of each of those sentiments, can be formed no other way than by observing what actions actually and in fact excite them.

When these general rules, indeed, have been formed, when they are universally acknowledged and established, by the concurring sentiments of mankind, we frequently appeal to them as to the standards of judgment, in debating concerning the degree of praise or blame that is due to certain actions of a complicated and dubious nature. They are upon these occasions commonly cited as the ultimate foundations of what is just and unjust in human conduct; and this circumstance seems to have misled several very eminent authors, to draw up their systems in such a manner, as if they had supposed that the original judgments of mankind with regard to right and wrong, were formed like the decisions of a court of judicatory, by considering first the general rule, and then, secondly, whether the particular action under consideration fell properly within its comprehension.

Those general rules of conduct, when they have been fixed in our mind by habitual reflection, are of great use in correcting the misrepresentations of self-love concerning what is fit and proper to be done in our particular situation. The man of furious resentment, if he was to listen to the dictates of that passion, would perhaps regard the death of his enemy, as but a small compensation for the wrong, he imagines, he has received; which, however, may be no more than a very slight

provocation. But his observations upon the conduct of others, have taught him how horrible all such sanguinary revenges appear. Unless his education has been very singular, he has laid it down to himself as an inviolable rule, to abstain from them upon all occasions. This rule preserves its authority with him, and renders him incapable of being guilty of such a violence. Yet the fury of his own temper may be such, that had this been the first time in which he considered such an action, he would undoubtedly have determined it to be quite just and proper, and what every impartial spectator would approve of. But that reverence for the rule which past experience has impressed upon him, checks the impetuosity of his passion, and helps him to correct the too partial views which self-love might otherwise suggest, of what was proper to be done in his situation. If he should allow himself to be so far transported by passion as to violate this rule, yet, even in this case, he cannot throw off altogether the awe and respect with which he has been accustomed to regard it. At the very time of acting, at the moment in which passion mounts the highest, he hesitates and trembles at the thought of what he is about to do: he is secretly conscious to himself that he is breaking through those measures of conduct which, in all his cool hours, he had resolved never to infringe, which he had never seen infringed by others without the highest disapprobation, and of which the infringement, his own mind forebodes, must soon render him the object of the same disagreeable sentiments. Before he can take the last fatal resolution, he is tormented with all the agonies of doubt and uncertainty; he is terrified at the thought of violating so sacred a rule, and at the same time is urged and goaded on by the fury of his desires to violate it. He changes his purpose every moment; sometimes he resolves to adhere to his principle, and not indulge a passion which may corrupt the remaining part of his life with the horrors of shame and repentance; and a momentary calm takes possession of his breast, from the prospect of that security and tranquillity which he will enjoy when he thus determines not to expose himself to the hazard of a contrary conduct. But immediately the passion rouses anew, and with fresh fury drives him on to commit what he had the instant before resolved to abstain from. Wearied and distracted with those continual irresolutions, he at length, from a sort of despair, makes the last fatal and irrecoverable step; but with that terror and amazement with which one flying from an enemy, throws himself over a precipice, where he is sure of meeting with more certain destruction than from any thing that pursues him from behind. Such are his sentiments even at the time of acting; though he is then, no doubt, less sensible of the

impropriety of his own conduct than afterwards, when his passion being gratified and palled, he begins to view what he has done in the light in which others are apt to view it; and actually feels, what he had only foreseen very imperfectly before, the stings of remorse and repentance begin to agitate and torment him.

Chap. V: Of the influence and authority of the general Rules of Morality, and that they are justly regarded as the Laws of the Deity

The regard to those general rules of conduct, is what is properly called a sense of duty, a principle of the greatest consequence in human life, and the only principle by which the bulk of mankind are capable of directing their actions. Many men behave very decently, and through the whole of their lives avoid any considerable degree of blame, who yet, perhaps, never felt the sentiment upon the propriety of which we found our approbation of their conduct, but acted merely from a regard to what they saw were the established rules of behaviour. The man who has received great benefits from another person, may, by the natural coldness of his temper, feel but a very small degree of the sentiment of gratitude. If he has been virtuously educated, however, he will often have been made to observe how odious those actions appear which denote a want of this sentiment, and how amiable the contrary. Though his heart therefore is not warmed with any grateful affection, he will strive to act as if it was, and will endeavour to pay all those regards and attentions to his patron which the liveliest gratitude could suggest. He will visit him regularly. he will behave to him respectfully; he will never talk of him but with expressions of the highest esteem, and of the many obligations which he owes to him. And what is more, he will carefully embrace every opportunity of making a proper return for past services. He may do all this too without any hypocrisy or blamable dissimulation, without any selfish intention of obtaining new favours, and without any design of imposing either upon his benefactor or the public. The motive of his actions may be no other than a reverence for the established rule of duty, a serious and earnest desire of acting, in every respect, according to the law of gratitude. A wife, in the same manner, may sometimes not feel that tender regard for her husband which is suitable to the relation that subsists between them. If she has been virtuously educated, however, she will endeavour to act as if she felt it, to be careful, officious, faithful, and sincere, and to be deficient in none of those attentions which the sentiment of conjugal affection could have prompted her to perform. Such a friend, and such a wife, are neither of them, undoubtedly, the very best of their kinds; and though both of them may have the most serious and earnest desire to fulfil every part of their duty, yet they will fail in

many nice and delicate regards, they will miss many opportunities of obliging, which they could never have overlooked if they had possessed the sentiment that is proper to their situation. Though not the very first of their kinds, however, they are perhaps the second; and if the regard to the general rules of conduct has been very strongly impressed upon them, neither of them will fail in any very essential part of their duty. None but those of the happiest mould are capable of suiting, with exact justness, their sentiments and behaviour to the smallest difference of situation, and of acting upon all occasions with the most delicate and accurate propriety. The coarse clay of which the bulk of mankind are formed, cannot be wrought up to such perfection. There is scarce any man, however, who by discipline, education, and example, may not be so impressed with a regard to general rules, as to act upon almost every occasion with tolerable decency, and through the whole of his life to avoid any considerable degree of blame.

Without this sacred regard to general rules, there is no man whose conduct can be much depended upon. It is this which constitutes the most essential difference between a man of principle and honour and a worthless fellow. The one adheres, on all occasions, steadily and resolutely to his maxims, and preserves through the whole of his life one even tenour of conduct. The other, acts variously and accidentally, as humour, inclination, or interest chance to be uppermost. Nay, such are the inequalities of humour to which all men are subject, that without this principle, the man who, in all his cool hours, had the most delicate sensibility to the propriety of conduct, might often be led to act absurdly upon the most frivolous occasions, and when it was scarce possible to assign any serious motive for his behaving in this manner. Your friend makes you a visit when you happen to be in a humour which makes it disagreeable to receive him: in your present mood his civility is very apt to appear an impertinent intrusion; and if you were to give way to the views of things which at this time occur, though civil in your temper, you would behave to him with coldness and contempt. What renders you incapable of such a rudeness, is nothing but a regard to the general rules of civility and hospitality, which prohibit it. That habitual reverence which your former experience has taught you for these, enables you to act, upon all such occasions, with nearly equal propriety, and hinders those inequalities of temper, to which all men are subject, from influencing your conduct in any very sensible degree. But if without regard to these general rules, even the duties of politeness, which are so easily observed, and which one can scarce have any serious motive to

violate, would yet be so frequently violated, what would become of the duties of justice, of truth, of chastity, of fidelity, which it is often so difficult to observe, and which there may be so many strong motives to violate? But upon the tolerable observance of these duties, depends the very existence of human society, which would crumble into nothing if mankind were not generally impressed with a reverence for those important rules of conduct.

This reverence is still further enhanced by an opinion which is first impressed by nature, and afterwards confirmed by reasoning and philosophy, that those important rules of morality are the commands and laws of the Deity, who will finally reward the obedient, and punish the transgressors of their duty.

This opinion or apprehension, I say, seems first to be impressed by nature. Men are naturally led to ascribe to those mysterious beings, whatever they are, which happen, in any country, to be the objects of religious fear, all their own sentiments and passions. They have no other, they can conceive no other to ascribe to them. Those unknown intelligences which they imagine but see not, must necessarily be formed with some sort of resemblance to those intelligences of which they have experience. During the ignorance and darkness of pagan superstition, mankind seem to have formed the ideas of their divinities with so little delicacy, that they ascribed to them, indiscriminately, all the passions of human nature, those not excepted which do the least honour to our species, such as lust, hunger, avarice, envy, revenge. They could not fail, therefore, to ascribe to those beings, for the excellence of whose nature they still conceived the highest admiration, those sentiments and qualities which are the great ornaments of humanity, and which seem to raise it to a resemblance of divine perfection, the love of virtue and beneficence, and the abhorrence of vice and injustice. The man who was injured, called upon Jupiter to be witness of the wrong that was done to him, and could not doubt, but that divine being would behold it with the same indignation which would animate the meanest of mankind, who looked on when injustice was committed. The man who did the injury, felt himself to be the proper object of the detestation and resentment of mankind; and his natural fears led him to impute the same sentiments to those awful beings, whose presence he could not avoid, and whose power he could not resist. These natural hopes and fears, and suspicions, were propagated by sympathy, and confirmed by education; and the gods were universally represented and believed to be the rewarders of humanity and mercy, and the avengers of perfidy and injustice. And thus

religion, even in its rudest form, gave a sanction to the rules of morality, long before the age of artificial reasoning and philosophy. That the terrors of religion should thus enforce the natural sense of duty, was of too much importance to the happiness of mankind, for nature to leave it dependent upon the slowness and uncertainty of philosophical researches.

These researches, however, when they came to take place, confirmed those original anticipations of nature. Upon whatever we suppose that our moral faculties are founded, whether upon a certain modification of reason, upon an original instinct, called a moral sense, or upon some other principle of our nature, it cannot be doubted, that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the most evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were set up within us to be the supreme arbiters of all our actions, to superintend all our senses, passions, and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or restrained. Our moral faculties are by no means, as some have pretended, upon a level in this respect with the other faculties and appetites of our nature, endowed with no more right to restrain these last, than these last are to restrain them. No other faculty or principle of action judges of any other. Love does not judge of resentment, nor resentment of love. Those two passions may be opposite to one another, but cannot, with any propriety, be said to approve or disapprove of one another. But it is the peculiar office of those faculties now under our consideration to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature. They may be considered as a sort of senses of which those principles are the objects. Every sense is supreme over its own objects. There is no appeal from the eye with regard to the beauty of colours, nor from the ear with regard to the harmony of sounds, nor from the taste with regard to the agreeableness of flavours. Each of those senses judges in the last resort of its own objects. Whatever gratifies the taste is sweet, whatever pleases the eye is beautiful, whatever soothes the ear is harmonious. The very essence of each of those qualities consists in its being fitted to please the sense to which it is addressed. It belongs to our moral faculties, in the same manner to determine when the ear ought to be soothed, when the eye ought to be indulged, when the taste ought to be gratified, when and how far every other principle of our nature ought either to be indulged or restrained. What is agreeable to our moral faculties, is fit, and right, and proper to be done; the contrary wrong, unfit, and improper. The sentiments which they approve of, are graceful and becoming: the

contrary, ungraceful and unbecoming. The very words, right, wrong, fit, improper, graceful, unbecoming, mean only what pleases or displeases those faculties.

Since these, therefore, were plainly intended to be the governing principles of human nature, the rules which they prescribe are to be regarded as the commands and laws of the Deity, promulgated by those vice-gerents which he has thus set up within us. All general rules are commonly denominated laws: thus the general rules which bodies observe in the communication of motion, are called the laws of motion. But those general rules which our moral faculties observe in approving or condemning whatever sentiment or action is subjected to their examination, may much more justly be denominated such. They have a much greater resemblance to what are properly called laws, those general rules which the sovereign lays down to direct the conduct of his subjects. Like them they are rules to direct the free actions of men: they are prescribed most surely by a lawful superior, and are attended too with the sanction of rewards and punishments. Those vice-gerents of God within us, never fail to punish the violation of them, by the torments of inward shame, and self-condemnation; and on the contrary, always reward obedience with tranquillity of mind, with contentment, and self-satisfaction.

There are innumerable other considerations which serve to confirm the same conclusion. The happiness of mankind, as well as of all other rational creatures, seems to have been the original purpose intended by the Author of nature, when he brought them into existence. No other end seems worthy of that supreme wisdom and divine benignity which we necessarily ascribe to him; and this opinion, which we are led to by the abstract consideration of his infinite perfections, is still more confirmed by the examination of the works of nature, which seem all intended to promote happiness, and to guard against misery. But by acting according to the dictates of our moral faculties, we necessarily pursue the most effectual means for promoting the happiness of mankind, and may therefore be said, in some sense, to co-operate with the Deity, and to advance as far as in our power the plan of Providence. By acting other ways, on the contrary, we seem to obstruct, in some measure, the scheme which the Author of nature has established for the happiness and perfection of the world, and to declare ourselves, if I may say so, in some measure the enemies of God. Hence we are naturally encouraged to hope for his extraordinary favour and reward in the one case, and to dread his vengeance and punishment in the other.

There are besides many other reasons, and many other natural principles, which all tend to confirm and inculcate the same salutary doctrine. If we consider the general rules by which external prosperity and adversity are commonly distributed in this life, we shall find, that notwithstanding the disorder in which all things appear to be in this world, yet even here every virtue naturally meets with its proper reward, with the recompense which is most fit to encourage and promote it; and this too so surely, that it requires a very extraordinary concurrence of circumstances entirely to disappoint it. What is the reward most proper for encouraging industry, prudence, and circumspection? Success in every sort of business. And is it possible that in the whole of life these virtues should fail of attaining it? Wealth and external honours are their proper recompense, and the recompense which they can seldom fail of acquiring. What reward is most proper for promoting the practice of truth, justice, and humanity? The confidence, the esteem, and love of those we live with. Humanity does not desire to be great, but to be beloved. It is not in being rich that truth and justice would rejoice, but in being trusted and believed, recompenses which those virtues must almost always acquire. By some very extraordinary and unlucky circumstance, a good man may come to be suspected of a crime of which he was altogether incapable, and upon that account be most unjustly exposed for the remaining part of his life to the horror and aversion of mankind. By an accident of this kind he may be said to lose his all, notwithstanding his integrity and justice; in the same manner as a cautious man, notwithstanding his utmost circumspection, may be ruined by an earthquake or an inundation. Accidents of the first kind, however, are perhaps still more rare, and still more contrary to the common course of things than those of the second; and it still remains true, that the practice of truth, justice, and humanity is a certain and almost infallible method of acquiring what those virtues chiefly aim at, the confidence and love of those we live with. A person may be very easily misrepresented with regard to a particular action; but it is scarce possible that he should be so with regard to the general tenor of his conduct. An innocent man may be believed to have done wrong: this, however, will rarely happen. On the contrary, the established opinion of the innocence of his manners, will often lead us to absolve him where he has really been in the fault, notwithstanding very strong presumptions. A knave, in the same manner, may escape censure, or even meet with applause, for a particular knavery, in which his conduct is not understood. But no man was ever habitually such, without being almost universally known to be so, and

without being even frequently suspected of guilt, when he was in reality perfectly innocent. And so far as vice and virtue can be either punished or rewarded by the sentiments and opinions of mankind, they both, according to the common course of things, meet even here with something more than exact and impartial justice.

But though the general rules by which prosperity and adversity are commonly distributed, when considered in this cool and philosophical light, appear to be perfectly suited to the situation of mankind in this life, yet they are by no means suited to some of our natural sentiments. Our natural love and admiration for some virtues is such, that we should wish to bestow on them all sorts of honours and rewards, even those which we must acknowledge to be the proper recompenses of other qualities, with which those virtues are not always accompanied. Our detestation, on the contrary, for some vices is such, that we should desire to heap upon them every sort of disgrace and disaster, those not excepted which are the natural consequences of very different qualities. Magnanimity, generosity, and justice, command so high a degree of admiration, that we desire to see them crowned with wealth, and power, and honours of every kind, the natural consequences of prudence, industry, and application; qualities with which those virtues are not inseparably connected. Fraud, falsehood, brutality, and violence, on the other hand, excite in every human breast such scorn and abhorrence, that our indignation rouses to see them possess those advantages which they may in some sense be said to have merited, by the diligence and industry with which they are sometimes attended. The industrious knave cultivates the soil; the indolent good man leaves it uncultivated. Who ought to reap the harvest? who starve, and who live in plenty? The natural course of things decides it in favour of the knave: the natural sentiments of mankind in favour of the man of virtue. Man judges, that the good qualities of the one are greatly over-recompensed by those advantages which they tend to procure him, and that the omissions of the other are by far too severely punished by the distress which they naturally bring upon him; and human laws, the consequences of human sentiments, forfeit the life and the estate of the industrious and cautious traitor, and reward, by extraordinary recompenses, the fidelity and public spirit of the improvident and careless good citizen. Thus man is by Nature directed to correct, in some measure, that distribution of things which she herself would otherwise have made. The rules which for this purpose she prompts him to follow, are different from those which she herself observes. She bestows upon every virtue, and upon every vice, that

precise reward or punishment which is best fitted to encourage the one, or to restrain the other. She is directed by this sole consideration, and pays little regard to the different degrees of merit and demerit, which they may seem to possess in the sentiments and passions of man. Man, on the contrary, pays regard to this only, and would endeavour to render the state of every virtue precisely proportioned to that degree of love and esteem, and of every vice to that degree of contempt and abhorrence, which he himself conceives for it. The rules which she follows are fit for her, those which he follows for him: but both are calculated to promote the same great end, the order of the world, and the perfection and happiness of human nature.

But though man is thus employed to alter that distribution of things which natural events would make, if left to themselves; though, like the gods of the poets, he is perpetually interposing, by extraordinary means, in favour of virtue, and in opposition to vice, and, like them, endeavours to turn away the arrow that is aimed at the head of the righteous, but to accelerate the sword of destruction that is lifted up against the wicked; yet he is by no means able to render the fortune of either quite suitable to his own sentiments and wishes. The natural course of things cannot be entirely controlled by the impotent endeavours of man: the current is too rapid and too strong for him to stop it; and though the rules which direct it appear to have been established for the wisest and best purposes, they sometimes produce effects which shock all his natural sentiments. That a great combination of men should prevail over a small one; that those who engage in an enterprise with forethought and all necessary preparation, should prevail over such as oppose them without any; and that every end should be acquired by those means only which Nature has established for acquiring it, seems to be a rule not only necessary and unavoidable in itself, but even useful and proper for rousing the industry and attention of mankind. Yet, when, in consequence of this rule, violence and artifice prevail over sincerity and justice, what indignation does it not excite in the breast of every human spectator? What sorrow and compassion for the sufferings of the innocent, and what furious resentment against the success of the oppressor? We are equally grieved and enraged at the wrong that is done, but often find it altogether out of our power to redress it. When we thus despair of finding any force upon earth which can check the triumph of injustice, we naturally appeal to heaven, and hope, that the great Author of our nature will himself execute hereafter, what all the principles which he has given us for the direction of our conduct, prompt us to attempt even here; that he will

complete the plan which he himself has thus taught us to begin; and will, in a life to come, render to every one according to the works which he has performed in this world. And thus we are led to the belief of a future state, not only by the weaknesses, by the hopes and fears of human nature, but by the noblest and best principles which belong to it, by the love of virtue, and by the abhorrence of vice and injustice.

‘Does it suit the greatness of God,’ says the eloquent and philosophical bishop of Clermont, with that passionate and exaggerating force of imagination, which seems sometimes to exceed the bounds of decorum; ‘does it suit the greatness of God, to leave the world which he has created in so universal a disorder? To see the wicked prevail almost always over the just; the innocent dethroned by the usurper; the father become the victim of the ambition of an unnatural son; the husband expiring under the stroke of a barbarous and faithless wife? From the height of his greatness ought God to behold those melancholy events as a fantastical amusement, without taking any share in them? Because he is great, should he be weak, or unjust, or barbarous? Because men are little, ought they to be allowed either to be dissolute without punishment, or virtuous without reward? O God! if this is the character of your Supreme Being; if it is you whom we adore under such dreadful ideas; I can no longer acknowledge you for my father, for my protector, for the comforter of my sorrow, the support of my weakness, the rewarder of my fidelity. You would then be no more than an indolent and fantastical tyrant, who sacrifices mankind to his insolent vanity, and who has brought them out of nothing, only to make them serve for the sport of his leisure and of his caprice.’

When the general rules which determine the merit and demerit of actions, come thus to be regarded as the laws of an All-powerful Being, who watches over our conduct, and who, in a life to come, will reward the observance, and punish the breach of them; they necessarily acquire a new sacredness from this consideration. That our regard to the will of the Deity ought to be the supreme rule of our conduct, can be doubted of by nobody who believes his existence. The very thought of disobedience appears to involve in it the most shocking impropriety. How vain, how absurd would it be for man, either to oppose or to neglect the commands that were laid upon him by Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Power. How unnatural, how impiously ungrateful not to reverence the precepts that were prescribed to him by the infinite goodness of his Creator, even though no punishment was to follow their violation. The sense of propriety too is here well supported by the strongest motives of self-

interest. The idea that, however we may escape the observation of man, or be placed above the reach of human punishment, yet we are always acting under the eye, and exposed to the punishment of God, the great avenger of injustice, is a motive capable of restraining the most headstrong passions, with those at least who, by constant reflection, have rendered it familiar to them.

It is in this manner that religion enforces the natural sense of duty: and hence it is, that mankind are generally disposed to place great confidence in the probity of those who seem deeply impressed with religious sentiments. Such persons, they imagine, act under an additional tie, besides those which regulate the conduct of other men. The regard to the propriety of action, as well as to reputation, the regard to the applause of his own breast, as well as to that of others, are motives which they suppose have the same influence over the religious man, as over the man of the world. But the former lies under another restraint, and never acts deliberately but as in the presence of that Great Superior who is finally to recompense him according to his deeds. A greater trust is reposed, upon this account, in the regularity and exactness of his conduct. And wherever the natural principles of religion are not corrupted by the factious and party zeal of some worthless cabal; wherever the first duty which it requires, is to fulfil all the obligations of morality; wherever men are not taught to regard frivolous observances, as more immediate duties of religion, than acts of justice and beneficence; and to imagine, that by sacrifices, and ceremonies, and vain supplications, they can bargain with the Deity for fraud, and perfidy, and violence, the world undoubtedly judges right in this respect, and justly places a double confidence in the rectitude of the religious man’s behaviour.

Chap. VI: In what cases the Sense of Duty ought to be the sole principle of our conduct; and in what cases it ought to concur with other motives

Religion affords such strong motives to the practice of virtue, and guards us by such powerful restraints from the temptations of vice, that many have been led to suppose, that religious principles were the sole laudable motives of action. We ought neither, they said, to reward from gratitude, nor punish from resentment; we ought neither to protect the helplessness of our children, nor afford support to the infirmities of our parents, from natural affection. All affections for particular objects, ought to be extinguished in our breast, and one great affection take the place of all others, the love of the Deity, the desire of rendering ourselves agreeable to him, and of directing our conduct, in every respect, according to his will. We ought not to be grateful from gratitude, we ought not to be charitable from humanity, we ought not to be public-spirited from the love of our country, nor generous and just from the love of mankind. The sole principle and motive of our conduct in the performance of all those different duties, ought to be a sense that God has commanded us to perform them. I shall not at present take time to examine this opinion particularly; I shall only observe, that we should not have expected to have found it entertained by any sect, who professed themselves of a religion in which, as it is the first precept to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, so it is the second to love our neighbour as we love ourselves; and we love ourselves surely for our own sakes, and not merely because we are commanded to do so. That the sense of duty should be the sole principle of our conduct, is no where the precept of Christianity; but that it should be the ruling and the governing one, as philosophy, and as, indeed, common sense directs. It may be a question, however, in what cases our actions ought to arise chiefly or entirely from a sense of duty, or from a regard to general rules; and in what cases some other sentiment or affection ought to concur, and have a principal influence.

The decision of this question, which cannot, perhaps, be given with any very great accuracy, will depend upon two different circumstances; first, upon the natural agreeableness or deformity of the sentiment or

affection which would prompt us to any action independent of all regard to general rules; and, secondly, upon the precision and exactness, or the looseness and inaccuracy, of the general rules themselves.

I. First, I say, it will depend upon the natural agreeableness or deformity of the affection itself, how far our actions ought to arise from it, or entirely proceed from a regard to the general rule.

All those graceful and admired actions, to which the benevolent affections would prompt us, ought to proceed as much from the passions themselves, as from any regard to the general rules of conduct. A benefactor thinks himself but ill requited, if the person upon whom he has bestowed his good offices, repays them merely from a cold sense of duty, and without any affection to his person. A husband is dissatisfied with the most obedient wife, when he imagines her conduct is animated by no other principle besides her regard to what the relation she stands in requires. Though a son should fail in none of the offices of filial duty, yet if he wants that affectionate reverence which it so well becomes him to feel, the parent may justly complain of his indifference. Nor could a son be quite satisfied with a parent who, though he performed all the duties of his situation, had nothing of that fatherly fondness which might have been expected from him. With regard to all such benevolent and social affections, it is agreeable to see the sense of duty employed rather to restrain than to enliven them, rather to hinder us from doing too much, than to prompt us to do what we ought. It gives us pleasure to see a father obliged to check his own fondness, a friend obliged to set bounds to his natural generosity, a person who has received a benefit, obliged to restrain the too sanguine gratitude of his own temper.

The contrary maxim takes place with regard to the malevolent and unsocial passions. We ought to reward from the gratitude and generosity of our own hearts, without any reluctance, and without being obliged to reflect how great the propriety of rewarding: but we ought always to punish with reluctance, and more from a sense of the propriety of punishing, than from any savage disposition to revenge. Nothing is more graceful than the behaviour of the man who appears to resent the greatest injuries, more from a sense that they deserve, and are the proper objects of resentment, than from feeling himself the furies of that disagreeable passion; who, like a judge, considers only the general rule, which determines what vengeance is due for each particular offence; who, in executing that rule, feels less for what himself has suffered, than for what the offender is about to suffer; who, though in wrath, remembers mercy, and is disposed to interpret the rule in the most gentle and favourable

manner, and to allow all the alleviations which the most candid humanity could, consistently with good sense, admit of.

As the selfish passions, according to what has formerly been observed, hold, in other respects, a sort of middle place, between the social and unsocial affections, so do they likewise in this. The pursuit of the objects of private interest, in all common, little, and ordinary cases, ought to flow rather from a regard to the general rules which prescribe such conduct, than from any passion for the objects themselves; but upon more important and extraordinary occasions, we should be awkward, insipid, and ungraceful, if the objects themselves did not appear to animate us with a considerable degree of passion. To be anxious, or to be laying a plot either to gain or to save a single shilling, would degrade the most vulgar tradesman in the opinion of all his neighbours. Let his circumstances be ever so mean, no attention to any such small matters, for the sake of the things themselves, must appear in his conduct. His situation may require the most severe oeconomy and the most exact assiduity: but each particular exertion of that oeconomy and assiduity must proceed, not so much from a regard for that particular saving or gain, as for the general rule which to him prescribes, with the utmost rigour, such a tenor of conduct. His parsimony to-day must not arise from a desire of the particular three-pence which be will save by it, nor his attendance in his shop from a passion for the particular ten-pence which he will acquire by it: both the one and the other ought to proceed solely from a regard to the general rule, which prescribes, with the most unrelenting severity, this plan of conduct to all persons in his way of life. In this consists the difference between the character of a miser and that of a person of exact oeconomy and assiduity. The one is anxious about small matters for their own sake; the other attends to them only in consequence of the scheme of life which he has laid down to himself.

It is quite otherwise with regard to the more extraordinary and important objects of self-interest. A person appears mean-spirited, who does not pursue these with some degree of earnestness for their own sake. We should despise a prince who was not anxious about conquering or defending a province. We should have little respect for a private gentleman who did not exert himself to gain an estate, or even a considerable office, when he could acquire them without either meanness or injustice. A member of parliament who shews no keenness about his own election, is abandoned by his friends, as altogether unworthy of their attachment. Even a tradesman is thought a poor-spirited fellow among his neighbours, who does not bestir himself to get what they call

an extraordinary job, or some uncommon advantage. This spirit and keenness constitutes the difference between the man of enterprise and the man of dull regularity. Those great objects of self-interest, of which the loss or acquisition quite changes the rank of the person, are the objects of the passion properly called ambition; a passion, which when it keeps within the bounds of prudence and justice, is always admired in the world, and has even sometimes a certain irregular greatness, which dazzles the imagination, when it passes the limits of both these virtues, and is not only unjust but extravagant. Hence the general admiration for heroes and conquerors, and even for statesmen, whose projects have been very daring and extensive, though altogether devoid of justice; such as those of the Cardinals of Richlieu and of Retz. The objects of avarice and ambition differ only in their greatness. A miser is as furious about a halfpenny, as a man of ambition about the conquest of a kingdom.

II. Secondly, I say, it will depend partly upon the precision and exactness, or the looseness and inaccuracy of the general rules themselves, how far our conduct ought to proceed entirely from a regard to them.

The general rules of almost all the virtues, the general rules which determine what are the offices of prudence, of charity, of generosity, of gratitude, of friendship, are in many respects loose and inaccurate, admit of many exceptions, and require so many modifications, that it is scarce possible to regulate our conduct entirely by a regard to them. The common proverbial maxims of prudence, being founded in universal experience, are perhaps the best general rules which can be given about it. To affect, however, a very strict and literal adherence to them would evidently be the most absurd and ridiculous pedantry. Of all the virtues I have just now mentioned, gratitude is that, perhaps, of which the rules are the most precise, and admit of the fewest exceptions. That as soon as we can we should make a return of equal, and if possible of superior value to the services we have received, would seem to be a pretty plain rule, and one which admitted of scarce any exceptions. Upon the most superficial examination, however, this rule will appear to be in the highest degree loose and inaccurate, and to admit of ten thousand exceptions. If your benefactor attended you in your sickness, ought you to attend him in his? or can you fulfil the obligation of gratitude, by making a return of a different kind? If you ought to attend him, how long ought you to attend him? The same time which he attended you, or longer, and how much longer? If your friend lent you money in your distress, ought you to lend him money in his? How much ought you to

lend him? When ought you to lend him? Now, or to-morrow, or next month? And for how long a time? It is evident, that no general rule can be laid down, by which a precise answer can, in all cases, be given to any of these questions. The difference between his character and yours, between his circumstances and yours, may be such, that you may be perfectly grateful, and justly refuse to lend him a halfpenny: and, on the contrary, you may be willing to lend, or even to give him ten times the sum which he lent you, and yet justly be accused of the blackest ingratitude, and of not having fulfilled the hundredth part of the obligation you lie under. As the duties of gratitude, however, are perhaps the most sacred of all those which the beneficent virtues prescribe to us, so the general rules which determine them are, as I said before, the most accurate. Those which ascertain the actions required by friendship, humanity, hospitality, generosity, are still more vague and indeterminate.

There is, however, one virtue of which the general rules determine with the greatest exactness every external action which it requires. This virtue is justice. The rules of justice are accurate in the highest degree, and admit of no exceptions or modifications, but such as may be ascertained as accurately as the rules themselves, and which generally, indeed, flow from the very same principles with them. If I owe a man ten pounds, justice requires that I should precisely pay him ten pounds, either at the time agreed upon, or when he demands it. What I ought to perform, how much I ought to perform, when and where I ought to perform it, the whole nature and circumstances of the action prescribed, are all of them precisely fixt and determined. Though it may be awkward and pedantic, therefore, to affect too strict an adherence to the common rules of prudence or generosity, there is no pedantry in sticking fast by the rules of justice. On the contrary, the most sacred regard is due to them; and the actions which this virtue requires are never so properly performed, as when the chief motive for performing them is a reverential and religious regard to those general rules which require them. In the practice of the other virtues, our conduct should rather be directed by a certain idea of propriety, by a certain taste for a particular tenor of conduct, than by any regard to a precise maxim or rule; and we should consider the end and foundation of the rule, more than the rule itself. But it is otherwise with regard to justice: the man who in that refines the least, and adheres with the most obstinate stedfastness to the general rules themselves, is the most commendable, and the most to be depended upon. Though the end of the rules of justice be, to hinder us from hurting our neighbour, it may frequently be a crime to violate them, though we

could pretend, with some pretext of reason, that this particular violation could do no hurt. A man often becomes a villain the moment he begins, even in his own heart, to chicane in this manner. The moment he thinks of departing from the most staunch and positive adherence to what those inviolable precepts prescribe to him, he is no longer to be trusted, and no man can say what degree of guilt he may not arrive at. The thief imagines he does no evil, when he steals from the rich, what he supposes they may easily want, and what possibly they may never even know has been stolen from them. The adulterer imagines he does no evil, when he corrupts the wife of his friend, provided he covers his intrigue from the suspicion of the husband, and does not disturb the peace of the family. When once we begin to give way to such refinements, there is no enormity so gross of which we may not be capable.

The rules of justice may be compared to the rules of grammar; the rules of the other virtues, to the rules which critics lay down for the attainment of what is sublime and elegant in composition. The one, are precise, accurate, and indispensable. The other, are loose, vague, and indeterminate, and present us rather with a general idea of the perfection we ought to aim at, than afford us any certain and infallible directions for acquiring it. A man may learn to write grammatically by rule, with the most absolute infallibility; and so, perhaps, he may be taught to act justly. But there are no rules whose observance will infallibly lead us to the attainment of elegance or sublimity in writing; though there are some which may help us, in some measure, to correct and ascertain the vague ideas which we might otherwise have entertained of those perfections. And there are no rules by the knowledge of which we can infallibly be taught to act upon all occasions with prudence, with just magnanimity, or proper beneficence: though there are some which may enable us to correct and ascertain, in several respects, the imperfect ideas which we might otherwise have entertained of those virtues.

It may sometimes happen, that with the most serious and earnest desire of acting so as to deserve approbation, we may mistake the proper rules of conduct, and thus be misled by that very principle which ought to direct us. It is in vain to expect, that in this case mankind should entirely approve of our behaviour. They cannot enter into that absurd idea of duty which influenced us, nor go along with any of the actions which follow from it. There is still, however, something respectable in the character and behaviour of one who is thus betrayed into vice, by a wrong sense of duty, or by what is called an erroneous conscience. How fatally soever he may be misled by it, he is still, with the generous and

humane, more the object of commiseration than of hatred or resentment. They lament the weakness of human nature, which exposes us to such unhappy delusions, even while we are most sincerely labouring after perfection, and endeavouring to act according to the best principle which can possibly direct us. False notions of religion are almost the only causes which can occasion any very gross perversion of our natural sentiments in this way; and that principle which gives the greatest authority to the rules of duty, is alone capable of distorting our ideas of them in any considerable degree. In all other cases common sense is sufficient to direct us, if not to the most exquisite propriety of conduct, yet to something which is not very far from it; and provided we are in earnest desirous to do well, our behaviour will always, upon the whole, be praise-worthy. That to obey the will of the Deity, is the first rule of duty, all men are agreed. But concerning the particular commandments which that will may impose upon us, they differ widely from one another. In this, therefore, the greatest mutual forbearance and toleration is due; and though the defence of society requires that crimes should be punished, from whatever motives they proceed, yet a good man will always punish them with reluctance, when they evidently proceed from false notions of religious duty. He will never feel against those who commit them that indignation which he feels against other criminals, but will rather regret, and sometimes even admire their unfortunate firmness and magnanimity, at the very time that he punishes their crime. In the tragedy of Mahomet, one of the finest of Mr Voltaire’s, it is well represented, what ought to be our sentiments for crimes which proceed from such motives. In that tragedy, two young people of different sexes, of the most innocent and virtuous dispositions, and without any other weakness except what endears them the more to us, a mutual fondness for one another, are instigated by the strongest motives of a false religion, to commit a horrid murder, that shocks all the principles of human nature. A venerable old man, who had expressed the most tender affection for them both, for whom, notwithstanding he was the avowed enemy of their religion, they had both conceived the highest reverence and esteem, and who was in reality their father, though they did not know him to be such, is pointed out to them as a sacrifice which God had expressly required at their hands, and they are commanded to kill him. While they are about executing this crime, they are tortured with all the agonies which can arise from the struggle between the idea of the indispensableness of religious duty on the one side, and compassion, gratitude, reverence for the age, and love for the humanity and virtue of

the person whom they are going to destroy, on the other. The representation of this exhibits one of the most interesting, and perhaps the most instructive spectacle that was ever introduced upon any theatre. The sense of duty, however, at last prevails over all the amiable weaknesses of human nature. They execute the crime imposed upon them; but immediately discover their error, and the fraud which had deceived them, and are distracted with horror, remorse, and resentment. Such as are our sentiments for the unhappy Seid and Palmira, such ought we to feel for every person who is in this manner misled by religion, when we are sure that it is really religion which misleads him, and not the pretence of it, which is made a cover to some of the worst of human passions.

As a person may act wrong by following a wrong sense of duty, so nature may sometimes prevail, and lead him to act right in opposition to it. We cannot in this case be displeased to see that motive prevail, which we think ought to prevail, though the person himself is so weak as to think otherwise. As his conduct, however, is the effect of weakness, not principle, we are far from bestowing upon it any thing that approaches to complete approbation. A bigoted Roman Catholic, who, during the massacre of St Bartholomew, had been so overcome by compassion, as to save some unhappy Protestants, whom he thought it his duty to destroy, would not seem to be entitled to that high applause which we should have bestowed upon him, had he exerted the same generosity with complete self-approbation. We might be pleased with the humanity of his temper, but we should still regard him with a sort of pity which is altogether inconsistent with the admiration that is due to perfect virtue. It is the same case with all the other passions. We do not dislike to see them exert themselves properly, even when a false notion of duty would direct the person to restrain them. A very devout Quaker, who upon being struck upon one cheek, instead of turning up the other, should so far forget his literal interpretation of our Saviour’s precept, as to bestow some good discipline upon the brute that insulted him, would not be disagreeable to us. We should laugh and be diverted with his spirit, and rather like him the better for it. But we should by no means regard him with that respect and esteem which would seem due to one who, upon a like occasion, had acted properly from a just sense of what was proper to be done. No action can properly be called virtuous, which is not accompanied with the sentiment of self-approbation.

Part IV: Of the Effect of Utility upon the Sentiment of Approbation Consisting of One Section

Chap. I: Of the beauty which the appearance of Utility bestows upon all the productions of art, and of the extensive influence of this species of Beauty

That utility is one of the principal sources of beauty has been observed by every body, who has considered with any attention what constitutes the nature of beauty. The conveniency of a house gives pleasure to the spectator as well as its regularity, and he is as much hurt when he observes the contrary defect, as when he sees the correspondent windows of different forms, or the door not placed exactly in the middle of the building. That the fitness of any system or machine to produce the end for which it was intended, bestows a certain propriety and beauty upon the whole, and renders the very thought and contemplation of it agreeable, is so very obvious that nobody has overlooked it.

The cause too, why utility pleases, has of late been assigned by an ingenious and agreeable philosopher, who joins the greatest depth of thought to the greatest elegance of expression, and possesses the singular and happy talent of treating the abstrusest subjects not only with the most perfect perspicuity, but with the most lively eloquence. The utility of any object, according to him, pleases the master by perpetually suggesting to him the pleasure or conveniency which it is fitted to promote. Every time he looks at it, he is put in mind of this pleasure; and the object in this manner becomes a source of perpetual satisfaction and enjoyment. The spectator enters by sympathy into the sentiments of the master, and necessarily views the object under the same agreeable aspect. When we visit the palaces of the great, we cannot help conceiving the satisfaction we should enjoy if we ourselves were the masters, and were possessed of so much artful and ingeniously contrived accommodation. A similar account is given why the appearance of inconveniency should render any object disagreeable both to the owner and to the spectator.

But that this fitness, this happy contrivance of any production of art, should often be more valued, than the very end for which it was intended; and that the exact adjustment of the means for attaining any conveniency or pleasure, should frequently be more regarded, than that very conveniency or pleasure, in the attainment of which their whole merit would seem to consist, has not, so far as I know, been yet taken

notice of by any body. That this however is very frequently the case, may be observed in a thousand instances, both in the most frivolous and in the most important concerns of human life.

When a person comes into his chamber, and finds the chairs all standing in the middle of the room, he is angry with his servant, and rather than see them continue in that disorder, perhaps takes the trouble himself to set them all in their places with their backs to the wall. The whole propriety of this new situation arises from its superior conveniency in leaving the floor free and disengaged. To attain this conveniency he voluntarily puts himself to more trouble than all he could have suffered from the want of it; since nothing was more easy, than to have set himself down upon one of them, which is probably what he does when his labour is over. What he w.anted therefore, it seems, was not so much this conveniency, as that arrangement of things which promotes it. Yet it is this conveniency which ultimately recommends that arrangement, and bestows upon it the whole of its propriety and beauty.

A watch, in the same manner, that falls behind above two minutes in a day, is despised by one curious in watches. He sells it perhaps for a couple of guineas, and purchases another at fifty, which will not lose above a minute in a fortnight. The sole use of watches however, is to tell us what o'clock it is, and to hinder us from breaking any engagement, or suffering any other inconveniency by our ignorance in that particular point. But the person so nice with regard to this machine, will not always be found either more scrupulously punctual than other men, or more anxiously concerned upon any other account, to know precisely what time of day it is. What interests him is not so much the attainment of this piece of knowledge, as the perfection of the machine which serves to attain it.

How many people ruin themselves by laying out money on trinkets of frivolous utility? What pleases these lovers of toys is not so much the utility, as the aptness of the machines which are fitted to promote it. All their pockets are stuffed with little conveniencies. They contrive new pockets, unknown in the clothes of other people, in order to carry a greater number. They walk about loaded with a multitude of baubles, in weight and sometimes in value not inferior to an ordinary Jew's-box, some of which may sometimes be of some little use, but all of which might at all times be very well spared, and of which the whole utility is certainly not worth the fatigue of bearing the burden.

Nor is it only with regard to such frivolous objects that our conduct is influenced by this principle; it is often the secret motive of the most

serious and important pursuits of both private and public life.

The poor man’s son, whom heaven in its anger has visited with ambition, when he begins to look around him, admires the condition of the rich. He finds the cottage of his father too small for his accommodation, and fancies he should be lodged more at his ease in a palace. He is displeased with being obliged to walk a-foot, or to endure the fatigue of riding on horseback. He sees his superiors carried about in machines, and imagines that in one of these he could travel with less inconveniency. He feels himself naturally indolent, and willing to serve himself with his own hands as little as possible; and judges, that a numerous retinue of servants would save him from a great deal of trouble. He thinks if he had attained all these, he would sit still contentedly, and be quiet, enjoying himself in the thought of the happiness and tranquillity of his situation. He is enchanted with the distant idea of this felicity. It appears in his fancy like the life of some superior rank of beings, and, in order to arrive at it, he devotes himself for ever to the pursuit of wealth and greatness. To obtain the conveniencies which these afford, he submits in the first year, nay in the first month of his application, to more fatigue of body and more uneasiness of mind than he could have suffered through the whole of his life from the want of them. He studies to distinguish himself in some laborious profession. With the most unrelenting industry he labours night and day to acquire talents superior to all his competitors. He endeavours next to bring those talents into public view, and with equal assiduity solicits every opportunity of employment. For this purpose he makes his court to all mankind; he serves those whom he hates, and is obsequious to those whom he despises. Through the whole of his life he pursues the idea of a certain artificial and elegant repose which he may never arrive at, for which he sacrifices a real tranquillity that is at all times in his power, and which, if in the extremity of old age he should at last attain to it, he will find to be in no respect preferable to that humble security and contentment which he had abandoned for it. It is then, in the last dregs of life, his body wasted with toil and diseases, his mind galled and ruffled by the memory of a thousand injuries and disappointments which he imagines he has met with from the injustice of his enemies, or from the perfidy and ingratitude of his friends, that he begins at last to find that wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility, no more adapted for procuring ease of body or tranquillity of mind than the tweezer-cases of the lover of toys; and like them too, more troublesome to the person who carries them about with him than all the advantages

they can afford him are commodious. There is no other real difference between them, except that the conveniencies of the one are somewhat more observable than those of the other. The palaces, the gardens, the equipage, the retinue of the great, are objects of which the obvious conveniency strikes every body. They do not require that their masters should point out to us wherein consists their utility. Of our own accord we readily enter into it, and by sympathy enjoy and thereby applaud the satisfaction which they are fitted to afford him. But the curiosity of a tooth-pick, of an ear-picker, of a machine for cutting the nails, or of any other trinket of the same kind, is not so obvious. Their conveniency may perhaps be equally great, but it is not so striking, and we do not so readily enter into the satisfaction of the man who possesses them. They are therefore less reasonable subjects of vanity than the magnificence of wealth and greatness; and in this consists the sole advantage of these last. They more effectually gratify that love of distinction so natural to man. To one who was to live alone in a desolate island it might be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a collection of such small conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment. If he is to live in society, indeed, there can be no comparison, because in this, as in all other cases, we constantly pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned, and consider rather how his situation will appear to other people, than how it will appear to himself. If we examine, however, why the spectator distinguishes with such admiration the condition of the rich and the great, we shall find that it is not so much upon account of the superior ease or pleasure which they are supposed to enjoy, as of the numberless artificial and elegant contrivances for promoting this ease or pleasure. He does not even imagine that they are really happier than other people: but he imagines that they possess more means of happiness. And it is the ingenious and artful adjustment of those means to the end for which they were intended, that is the principal source of his admiration. But in the languor of disease and the weariness of old age, the pleasures of the vain and empty distinctions of greatness disappear. To one, in this situation, they are no longer capable of recommending those toilsome pursuits in which they had formerly engaged him. In his heart he curses ambition, and vainly regrets the ease and the indolence of youth, pleasures which are fled for ever, and which he has foolishly sacrificed for what, when he has got it, can afford him no real satisfaction. In this miserable aspect does greatness appear to every man when reduced either by spleen or disease

to observe with attention his own situation, and to consider what it is that is really wanting to his happiness. Power and riches appear then to be, what they are, enormous and operose machines contrived to produce a few trifling conveniencies to the body, consisting of springs the most nice and delicate, which must be kept in order with the most anxious attention, and which in spite of all our care are ready every moment to burst into pieces, and to crush in their ruins their unfortunate possessor. They are immense fabrics, which it requires the labour of a life to raise, which threaten every moment to overwhelm the person that dwells in them, and which while they stand, though they may save him from some smaller inconveniencies, can protect him from none of the severer inclemencies of the season. They keep off the summer shower, not the winter storm, but leave him always as much, and sometimes more exposed than before, to anxiety, to fear, and to sorrow; to diseases, to danger, and to death.

But though this splenetic philosophy, which in time of sickness or low spirits is familiar to every man, thus entirely depreciates those great objects of human desire, when in better health and in better humour, we never fail to regard them under a more agreeable aspect. Our imagination, which in pain and sorrow seems to be confined and cooped up within our own persons, in times of ease and prosperity expands itself to every thing around us. We are then charmed with the beauty of that accommodation which reigns in the palaces and oeconomy of the great; and admire how every thing is adapted to promote their ease, to prevent their wants, to gratify their wishes, and to amuse and entertain their most frivolous desires. If we consider the real satisfaction which all these things are capable of affording, by itself and separated from the beauty of that arrangement which is fitted to promote it, it will always appear in the highest degree contemptible and trifling. But we rarely view it in this abstract and philosophical light. We naturally confound it in our imagination with the order, the regular and harmonious movement of the system, the machine or oeconomy by means of which it is produced. The pleasures of wealth and greatness, when considered in this complex view, strike the imagination as something grand and beautiful and noble, of which the attainment is well worth all the toil and anxiety which we are so apt to bestow upon it.

And it is well that nature imposes upon us in this manner. It is this deception which rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind. It is this which first prompted them to cultivate the ground, to build houses, to found cities and commonwealths, and to invent and

improve all the sciences and arts, which ennoble and embellish human life; which have entirely changed the whole face of the globe, have turned the rude forests of nature into agreeable and fertile plains, and made the trackless and barren ocean a new fund of subsistence, and the great high road of communication to the different nations of the earth. The earth by these labours of mankind has been obliged to redouble her natural fertility, and to maintain a greater multitude of inhabitants. It is to no purpose, that the proud and unfeeling landlord views his extensive fields, and without a thought for the wants of his brethren, in imagination consumes himself the whole harvest that grows upon them. The homely and vulgar proverb, that the eye is larger than the belly, never was more fully verified than with regard to him. The capacity of his stomach bears no proportion to the immensity of his desires, and will receive no more than that of the meanest peasant. The rest he is obliged to distribute among those, who prepare, in the nicest manner, that little which he himself makes use of, among those who fit up the palace in which this little is to be consumed, among those who provide and keep in order all the different baubles and trinkets, which are employed in the oeconomy of greatness; all of whom thus derive from his luxury and caprice, that share of the necessaries of life, which they would in vain have expected from his humanity or his justice. The produce of the soil maintains at all times nearly that number of inhabitants which it is capable of maintaining. The rich only select from the heap what is most precious and agreeable. They consume little more than the poor, and in spite of their natural selfishness and rapacity, though they mean only their own conveniency, though the sole end which they propose from the labours of all the thousands whom they employ, be the gratification of their own vain and insatiable desires, they divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements. They are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessaries of life, which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants, and thus without intending it, without knowing it, advance the interest of the society, and afford means to the multiplication of the species. When Providence divided the earth among a few lordly masters, it neither forgot nor abandoned those who seemed to have been left out in the partition. These last too enjoy their share of all that it produces. In what constitutes the real happiness of human life, they are in no respect inferior to those who would seem so much above them. In ease of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level,

and the beggar, who suns himself by the side of the highway, possesses that security which kings are fighting for.

The same principle, the same love of system, the same regard to the beauty of order, of art and contrivance, frequently serves to recommend those institutions which tend to promote the public welfare. When a patriot exerts himself for the improvement of any part of the public police, his conduct does not always arise from pure sympathy with the happiness of those who are to reap the benefit of it. It is not commonly from a fellow-feeling with carriers and waggoners that a public-spirited man encourages the mending of high roads. When the legislature establishes premiums and other encouragements to advance the linen or woollen manufactures, its conduct seldom proceeds from pure sympathy with the wearer of cheap or fine cloth, and much less from that with the manufacturer or merchant. The perfection of police, the extension of trade and manufactures, are noble and magnificent objects. The contemplation of them pleases us, and we are interested in whatever can tend to advance them. They make part of the great system of government, and the wheels of the political machine seem to move with more harmony and ease by means of them. We take pleasure in beholding the perfection of so beautiful and grand a system, and we are uneasy till we remove any obstruction that can in the least disturb or encumber the regularity of its motions. All constitutions of government, however, are valued only in proportion as they tend to promote the happiness of those who live under them. This is their sole use and end. From a certain spirit of system, however, from a certain love of art and contrivance, we sometimes seem to value the means more than the end, and to be eager to promote the happiness of our fellow-creatures, rather from a view to perfect and improve a certain beautiful and orderly system, than from any immediate sense or feeling of what they either suffer or enjoy. There have been men of the greatest public spirit, who have shown themselves in other respects not very sensible to the feelings of humanity. And on the contrary, there have been men of the greatest humanity, who seem to have been entirely devoid of public spirit. Every man may find in the circle of his acquaintance instances both of the one kind and the other. Who had ever less humanity, or more public spirit, than the celebrated legislator of Muscovy? The social and well-natured James the First of Great Britain seems, on the contrary, to have had scarce any passion, either for the glory or the interest of his country. Would you awaken the industry of the man who seems almost dead to ambition, it will often be to no purpose to describe to him the happiness

of the rich and the great; to tell him that they are generally sheltered from the sun and the rain, that they are seldom hungry, that they are seldom cold, and that they are rarely exposed to weariness, or to want of any kind. The most eloquent exhortation of this kind will have little effect upon him. If you would hope to succeed, you must describe to him the conveniency and arrangement of the different apartments in their palaces; you must explain to him the propriety of their equipages, and point out to him the number, the order, and the different offices of all their attendants. If any thing is capable of making impression upon him, this will. Yet all these things tend only to keep off the sun and the rain, to save them from hunger and cold, from want and weariness. In the same manner, if you would implant public virtue in the breast of him who seems heedless of the interest of his country, it will often be to no purpose to tell him, what superior advantages the subjects of a well-governed state enjoy; that they are better lodged, that they are better clothed, that they are better fed. These considerations will commonly make no great impression. You will be more likely to persuade, if you describe the great system of public police which procures these advantages, if you explain the connexions and dependencies of its several parts, their mutual subordination to one another, and their general subserviency to the happiness of the society; if you show how this system might be introduced into his own country, what it is that hinders it from taking place there at present, how those obstructions might be removed, and all the several wheels of the machine of government be made to move with more harmony and smoothness, without grating upon one another, or mutually retarding one another’s motions. It is scarce possible that a man should listen to a discourse of this kind, and not feel himself animated to some degree of public spirit. He will, at least for the moment, feel some desire to remove those obstructions, and to put into motion so beautiful and so orderly a machine. Nothing tends so much to promote public spirit as the study of politics, of the several systems of civil government, their advantages and disadvantages, of the constitution of our own country, its situation, and interest with regard to foreign nations, its commerce, its defence, the disadvantages it labours under, the dangers to which it may be exposed, how to remove the one, and how to guard against the other. Upon this account political disquisitions, if just, and reasonable, and practicable, are of all the works of speculation the most useful. Even the weakest and the worst of them are not altogether without their utility. They serve at least to animate the public passions of

men, and rouse them to seek out the means of promoting the happiness of the society.

Chap. II: Of the beauty which the appearance of Utility bestows upon the characters and actions of men; and how far the perception of this beauty may be regarded as one of the original principles of approbation

The characters of men, as well as the contrivances of art, or the institutions of civil government, may be fitted either to promote or to disturb the happiness both of the individual and of the society. The prudent, the equitable, the active, resolute, and sober character promises prosperity and satisfaction, both to the person himself and to every one connected with him. The rash, the insolent, the slothful, effeminate, and voluptuous, on the contrary, forebodes ruin to the individual, and misfortune to all who have any thing to do with him. The first turn of mind has at least all the beauty which can belong to the most perfect machine that was ever invented for promoting the most agreeable purpose: and the second, all the deformity of the most awkward and clumsy contrivance. What institution of government could tend so much to promote the happiness of mankind as the general prevalence of wisdom and virtue? All government is but an imperfect remedy for the deficiency of these. Whatever beauty, therefore, can belong to civil government upon account of its utility, must in a far superior degree belong to these. On the contrary, what civil policy can be so ruinous and destructive as the vices of men? The fatal effects of bad government arise from nothing, but that it does not sufficiently guard against the mischiefs which human wickedness gives occasion to.

This beauty and deformity which characters appear to derive from their usefulness or inconveniency, are apt to strike, in a peculiar manner, those who consider, in an abstract and philosophical light, the actions and conduct of mankind. When a philosopher goes to examine why humanity is approved of, or cruelty condemned, he does not always form to himself, in a very clear and distinct manner, the conception of any one particular action either of cruelty or of humanity, but is commonly contented with the vague and indeterminate idea which the general names of those qualities suggest to him. But it is in particular instances

only that the propriety or impropriety, the merit or demerit of actions is very obvious and discernible. It is only when particular examples are given that we perceive distinctly either the concord or disagreement between our own affections and those of the agent, or feel a social gratitude arise towards him in the one case, or a sympathetic resentment in the other. When we consider virtue and vice in an abstract and general manner, the qualities by which they excite these several sentiments seem in a great measure to disappear, and the sentiments themselves become less obvious and discernible. On the contrary, the happy effects of the one and the fatal consequences of the other seem then to rise up to the view, and as it were to stand out and distinguish themselves from all the other qualities of either.

The same ingenious and agreeable author who first explained why utility pleases, has been so struck with this view of things, as to resolve our whole approbation of virtue into a perception of this species of beauty which results from the appearance of utility. No qualities of the mind, he observes, are approved of as virtuous, but such as are useful or agreeable either to the person himself or to others; and no qualities are disapproved of as vicious but such as have a contrary tendency. And Nature, indeed, seems to have so happily adjusted our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation, to the conveniency both of the individual and of the society, that after the strictest examination it will be found, I believe, that this is universally the case. But still I affirm, that it is not the view of this utility or hurtfulness which is either the first or principal source of our approbation and disapprobation. These sentiments are no doubt enhanced and enlivened by the perception of the beauty or deformity which results from this utility or hurtfulness. But still, I say, they are originally and essentially different from this perception.

For first of all, it seems impossible that the approbation of virtue should be a sentiment of the same kind with that by which we approve of a convenient and well-contrived building; or that we should have no other reason for praising a man than that for which we commend a chest of drawers.

And secondly, it will be found, upon examination, that the usefulness of any disposition of mind is seldom the first ground of our approbation; and that the sentiment of approbation always involves in it a sense of propriety quite distinct from the perception of utility. We may observe this with regard to all the qualities which are approved of as virtuous, both those which, according to this system, are originally valued as

useful to ourselves, as well as those which are esteemed on account of their usefulness to others.

The qualities most useful to ourselves are, first of all, superior reason and understanding, by which we are capable of discerning the remote consequences of all our actions, and of foreseeing the advantage or detriment which is likely to result from them: and secondly, self-command, by which we are enabled to abstain from present pleasure or to endure present pain, in order to obtain a greater pleasure or to avoid a greater pain in some future time. In the union of those two qualities consists the virtue of prudence, of all the virtues that which is most useful to the individual.

With regard to the first of those qualities, it has been observed on a former occasion, that superior reason and understanding are originally approved of as just and right and accurate, and not merely as useful or advantageous. It is in the abstruser sciences, particularly in the higher parts of mathematics, that the greatest and most admired exertions of human reason have been displayed. But the utility of those sciences, either to the individual or to the public, is not very obvious, and to prove it, requires a discussion which is not always very easily comprehended. It was not, therefore, their utility which first recommended them to the public admiration. This quality was but little insisted upon, till it became necessary to make some reply to the reproaches of those, who, having themselves no taste for such sublime discoveries, endeavoured to depreciate them as useless.

That self-command, in the same manner, by which we restrain our present appetites, in order to gratify them more fully upon another occasion, is approved of, as much under the aspect of propriety, as under that of utility. When we act in this manner, the sentiments which influence our conduct seem exactly to coincide with those of the spectator. The spectator does not feel the solicitations of our present appetites. To him the pleasure which we are to enjoy a week hence, or a year hence, is just as interesting as that which we are to enjoy this moment. When for the sake of the present, therefore, we sacrifice the future, our conduct appears to him absurd and extravagant in the highest degree, and he cannot enter into the principles which influence it. On the contrary, when we abstain from present pleasure, in order to secure greater pleasure to come, when we act as if the remote object interested us as much as that which immediately presses upon the senses, as our affections exactly correspond with his own, he cannot fail to approve of our behaviour: and as he knows from experience, how few are capable of

this self-command, he looks upon our conduct with a considerable degree of wonder and admiration. Hence arises that eminent esteem with which all men naturally regard a steady perseverance in the practice of frugality, industry, and application, though directed to no other purpose than the acquisition of fortune. The resolute firmness of the person who acts in this manner, and in order to obtain a great though remote advantage, not only gives up all present pleasures, but endures the greatest labour both of mind and body, necessarily commands our approbation. That view of his interest and happiness which appears to regulate his conduct, exactly tallies with the idea which we naturally form of it. There is the most perfect correspondence between his sentiments and our own, and at the same time, from our experience of the common weakness of human nature, it is a correspondence which we could not reasonably have expected. We not only approve, therefore, but in some measure admire his conduct, and think it worthy of a considerable degree of applause. It is the consciousness of this merited approbation and esteem which is alone capable of supporting the agent in this tenour of conduct. The pleasure which we are to enjoy ten years hence interests us so little in comparison with that which we may enjoy to-day, the passion which the first excites, is naturally so weak in comparison with that violent emotion which the second is apt to give occasion to, that the one could never be any balance to the other, unless it was supported by the sense of propriety, by the consciousness that we merited the esteem and approbation of every body, by acting in the one way, and that we became the proper objects of their contempt and derision by behaving in the other.

Humanity, justice, generosity, and public spirit, are the qualities most useful to others. Wherein consists the propriety of humanity and justice has been explained upon a former occasion, where it was shewn how much our esteem and approbation of those qualities depended upon the concord between the affections of the agent and those of the spectators.

The propriety of generosity and public spirit is founded upon the same principle with that of justice. Generosity is different from humanity. Those two qualities, which at first sight seem so nearly allied, do not always belong to the same person. Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generosity of a man. The fair-sex, who have commonly much more tenderness than ours, have seldom so much generosity. That women rarely make considerable donations, is an observation of the civil law. Humanity consists merely in the exquisite fellow-feeling which the spectator entertains with the sentiments of the persons principally

concerned, so as to grieve for their sufferings, to resent their injuries, and to rejoice at their good fortune. The most humane actions require no self-denial, no self-command, no great exertion of the sense of propriety. They consist only in doing what this exquisite sympathy would of its own accord prompt us to do. But it is otherwise with generosity. We never are generous except when in some respect we prefer some other person to ourselves, and sacrifice some great and important interest of our own to an equal interest of a friend or of a superior. The man who gives up his pretensions to an office that was the great object of his ambition, because he imagines that the services of another are better entitled to it; the man who exposes his life to defend that of his friend, which he judges to be of more importance; neither of them act from humanity, or because they feel more exquisitely what concerns that other person than what concerns themselves. They both consider those opposite interests, not in the light in which they naturally appear to themselves, but in that in which they appear to others. To every bystander, the success or preservation of this other person may justly be more interesting than their own; but it cannot be so to themselves. When to the interest of this other person, therefore, they sacrifice their own, they accommodate themselves to the sentiments of the spectator, and by an effort of magnanimity act according to those views of things which, they feel, must naturally occur to any third person. The soldier who throws away his life in order to defend that of his officer, would perhaps be but little affected by the death of that officer, if it should happen without any fault of his own; and a very small disaster which had befallen himself might excite a much more lively sorrow. But when he endeavours to act so as to deserve applause, and to make the impartial spectator enter into the principles of his conduct, he feels, that to every body but himself, his own life is a trifle compared with that of his officer, and that when he sacrifices the one to the other, he acts quite properly and agreeably to what would be the natural apprehensions of every impartial bystander.

It is the same case with the greater exertions of public spirit. When a young officer exposes his life to acquire some inconsiderable addition to the dominions of his sovereign, it is not because the acquisition of the new territory is, to himself, an object more desireable than the preservation of his own life. To him his own life is of infinitely more value than the conquest of a whole kingdom for the state which he serves. But when he compares those two objects with one another, he does not view them in the light in which they naturally appear to himself,

but in that in which they appear to the nation he fights for. To them the success of the war is of the highest importance; the life of a private person of scarce any consequence. When he puts himself in their situation, he immediately feels that he cannot be too prodigal of his blood, if, by shedding it, he can promote so valuable a purpose. In thus thwarting, from a sense of duty and propriety, the strongest of all natural propensities, consists the heroism of his conduct. There is many an honest Englishman, who, in his private station, would be more seriously disturbed by the loss of a guinea, than by the national loss of Minorca, who yet, had it been in his power to defend that fortress, would have sacrificed his life a thousand times rather than, through his fault, have let it fall into the hands of the enemy. When the first Brutus led forth his own sons to a capital punishment, because they had conspired against the rising liberty of Rome, he sacrificed what, if he had consulted his own breast only, would appear to be the stronger to the weaker affection. Brutus ought naturally to have felt much more for the death of his own sons, than for all that probably Rome could have suffered from the want of so great an example. But he viewed them, not with the eyes of a father, but with those of a Roman citizen. He entered so thoroughly into the sentiments of this last character, that he paid no regard to that tie, by which he himself was connected with them; and to a Roman citizen, the sons even of Brutus seemed contemptible, when put into the balance with the smallest interest of Rome. In these and in all other cases of this kind, our admiration is not so much founded upon the utility, as upon the unexpected, and on that account the great, the noble, and exalted propriety of such actions. This utility, when we come to view it, bestows upon them, undoubtedly, a new beauty, and upon that account still further recommends them to our approbation. This beauty, however, is chiefly perceived by men of reflection and speculation, and is by no means the quality which first recommends such actions to the natural sentiments of the bulk of mankind.

It is to be observed, that so far as the sentiment of approbation arises from the perception of this beauty of utility, it has no reference of any kind to the sentiments of others. If it was possible, therefore, that a person should grow up to manhood without any communication with society, his own actions might, notwithstanding, be agreeable or disagreeable to him on account of their tendency to his happiness or disadvantage. He might perceive a beauty of this kind in prudence, temperance, and good conduct, and a deformity in the opposite behaviour: he might view his own temper and character with that sort of

satisfaction with which we consider a well-contrived machine, in the one case; or with that sort of distaste and dissatisfaction with which we regard a very awkward and clumsy contrivance, in the other. As these perceptions, however, are merely a matter of taste, and have all the feebleness and delicacy of that species of perceptions, upon the justness of which what is properly called taste is founded, they probably would not be much attended to by one in this solitary and miserable condition. Even though they should occur to him, they would by no means have the same effect upon him, antecedent to his connexion with society, which they would have in consequence of that connexion. He would not be cast down with inward shame at the thought of this deformity; nor would he be elevated with secret triumph of mind from the consciousness of the contrary beauty. He would not exult from the notion of deserving reward in the one case, nor tremble from the suspicion of meriting punishment in the other. All such sentiments suppose the idea of some other being, who is the natural judge of the person that feels them; and it is only by sympathy with the decisions of this arbiter of his conduct, that he can conceive, either the triumph of self-applause, or the shame of self-condemnation.

Part V: Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon the Sentiments of Moral Approbation and Disapprobation

Chap. I : Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon our Notions of Beauty and Deformity

There are other principles besides those already enumerated, which have a considerable influence upon the moral sentiments of mankind, and are the chief causes of the many irregular and discordant opinions which prevail in different ages and nations concerning what is blameable or praise-worthy. These principles are custom and fashion, principles which extend their dominion over our judgments concerning beauty of every kind.

When two objects have frequently been seen together, the imagination acquires a habit of passing easily from the one to the other. If the first appear, we lay our account that the second is to follow. Of their own accord they put us in mind of one another, and the attention glides easily along them. Though, independent of custom, there should be no real beauty in their union, yet when custom has thus connected them together, we feel an impropriety in their separation. The one we think is awkward when it appears without its usual companion. We miss something which we expected to find, and the habitual arrangement of our ideas is disturbed by the disappointment. A suit of clothes, for example, seems to want something if they are without the most insignificant ornament which usually accompanies them, and we find a meanness or awkwardness in the absence even of a haunch button. When there is any natural propriety in the union, custom increases our sense of it, and makes a different arrangement appear still more disagreeable than it would otherwise seem to be. Those who have been accustomed to see things in a good taste, are more disgusted by whatever is clumsy or awkward. Where the conjunction is improper, custom either diminishes, or takes away altogether, our sense of the impropriety. Those who have been accustomed to slovenly disorder lose all sense of neatness or elegance. The modes of furniture or dress which seem ridiculous to strangers, give no offence to the people who are used to them.

Fashion is different from custom, or rather is a particular species of it. That is not the fashion which every body wears, but which those wear who are of a high rank, or character. The graceful, the easy, and commanding manners of the great, joined to the usual richness and magnificence of their dress, give a grace to the very form which they

happen to bestow upon it. As long as they continue to use this form, it is connected in our imaginations with the idea of something that is genteel and magnificent, and though in itself it should be indifferent, it seems, on account of this relation, to have something about it that is genteel and magnificent too. As soon as they drop it, it loses all the grace, which it had appeared to possess before, and being now used only by the inferior ranks of people, seems to have something of their meanness and awkwardness.

Dress and furniture are allowed by all the world to be entirely under the dominion of custom and fashion. The influence of those principles, however, is by no means confined to so narrow a sphere, but extends itself to whatever is in any respect the object of taste, to music, to poetry, to architecture. The modes of dress and furniture are continually changing, and that fashion appearing ridiculous to-day which was admired five years ago, we are experimentally convinced that it owed its vogue chiefly or entirely to custom and fashion. Clothes and furniture are not made of very durable materials. A well-fancied coat is done in a twelve-month, and cannot continue longer to propagate, as the fashion, that form according to which it was made. The modes of furniture change less rapidly than those of dress; because furniture is commonly more durable. In five or six years, however, it generally undergoes an entire revolution, and every man in his own time sees the fashion in this respect change many different ways. The productions of the other arts are much more lasting, and, when happily imagined, may continue to propagate the fashion of their make for a much longer time. A well-contrived building may endure many centuries: a beautiful air may be delivered down by a sort of tradition, through many successive generations: a well-written poem may last as long as the world; and all of them continue for ages together, to give the vogue to that particular style, to that particular taste or manner, according to which each of them was composed. Few men have an opportunity of seeing in their own times the fashion in any of these arts change very considerably. Few men have so much experience and acquaintance with the different modes which have obtained in remote ages and nations, as to be thoroughly reconciled to them, or to judge with impartiality between them, and what takes place in their own age and country. Few men therefore are willing to allow, that custom or fashion have much influence upon their judgments concerning what is beautiful, or otherwise, in the productions of any of those arts; but imagine, that all the rules, which they think ought to be observed in each of them, are founded upon reason and nature, not upon

habit or prejudice. A very little attention, however, may convince them of the contrary, and satisfy them, that the influence of custom and fashion over dress and furniture, is not more absolute than over architecture, poetry, and music.

Can any reason, for example, be assigned why the Doric capital should be appropriated to a pillar, whose height is equal to eight diameters; the Ionic volute to one of nine; and the Corinthian foliage to one of ten? The propriety of each of those appropriations can be founded upon nothing but habit and custom. The eye having been used to see a particular proportion connected with a particular ornament, would be offended if they were not joined together. Each of the five orders has its peculiar ornaments, which cannot be changed for any other, without giving offence to all those who know any thing of the rules of architecture. According to some architects, indeed, such is the exquisite judgment with which the ancients have assigned to each order its proper ornaments, that no others can be found which are equally suitable. It seems, however, a little difficult to be conceived that these forms, though, no doubt, extremely agreeable, should be the only forms which can suit those proportions, or that there should not be five hundred others which, antecedent to established custom, would have fitted them equally well. When custom, however, has established particular rules of building, provided they are not absolutely unreasonable, it is absurd to think of altering them for others which are only equally good, or even for others which, in point of elegance and beauty, have naturally some little advantage over them. A man would be ridiculous who should appear in public with a suit of clothes quite different from those which are commonly worn, though the new dress should in itself be ever so graceful or convenient. And there seems to be an absurdity of the same kind in ornamenting a house after a quite different manner from that which custom and fashion have prescribed; though the new ornaments should in themselves be somewhat superior to the common ones.

According to the ancient rhetoricians, a certain measure of verse was by nature appropriated to each particular species of writing, as being naturally expressive of that character, sentiment, or passion, which ought to predominate in it. One verse, they said, was fit for grave and another for gay works, which could not, they thought, be interchanged without the greatest impropriety. The experience of modern times, however, seems to contradict this principle, though in itself it would appear to be extremely probable. What is the burlesque verse in English, is the heroic

verse in French. The tragedies of Racine and the Henriad of Voltaire, are nearly in the same verse with,

Let me have your advice in a weighty affair.

The burlesque verse in French, on the contrary, is pretty much the same with the heroic verse of ten syllables in English. Custom has made the one nation associate the ideas of gravity, sublimity, and seriousness, to that measure which the other has connected with whatever is gay, flippant, and ludicrous. Nothing would appear more absurd in English, than a tragedy written in the Alexandrine verses of the French; or in French, than a work of the same kind in verses of ten syllables.

An eminent artist will bring about a considerable change in the established modes of each of those arts, and introduce a new fashion of writing, music, or architecture. As the dress of an agreeable man of high rank recommends itself, and how peculiar and fantastical soever, comes soon to be admired and imitated; so the excellencies of an eminent master recommend his peculiarities, and his manner becomes the fashionable style in the art which he practises. The taste of the Italians in music and architecture has, within these fifty years, undergone a considerable change, from imitating the peculiarities of some eminent masters in each of those arts. Seneca is accused by Quintilian of having corrupted the taste of the Romans, and of having introduced a frivolous prettiness in the room of majestic reason and masculine eloquence. Sallust and Tacitus have by others been charged with the same accusation, though in a different manner. They gave reputation, it is pretended, to a style, which though in the highest degree concise, elegant, expressive, and even poetical, wanted, however, ease, simplicity, and nature, and was evidently the production of the most laboured and studied affectation. How many great qualities must that writer possess, who can thus render his very faults agreeable? After the praise of refining the taste of a nation, the highest eulogy, perhaps, which can be bestowed upon any author, is to say, that he corrupted it. In our own language, Mr. Pope and Dr. Swift have each of them introduced a manner different from what was practised before, into all works that are written in rhyme, the one in long verses, the other in short. The quaintness of Butler has given place to the plainness of Swift. The rambling freedom of Dryden, and the correct but often tedious and prosaic languor of Addison, are no longer the objects of imitation, but all long verses are now written after the manner of the nervous precision of Mr. Pope.

Neither is it only over the productions of the arts, that custom and fashion exert their dominion. They influence our judgments, in the same

manner, with regard to the beauty of natural objects. What various and opposite forms are deemed beautiful in different species of things? The proportions which are admired in one animal, are altogether different from those which are esteemed in another. Every class of things has its own peculiar conformation, which is approved of, and has a beauty of its own, distinct from that of every other species. It is upon this account that a learned Jesuit, father Buffier, has determined that the beauty of every object consists in that form and colour, which is most usual among things of that particular sort to which it belongs. Thus, in the human form, the beauty of each feature lies in a certain middle, equally removed from a variety of other forms that are ugly. A beautiful nose, for example, is one that is neither very long, nor very short, neither very straight, nor very crooked, but a sort of middle among all these extremes, and less different from any one of them, than all of them are from one another. It is the form which Nature seems to have aimed at in them all, which, however, she deviates from in a great variety of ways, and very seldom hits exactly; but to which all those deviations still bear a very strong resemblance. When a number of drawings are made after one pattern, though they may all miss it in some respects, yet they will all resemble it more than they resemble one another; the general character of the pattern will run through them all; the most singular and odd will be those which are most wide of it; and though very few will copy it exactly, yet the most accurate delineations will bear a greater resemblance to the most careless, than the careless ones will bear to one another. In the same manner, in each species of creatures, what is most beautiful bears the strongest characters of the general fabric of the species, and has the strongest resemblance to the greater part of the individuals with which it is classed. Monsters, on the contrary, or what is perfectly deformed, are always most singular and odd, and have the least resemblance to the generality of that species to which they belong. And thus the beauty of each species, though in one sense the rarest of all things, because few individuals hit this middle form exactly, yet in another, is the most common, because all the deviations from it resemble it more than they resemble one another. The most customary form, therefore, is in each species of things, according to him, the most beautiful. And hence it is that a certain practice and experience in contemplating each species of objects is requisite, before we can judge of its beauty, or know wherein the middle and most usual form consists. The nicest judgment concerning the beauty of the human species, will not help us to judge of that of flowers, or horses, or any other species of things. It is for the

same reason that in different climates, and where different customs and ways of living take place, as the generality of any species receives a different conformation from those circumstances, so different ideas of its beauty prevail. The beauty of a Moorish is not exactly the same with that of an English horse. What different ideas are formed in different nations concerning the beauty of the human shape and countenance ? A fair complexion is a shocking deformity upon the coast of Guinea. Thick lips and a flat nose are a beauty. In some nations long ears that hang down upon the shoulders are the objects of universal admiration. In China if a lady’s foot is so large as to be fit to walk upon, she is regarded as a monster of ugliness. Some of the savage nations in North-America tie four boards round the heads of their children, and thus squeeze them, while the bones are tender and gristly, into a form that is almost perfectly square. Europeans are astonished at the absurd barbarity of this practice, to which some missionaries have imputed the singular stupidity of those nations among whom it prevails. But when they condemn those savages, they do not reflect that the ladies in Europe had, till within these very few years, been endeavouring, for near a century past, to squeeze the beautiful roundness of their natural shape into a square form of the same kind. And that, notwithstanding the many distortions and diseases which this practice was known to occasion, custom had rendered it agreeable among some of the most civilized nations which, perhaps, the world ever beheld.

Such is the system of this learned and ingenious Father, concerning the nature of beauty; of which the whole charm, according to him, would thus seem to arise from its falling in with the habits which custom had impressed upon the imagination, with regard to things of each particular kind. I cannot, however, be induced to believe that our sense even of external beauty is founded altogether on custom. The utility of any form, its fitness for the useful purposes for which it was intended, evidently recommends it, and renders it agreeable to us, independent of custom. Certain colours are more agreeable than others, and give more delight to the eye the first time it ever beholds them. A smooth surface is more agreeable than a rough one. Variety is more pleasing than a tedious undiversified uniformity. Connected variety, in which each new appearance seems to be introduced by what went before it, and in which all the adjoining parts seem to have some natural relation to one another, is more agreeable than a disjointed and disorderly assemblage of unconnected objects. But though I cannot admit that custom is the sole principle of beauty, yet I can so far allow the truth of this ingenious

system as to grant, that there is scarce any one external form so beautiful as to please, if quite contrary to custom and unlike whatever we have been used to in that particular species of things: or so deformed as not to be agreeable, if custom uniformly supports it, and habituates us to see it in every single individual of the kind.

Chap. II : Of the Influence of Custom and Fashion upon Moral Sentiments

Since our sentiments concerning beauty of every kind, are so much influenced by custom and fashion, it cannot be expected, that those, concerning the beauty of conduct, should be entirely exempted from the dominion of those principles. Their influence here, however, seems to be much less than it is every where else. There is, perhaps, no form of external objects, how absurd and fantastical soever, to which custom will not reconcile us, or which fashion will not render even agreeable. But the characters and conduct of a Nero, or a Claudius, are what no custom will ever reconcile us to, what no fashion will ever render agreeable; but the one will always be the object of dread and hatred; the other of scorn and derision. The principles of the imagination, upon which our sense of beauty depends, are of a very nice and delicate nature, and may easily be altered by habit and education: but the sentiments of moral approbation and disapprobation, are founded on the strongest and most vigorous passions of human nature; and though they may be somewhat warpt, cannot be entirely perverted.

But though the influence of custom and fashion upon moral sentiments, is not altogether so great, it is however perfectly similar to what it is every where else. When custom and fashion coincide with the natural principles of right and wrong, they heighten the delicacy of our sentiments, and increase our abhorrence for every thing which approaches to evil. Those who have been educated in what is really good company, not in what is commonly called such, who have been accustomed to see nothing in the persons whom they esteemed and lived with, but justice, modesty, humanity, and good order; are more shocked with whatever seems to be inconsistent with the rules which those virtues prescribe. Those, on the contrary, who have had the misfortune to be brought up amidst violence, licentiousness, falsehood, and injustice; lose, though not all sense of the impropriety of such conduct, yet all sense of its dreadful enormity, or of the vengeance and punishment due to it. They have been familiarized with it from their infancy, custom has rendered it habitual to them, and they are very apt to regard it as, what is called, the way of the world, something which either may, or must be practised, to hinder us from being the dupes of our own integrity.

Fashion too will sometimes give reputation to a certain degree of disorder, and, on the contrary, discountenance qualities which deserve esteem. In the reign of Charles II. a degree of licentiousness was deemed the characteristic of a liberal education. It was connected, according to the notions of those times, with generosity, sincerity, magnanimity, loyalty, and proved that the person who acted in this manner, was a gentleman, and not a puritan. Severity of manners, and regularity of conduct, on the other hand, were altogether unfashionable, and were connected, in the imagination of that age, with cant, cunning, hypocrisy, and low manners. To superficial minds, the vices of the great seem at all times agreeable. They connect them, not only with the splendour of fortune, but with many superior virtues, which they ascribe to their superiors; with the spirit of freedom and independency, with frankness, generosity, humanity, and politeness. The virtues of the inferior ranks of people, on the contrary, their parsimonious frugality, their painful industry, and rigid adherence to rules, seem to them mean and disagreeable. They connect them, both with the meanness of the station to which those qualities commonly belong, and with many great vices, which, they suppose, usually accompany them; such as an abject, cowardly, ill-natured, lying, pilfering disposition.

The objects with which men in the different professions and states of life are conversant, being very different, and habituating them to very different passions, naturally form in them very different characters and manners. We expect in each rank and profession, a degree of those manners, which, experience has taught us, belong to it. But as in each species of things, we are particularly pleased with the middle conformation, which, in every part and feature, agrees most exactly with the general standard which nature seems to have established for things of that kind; so in each rank, or, if I may say so, in each species of men, we are particularly pleased, if they have neither too much, nor too little of the character which usually accompanies their particular condition and situation. A man, we say, should look like his trade and profession; yet the pedantry of every profession is disagreeable. The different periods of life have, for the same reason, different manners assigned to them. We expect in old age, that gravity and sedateness which its infirmities, its long experience, and its worn-out sensibility seem to render both natural and respectable; and we lay our account to find in youth that sensibility, that gaiety and sprightly vivacity which experience teaches us to expect from the lively impressions that all interesting objects are apt to make upon the tender and unpractised senses of that early period of life. Each

of those two ages, however, may easily have too much of the peculiarities which belong to it. The flirting levity of youth, and the immovable insensibility of old age, are equally disagreeable. The young, according to the common saying, are most agreeable when in their behaviour there is something of the manners of the old, and the old, when they retain something of the gaiety of the young. Either of them, however, may easily have too much of the manners of the other. The extreme coldness, and dull formality, which are pardoned in old age, make youth ridiculous. The levity, the carelessness, and the vanity, which are indulged in youth, render old age contemptible.

The peculiar character and manners which we are led by custom to appropriate to each rank and profession, have sometimes perhaps a propriety independent of custom; and are what we should approve of for their own sakes, if we took into consideration all the different circumstances which naturally affect those in each different state of life. The propriety of a person's behaviour, depends not upon its suitableness to any one circumstance of his situation, but to all the circumstances, which, when we bring his case home to ourselves, we feel, should naturally call upon his attention. If he appears to be so much occupied by any one of them, as entirely to neglect the rest, we disapprove of his conduct, as something which we cannot entirely go along with, because not properly adjusted to all the circumstances of his situation: yet, perhaps, the emotion he expresses for the object which principally interests him, does not exceed what we should entirely sympathize with, and approve of, in one whose attention was not required by any other thing. A parent in private life might, upon the loss of an only son, express without blame a degree of grief and tenderness, which would be unpardonable in a general at the head of an army, when glory, and the public safety, demanded so great a part of his attention. As different objects ought, upon common occasions, to occupy the attention of men of different professions, so different passions ought naturally to become habitual to them; and when we bring home to ourselves their situation in this particular respect, we must be sensible, that every occurrence should naturally affect them more or less, according as the emotion which it excites, coincides or disagrees with the fixt habit and temper of their minds. We cannot expect the same sensibility to the gay pleasures and amusements of life in a clergyman, which we lay our account with in an officer. The man whose peculiar occupation it is to keep the world in mind of that awful futurity which awaits them, who is to announce what may be the fatal consequences of every deviation from the rules of duty,

and who is himself to set the example of the most exact conformity, seems to be the messenger of tidings, which cannot, in propriety, be delivered either with levity or indifference. His mind is supposed to be continually occupied with what is too grand and solemn, to leave any room for the impressions of those frivolous objects, which fill up the attention of the dissipated and the gay . We readily feel therefore, that, independent of custom, there is a propriety in the manners which custom has allotted to this profession; and that nothing can be more suitable to the character of a clergyman than that grave, that austere and abstracted severity, which we are habituated to expect in his behaviour. These reflections are so very obvious, that there is scarce any man so inconsiderate, as not, at some time, to have made them, and to have accounted to himself in this manner for his approbation of the usual character of this order.

The foundation of the customary character of some other professions is not so obvious, and our approbation of it is founded entirely in habit, without being either confirmed, or enlivened by any reflections of this kind. We are led by custom, for example, to annex the character of gaiety, levity, and sprightly freedom, as well as of some degree of dissipation, to the military profession. Yet, if we were to consider what mood or tone of temper would be most suitable to this situation, we should be apt to determine, perhaps, that the most serious and thoughtful turn of mind would best become those whose lives are continually exposed to uncommon danger, and who should therefore be more constantly occupied with the thoughts of death and its consequences than other men. It is this very circumstance, however, which is not improbably the occasion why the contrary turn of mind prevails so much among men of this profession. It requires so great an effort to conquer the fear of death, when we survey it with steadiness and attention, that those who are constantly exposed to it, find it easier to turn away their thoughts from it altogether, to wrap themselves up in careless security and indifference, and to plunge themselves, for this purpose, into every sort of amusement and dissipation. A camp is not the element of a thoughtful or a melancholy man: persons of that cast, indeed, are often abundantly determined, and are capable, by a great effort, of going on with inflexible resolution to the most unavoidable death. But to be exposed to continual, though less imminent danger, to be obliged to exert, for a long time, a degree of this effort, exhausts and depresses the mind, and renders it incapable of all happiness and enjoyment. The gay and careless, who have occasion to make no effort at all, who fairly

resolve never to look before them, but to lose in continual pleasures and amusements all anxiety about their situation, more easily support such circumstances. Whenever, by any peculiar circumstances, an officer has no reason to lay his account with being exposed to any uncommon danger, he is very apt to lose the gaiety and dissipated thoughtlessness of his character. The captain of a city guard is commonly as sober, careful, and penurious an animal as the rest of his fellow-citizens. A long peace is, for the same reason, very apt to diminish the difference between the civil and the military character. The ordinary situation, however, of men of this profession, renders gaiety, and a degree of dissipation, so much their usual character; and custom has, in our imagination, so strongly connected this character with this state of life, that we are very apt to despise any man, whose peculiar humour or situation, renders him incapable of acquiring it. We laugh at the grave and careful faces of a city guard, which so little resemble those of their profession. They themselves seem often to be ashamed of the regularity of their own manners, and, not to be out of the fashion of their trade, are fond of affecting that levity, which is by no means natural to them. Whatever is the deportment which we have been accustomed to see in a respectable order of men, it comes to be so associated in our imagination with that order, that whenever we see the one, we lay our account that we are to meet with the other, and when disappointed, miss something which we expected to find. We are embarrassed, and put to a stand, and know not how to address ourselves to a character, which plainly affects to be of a different species from those with which we should have been disposed to class it.

The different situations of different ages and countries are apt, in the same manner, to give different characters to the generality of those who live in them, and their sentiments concerning the particular degree of each quality, that is either blamable or praise-worthy, vary, according to that degree which is usual in their own country, and in their own times. That degree of politeness, which would be highly esteemed, perhaps would be thought effeminate adulation, in Russia, would be regarded as rudeness and barbarism at the court of France. That degree of order and frugality, which, in a Polish nobleman, would be considered as excessive parsimony, would be regarded as extravagance in a citizen of Amsterdam. Every age and country look upon that degree of each quality, which is commonly to be met with in those who are esteemed among themselves, as the golden mean of that particular talent or virtue. And as this varies, according as their different circumstances render

different qualities more or less habitual to them, their sentiments concerning the exact propriety of character and behaviour vary accordingly.

Among civilized nations, the virtues which are founded upon humanity, are more cultivated than those which are founded upon self-denial and the command of the passions. Among rude and barbarous nations, it is quite otherwise, the virtues of self-denial are more cultivated than those of humanity. The general security and happiness which prevail in ages of civility and politeness, afford little exercise to the contempt of danger, to patience in enduring labour, hunger, and pain. Poverty may easily be avoided, and the contempt of it therefore almost ceases to be a virtue. The abstinence from pleasure becomes less necessary, and the mind is more at liberty to unbend itself, and to indulge.its natural inclinations in all those particular respects.

Among savages and barbarians it is quite otherwise. Every savage undergoes a sort of Spartan discipline, and by the necessity of his situation is inured to every sort of hardship. He is in continual danger: he is often exposed to the greatest extremities of hunger, and frequently dies of pure want. His circumstances not only habituate him to every sort of distress, but teach him to give way to none of the passions which that distress is apt to excite. He can expect from his countrymen no sympathy or indulgence for such weakness. Before we can feel much for others, we must in some measure be at ease ourselves. If our own misery pinches us very severely, we have no leisure to attend to that of our neighbour: and all savages are too much occupied with their own wants and necessities, to give much attention to those of another person. A savage, therefore, whatever be the nature of his distress, expects no sympathy from those about him, and disdains, upon that account, to expose himself, by allowing the least weakness to escape him. His passions, how furious and violent soever, are never permitted to disturb the serenity of his countenance or the composure of his conduct and behaviour. The savages in North America, we are told, assume upon all occasions the greatest indifference, and would think themselves degraded if they should ever appear in any respect to be overcome, either by love, or grief, or resentment. Their magnanimity and self-command, in this respect, are almost beyond the conception of Europeans. In a country in which all men are upon a level, with regard to rank and fortune, it might be expected that the mutual inclinations of the two parties should be the only thing considered in marriages, and should be indulged without any sort of control. This, however, is the country in which all marriages,

without exception, are made up by the parents, and in which a young man would think himself disgraced for ever, if he shewed the least preference of one woman above another, or did not express the most complete indifference, both about the time when, and the person to whom, he was to be married. The weakness of love, which is so much indulged in ages of humanity and politeness, is regarded among savages as the most unpardonable effeminacy. Even after the marriage, the two parties seem to be ashamed of a connexion which is founded upon so sordid a necessity. They do not live together. They see one another by stealth only. They both continue to dwell in the houses of their respective fathers, and the open cohabitation of the two sexes, which is permitted without blame in all other countries, is here considered as the most indecent and unmanly sensuality. Nor is it only over this agreeable passion that they exert this absolute self-command. They often bear, in the sight of all their countrymen, with injuries, reproach, and the grossest insults, with the appearance of the greatest insensibility, and without expressing the smallest resentment. When a savage is made prisoner of war, and receives, as is usual, the sentence of death from his conquerors, he hears it without expressing any emotion, and afterwards submits to the most dreadful torments, without ever bemoaning himself, or discovering any other passion but contempt of his enemies. While he is hung by the shoulders over a slow fire, he derides his tormentors, and tells them with how much more ingenuity he himself had tormented such of their countrymen as had fallen into his hands. After he has been scorched and burnt, and lacerated in all the most tender and sensible parts of his body for several hours together, he is often allowed, in order to prolong his misery, a short respite, and is taken down from the stake: he employs this interval in talking upon all indifferent subjects, inquires after the news of the country, and seems indifferent about nothing but his own situation. The spectators express the same insensibility; the sight of so horrible an object seems to make no impression upon them; they scarce look at the prisoner, except when they lend a hand to torment him. At other times they smoke tobacco, and amuse themselves with any common object, as if no such matter was going on. Every savage is said to prepare himself from his earliest youth for this dreadful end. He composes, for this purpose, what they call the song of death, a song which he is to sing when he has fallen into the hands of his enemies, and is expiring under the tortures which they inflict upon him. It consists of insults upon his tormentors, and expresses the highest contempt of death and pain. He sings this song upon all extraordinary occasions, when he

goes out to war, when he meets his enemies in the field, or whenever he has a mind to show that he has familiarised his imagination to the most dreadful misfortunes, and that no human event can daunt his resolution, or alter his purpose. The same contempt of death and torture prevails among all other savage nations. There is not a negro from the coast of Africa who does not, in this respect, possess a degree of magnanimity which the soul of his sordid master is too often scarce capable of conceiving. Fortune never exerted more cruelly her empire over mankind, than when she subjected those nations of heroes to the refuse of the jails of Europe, to wretches who possess the virtues neither of the countries which they come from, nor of those which they go to, and whose levity, brutality, and baseness, so justly expose them to the contempt of the vanquished.

This heroic and unconquerable firmness, which the custom and education of his country demand of every savage, is not required of those who are brought up to live in civilized societies. If these last complain when they are in pain, if they grieve when they are in distress, if they allow themselves either to be overcome by love, or to be discomposed by anger, they are easily pardoned. Such weaknesses are not apprehended to affect the essential parts of their character. As long as they do not allow themselves to be transported to do any thing contrary to justice or humanity, they lose but little reputation, though the serenity of their countenance, or the composure of their discourse and behaviour, should be somewhat ruffled and disturbed. A humane and polished people, who have more sensibility to the passions of others, can more readily enter into an animated and passionate behaviour, and can more easily pardon some little excess. The person principally concerned is sensible of this; and being assured of the equity of his judges, indulges himself in stronger expressions of passion, and is less afraid of exposing himself to their contempt by the violence of his emotions. We can venture to express more emotion in the presence of a friend than in that of a stranger, because we expect more indulgence from the one than from the other. And in the same manner the rules of decorum among civilized nations, admit of a more animated behaviour, than is approved of among barbarians. The first converse together with the openness of friends; the second with the reserve of strangers. The emotion and vivacity with which the French and the Italians, the two most polished nations upon the continent, express themselves on occasions that are at all interesting, surprise at first those strangers who happen to be travelling among them, and who, having been educated among a people of duller sensibility,

cannot enter into this passionate behaviour, of which they have never seen any example in their own country. A young French nobleman will weep in the presence of the whole court upon being refused a regiment. An Italian, says the abbot Dû Bos, expresses more emotion on being condemned in a fine of twenty shillings, than an Englishman on receiving the sentence of death. Cicero, in the times of the highest Roman politeness, could, without degrading himself, weep with all the bitterness of sorrow in the sight of the whole senate and the whole people; as it is evident he must have done in the end of almost every oration. The orators of the earlier and ruder ages of Rome could not probably, consistent with the manners of the times, have expressed themselves with so much emotion. It would have been regarded, I suppose, as a violation of nature and propriety in the Scipios, in the Leliuses, and in the elder Cato, to have exposed so much tenderness to the view of the public. Those ancient warriors could express themselves with order, gravity, and good judgment; but are said to have been strangers to that sublime and passionate eloquence which was first introduced into Rome, not many years before the birth of Cicero, by the two Gracchi, by Crassus, and by Sulpitius. This animated eloquence, which has been long practised, with or without success, both in France and Italy, is but just beginning to be introduced into England. So wide is the difference between the degrees of self-command which are required in civilized and in barbarous nations, and by such different standards do they judge of the propriety of behaviour.

This difference gives occasion to many others that are not less essential. A polished people being accustomed to give way, in some measure, to the movements of nature, become frank, open, and sincere. Barbarians, on the contrary, being obliged to smother and conceal the appearance of every passion, necessarily acquire the habits of falsehood and dissimulation. It is observed by all those who have been conversant with savage nations, whether in Asia, Africa, or America, that they are all equally impenetrable, and that, when they have a mind to conceal the truth, no examination is capable of drawing it from them. They cannot be trepanned by the most artful questions. The torture itself is incapable of making them confess any thing which they have no mind to tell. The passions of a savage too, though they never express themselves by any outward emotion, but lie concealed in the breast of the sufferer, are, notwithstanding, all mounted to the highest pitch of fury. Though he seldom shows any symptoms of anger, yet his vengeance, when he comes to give way to it, is always sanguinary and dreadful. The least

affront drives him to despair. His countenance and discourse indeed are still sober and composed, and express nothing but the most perfect tranquillity of mind: but his actions are often the most furious and violent. Among the North-Americans it is not uncommon for persons of the tenderest age and more fearful sex to drown themselves upon receiving only a slight reprimand from their mothers, and this too without expressing any passion, or saying any thing, except, you shall no longer have a daughter. In civilized nations the passions of men are not commonly so furious or so desperate. They are often clamorous and noisy, but are seldom very hurtful; and seem frequently to aim at no other satisfaction, but that of convincing the spectator, that they are in the right to be so much moved, and of procuring his sympathy and approbation.

All these effects of custom and fashion, however, upon the moral sentiments of mankind, are inconsiderable, in comparison of those which they give occasion to in some other cases; and it is not concerning the general style of character and behaviour, that those principles produce the greatest perversion of judgment, but concerning the propriety or impropriety of particular usages.

The different manners which custom teaches us to approve of in the different professions and states of life, do not concern things of the greatest importance. We expect truth and justice from an old man as well as from a young, from a clergyman as well as from an officer; and it is in matters of small moment only that we look for the distinguishing marks of their respective characters. With regard to these too, there is often some unobserved circumstance which, if it was attended to, would show us, that, independent of custom, there was a propriety in the character which custom had taught us to allot to each profession. We cannot complain, therefore, in this case, that the perversion of natural sentiment is very great. Though the manners of different nations require different degrees of the same quality, in the character which they think worthy of esteem, yet the worst that can be said to happen even here, is that the duties of one virtue are sometimes extended so as to encroach a little upon the precincts of some other. The rustic hospitality that is in fashion among the Poles encroaches, perhaps, a little upon oeconomy and good order; and the frugality that is esteemed in Holland, upon generosity and good-fellowship. The hardiness demanded of savages diminishes their humanity; and, perhaps, the delicate sensibility required in civilized nations sometimes destroys the masculine firmness of the character. In general, the style of manners which takes place in any nation, may

commonly upon the whole be said to be that which is most suitable to its situation. Hardiness is the character most suitable to the circumstances of a savage; sensibility to those of one who lives in a very civilized society. Even here, therefore, we cannot complain that the moral sentiments of men are very grossly perverted.

It is not therefore in the general style of conduct or behaviour that custom authorises the widest departure from what is the natural propriety of action. With regard to particular usages, its influence is often much more destructive of good morals, and it is capable of establishing, as lawful and blameless, particular actions, which shock the plainest principles of right and wrong.

Can there be greater barbarity for example, than to hurt an infant? Its helplessness, its innocence, its amiableness, call forth the compassion, even of an enemy, and not to spare that tender age is regarded as the most furious effort of an enraged and cruel conqueror. What then should we imagine must be the heart of a parent who could injure that weakness which even a furious enemy is afraid to violate? Yet the exposition, that is, the murder of new-born infants, was a practice allowed of in almost all the states of Greece, even among the polite and civilized Athenians; and whenever the circumstances of the parent rendered it inconvenient to bring up the child, to abandon it to hunger, or to wild beasts, was regarded without blame or censure. This practice had probably begun in times of the most savage barbarity. The imaginations of men had been first made familiar with it in that earliest period of society, and the uniform continuance of the custom had hindered them afterwards from perceiving its enormity. We find, at this day, that this practice prevails among all savage nations; and in that rudest and lowest state of society it is undoubtedly more pardonable than in any other. The extreme indigence of a savage is often such that he himself is frequently exposed to the greatest extremity of hunger, he often dies of pure want, and it is frequently impossible for him to support both himself and his child. We cannot wonder, therefore, that in this case he should abandon it. One who, in flying from an enemy, whom it was impossible to resist, should throw down his infant, because it retarded his flight, would surely be excusable; since, by attempting to save it, he could only hope for the consolation of dying with it. That in this state of society, therefore, a parent should be allowed to judge whether he can bring up his child, ought not to surprise us so greatly. In the latter ages of Greece, however, the same thing was permitted from views of remote interest or conveniency, which could by no means excuse it. Uninterrupted custom

had by this time so thoroughly authorised the practice, that not only the loose maxims of the world tolerated this barbarous prerogative, but even the doctrine of philosophers, which ought to have been more just and accurate, was led away by the established custom, and upon this, as upon many other occasions, instead of censuring, supported the horrible abuse, by far-fetched considerations of public utility. Aristotle talks of it as of what the magistrate ought upon many occasions to encourage. The humane Plato is of the same opinion, and, with all that love of mankind which seems to animate all his writings, no where marks this practice with disapprobation. When custom can give sanction to so dreadful a violation of humanity, we may well imagine that there is scarce any particular practice so gross which it cannot authorise. Such a thing, we hear men every day saying, is commonly done, and they seem to think this a sufficient apology for what, in itself, is the most unjust and unreasonable conduct.

There is an obvious reason why custom should never pervert our sentiments with regard to the general style and character of conduct and behaviour, in the same degree as with regard to the propriety or unlawfulness of particular usages. There never can be any such custom. No society could subsist a moment, in which the usual strain of men’s conduct and behaviour was of a piece with the horrible practice I have just now mentioned.

Part VI: Of the Character of Virtue

Introduction

When we consider the character of any individual, we naturally view it under two different aspects; first, as it may affect his own happiness; and secondly, as it may affect that of other people.

Section I : Of the Character of the Individual, so far as it affects his own Happiness; or of Prudence

The preservation and healthful state of the body seem to be the objects which Nature first recommends to the care of every individual. The appetites of hunger and thirst, the agreeable or disagreeable sensations of pleasure and pain, of heat and cold, etc. may be considered as lessons delivered by the voice of Nature herself, directing him what he ought to chuse, and what he ought to avoid, for this purpose. The first lessons which he is taught by those to whom his childhood is entrusted, tend, the greater part of them, to the same purpose. Their principal object is to teach him how to keep out of harm's way.

As he grows up, he soon learns that some care and foresight are necessary for providing the means of gratifying those natural appetites, of procuring pleasure and avoiding pain, of procuring the agreeable and avoiding the disagreeable temperature of heat and cold. In the proper direction of this care and foresight consists the art of preserving and increasing what is called his external fortune.

Though it is in order to supply the necessities and conveniencies of the body, that the advantages of external fortune are originally recommended to us, yet we cannot live long in the world without perceiving that the respect of our equals, our credit and rank in the society we live in, depend very much upon the degree in which we possess, or are supposed to possess, those advantages. The desire of becoming the proper objects of this respect, of deserving and obtaining this credit and rank among our equals, is, perhaps, the strongest of all our desires, and our anxiety to obtain the advantages of fortune is accordingly much more excited and irritated by this desire, than by that of supplying all the necessities and conveniencies of the body, which are always very easily supplied.

Our rank and credit among our equals, too, depend very much upon, what, perhaps, a virtuous man would wish them to depend entirely, our character and conduct, or upon the confidence, esteem, and good-will, which these naturally excite in the people we live with.

The care of the health, of the fortune, of the rank and reputation of the individual, the objects upon which his comfort and happiness in this life

are supposed principally to depend, is considered as the proper business of that virtue which is commonly called Prudence.

We suffer more, it has already been observed, when we fall from a better to a worse situation, than we ever enjoy when we rise from a worse to a better. Security, therefore, is the first and the principal object of prudence. It is averse to expose our health, our fortune, our rank, or reputation, to any sort of hazard. It is rather cautious than enterprising, and more anxious to preserve the advantages which we already possess, than forward to prompt us to the acquisition of still greater advantages. The methods of improving our fortune, which it principally recommends to us, are those which expose to no loss or hazard; real knowledge and skill in our trade or profession, assiduity and industry in the exercise of it, frugality, and even some degree of parsimony, in all our expences.

The prudent man always studies seriously and earnestly to understand whatever he professes to understand, and not merely to persuade other people that he understands it; and though his talents may not always be very brilliant, they are always perfectly genuine. He neither endeavours to impose upon you by the cunning devices of an artful impostor, nor by the arrogant airs of an assuming pedant, nor by the confident assertions of a superficial and imprudent pretender. He is not ostentatious even of the abilities which he really possesses. His conversation is simple and modest, and he is averse to all the quackish arts by which other people so frequently thrust themselves into public notice and reputation. For reputation in his profession he is naturally disposed to rely a good deal upon the solidity of his knowledge and abilities; and he does not always think of cultivating the favour of those little clubs and cabals, who, in the superior arts and sciences, so often erect themselves into the supreme judges of merit; and who make it their business to celebrate the talents and virtues of one another, and to decry whatever can come into competition with them. If he ever connects himself with any society of this kind, it is merely in self-defence, not with a view to impose upon the public, but to hinder the public from being imposed upon, to his disadvantage, by the clamours, the whispers, or the intrigues, either of that particular society, or of some other of the same kind.

The prudent man is always sincere, and feels horror at the very thought of exposing himself to the disgrace which attends upon the detection of falsehood. But though always sincere, he is not always frank and open; and though he never tells any thing but the truth, he does not always think himself bound, when not properly called upon, to tell the whole truth. As he is cautious in his actions, so he is reserved in his

speech; and never rashly or unnecessarily obtrudes his opinion concerning either things or persons.

The prudent man, though not always distinguished by the most exquisite sensibility, is always very capable of friendship. But his friendship is not that ardent and passionate, but too often transitory affection, which appears so delicious to the generosity of youth and inexperience. It is a sedate, but steady and faithful attachment to a few well-tried and well-chosen companions; in the choice of whom he is not guided by the giddy admiration of shining accomplishments, but by the sober esteem of modesty, discretion, and good conduct. But though capable of friendship, he is not always much disposed to general sociality. He rarely frequents, and more rarely figures in those convivial societies which are distinguished for the jollity and gaiety of their conversation. Their way of life might too often interfere with the regularity of his temperance, might interrupt the steadiness of his industry, or break in upon the strictness of his frugality.

But though his conversation may not always be very sprightly or diverting, it is always perfectly inoffensive. He hates the thought of being guilty of any petulance or rudeness. He never assumes impertinently over any body, and, upon all common occasions, is willing to place himself rather below than above his equals. Both in his conduct and conversation, he is an exact observer of decency, and respects with an almost religious scrupulosity, all the established decorums and ceremonials of society. And, in this respect, he sets a much better example than has frequently been done by men of much more splendid talents and virtues; who, in all ages, from that of Socrates and Aristippus, down to that of Dr. Swift and Voltaire, and from that of Philip and Alexander the Great, down to that of the great Czar Peter of Moscovy, have too often distinguished themselves by the most improper and even insolent contempt of all the ordinary decorums of life and conversation, and who have thereby set the most pernicious example to those who wish to resemble them, and who too often content themselves with imitating their follies, without even attempting to attain their perfections.

In the steadiness of his industry and frugality, in his steadily sacrificing the ease and enjoyment of the present moment for the probable expectation of the still greater ease and enjoyment of a more distant but more lasting period of time, the prudent man is always both supported and rewarded by the entire approbation of the impartial spectator, and of the representative of the impartial spectator, the man within the breast. The impartial spectator does not feel himself worn out

by the present labour of those whose conduct he surveys; nor does he feel himself solicited by the importunate calls of their present appetites. To him their present, and what is likely to be their future situation, are very nearly the same: he sees them nearly at the same distance, and is affected by them very nearly in the same manner. He knows, however, that to the persons principally concerned, they are very far from being the same, and that they naturally affect them in a very different manner. He cannot therefore but approve, and even applaud, that proper exertion of self-command, which enables them to act as if their present and their future situation affected them nearly in the same manner in which they affect him.

The man who lives within his income, is naturally contented with his situation, which, by continual, though small accumulations, is growing better and better every day. He is enabled gradually to relax, both in the rigour of his parsimony and in the severity of his application; and he feels with double satisfaction this gradual increase of ease and enjoyment, from having felt before the hardship which attended the want of them. He has no anxiety to change so comfortable a situation, and does not go in quest of new enterprises and adventures, which might endanger, but could not well increase, the secure tranquillity which he actually enjoys. If he enters into any new projects or enterprises, they are likely to be well concerted and well prepared. He can never be hurried or drove into them by any necessity, but has always time and leisure to deliberate soberly and coolly concerning what are likely to be their consequences.

The prudent man is not willing to subject himself to any responsibility which his duty does not impose upon him. He is not a bustler in business where he has no concern; is not a meddler in other people’s affairs; is not a professed counsellor or adviser, who obtrudes his advice where nobody is asking it. He confines himself, as much as his duty will permit, to his own affairs, and has no taste for that foolish importance which many people wish to derive from appearing to have some influence in the management of those of other people. He is averse to enter into any party disputes, hates faction, and is not always very forward to listen to the voice even of noble and great ambition. When distinctly called upon, he will not decline the service of his country, but he will not cabal in order to force himself into it; and would be much better pleased that the public business were well managed by some other person, than that he himself should have the trouble, and incur the responsibility, of managing it. In the bottom of his heart he would prefer the undisturbed enjoyment of

secure tranquillity, not only to all the vain splendour of successful ambition, but to the real and solid glory of performing the greatest and most magnanimous actions.

Prudence, in short, when directed merely to the care of the health, of the fortune, and of the rank and reputation of the individual, though it is regarded as a most respectable and even, in some degree, as an amiable and agreeable quality, yet it never is considered as one, either of the most endearing, or of the most ennobling of the virtues. It commands a certain cold esteem, but seems not entitled to any very ardent love or admiration.

Wise and judicious conduct, when directed to greater and nobler purposes than the care of the health, the fortune, the rank and reputation of the individual, is frequently and very properly called prudence. We talk of the prudence of the great general, of the great statesman, of the great legislator. Prudence is, in all these cases, combined with many greater and more splendid virtues, with valour, with extensive and strong benevolence, with a sacred regard to the rules of justice, and all these supported by a proper degree of self-command. This superior prudence, when carried to the highest degree of perfection, necessarily supposes the art, the talent, and the habit or disposition of acting with the most perfect propriety in every possible circumstance and situation. It necessarily supposes the utmost perfection of all the intellectual and of all the moral virtues. It is the best head joined to the best heart. It is the most perfect wisdom combined with the most perfect virtue. It constitutes very nearly the character of the Academical or Peripatetic sage, as the inferior prudence does that of the Epicurean.

Mere imprudence, or the mere want of the capacity to take care of one’s-self, is, with the generous and humane, the object of compassion; with those of less delicate sentiments, of neglect, or, at worst, of contempt, but never of hatred or indignation. When combined with other vices, however, it aggravates in the highest degree the infamy and disgrace which would otherwise attend them. The artful knave, whose dexterity and address exempt him, though not from strong suspicions, yet from punishment or distinct detection, is too often received in the world with an indulgence which he by no means deserves. The awkward and foolish one, who, for want of this dexterity and address, is convicted and brought to punishment, is the object of universal hatred, contempt, and derision. In countries where great crimes frequently pass unpunished, the most atrocious actions become almost familiar, and cease to impress the people with that horror which is universally felt in countries where an exact administration of justice takes place. The injustice is the same in

both countries; but the imprudence is often very different. In the latter, great crimes are evidently great follies. In the former, they are not always considered as such. In Italy, during the greater part of the sixteenth century, assassinations, murders, and even murders under trust, seem to have been almost familiar among the superior ranks of people. Caesar Borgia invited four of the little princes in his neighbourhood, who all possessed little sovereignties, and commanded little armies of their own, to a friendly conference at Senigaglia, where, as soon as they arrived, he put them all to death. This infamous action, though certainly not approved of even in that age of crimes, seems to have contributed very little to the discredit, and not in the least to the ruin of the perpetrator. That ruin happened a few years after from causes altogether disconnected with this crime. Machiavel, not indeed a man of the nicest morality even for his own times, was resident, as minister from the republic of Florence, at the court of Caesar Borgia when this crime was committed. He gives a very particular account of it, and in that pure, elegant, and simple language which distinguishes all his writings. He talks of it very coolly; is pleased with the address with which Caesar Borgia conducted it; has much contempt for the dupery and weakness of the sufferers; but no compassion for their miserable and untimely death, and no sort of indignation at the cruelty and falsehood of their murderer. The violence and injustice of great conquerors are often regarded with foolish wonder and admiration; those of petty thieves, robbers, and murderers, with contempt, hatred, and even horror upon all occasions. The former, though they are a hundred times more mischievous and destructive, yet when successful, they often pass for deeds of the most heroic magnanimity. The latter are always viewed with hatred and aversion, as the follies, as well as the crimes, of the lowest and most worthless of mankind. The injustice of the former is certainly, at least, as great as that of the latter; but the folly and imprudence are not near so great. A wicked and worthless man of parts often goes through the world with much more credit than he deserves. A wicked and worthless fool appears always, of all mortals, the most hateful, as well as the most contemptible. As prudence combined with other virtues, constitutes the noblest; so imprudence combined with other vices, constitutes the vilest of all characters.

Section II : Of the Character of the Individual, so far as it can affect the Happiness of other People

The character of every individual, so far as it can affect the happiness of other people, must do so by its disposition either to hurt or to benefit them.

Proper resentment for injustice attempted, or actually committed, is the only motive which, in the eyes of the impartial spectator, can justify our hurting or disturbing in any respect the happiness of our neighbour. To do so from any other motive is itself a violation of the laws of justice, which force ought to be employed either to restrain or to punish. The wisdom of every state or commonwealth endeavours, as well as it can, to employ the force of the society to restrain those who are subject to its authority, from hurting or disturbing the happiness of one another. The rules which it establishes for this purpose, constitute the civil and criminal law of each particular state or country. The principles upon which those rules either are, or ought to be founded, are the subject of a particular science, of all sciences by far the most important, but hitherto, perhaps, the least cultivated, that of natural jurisprudence,. concerning which it belongs not to our present subject to enter into any detail. A sacred and religious regard not to hurt or disturb in any respect the happiness of our neighbour, even in those cases where no law can properly protect him, constitutes the character of the perfectly innocent and just man; a character which, when carried to a certain delicacy of attention, is always highly respectable and even venerable for its own sake, and can scarce ever fail to be accompanied with many other virtues, with great feeling for other people, with great humanity and great benevolence. It is a character sufficiently understood, and requires no further explanation. In the present section I shall only endeavour to explain the foundation of that order which nature seems to have traced out for the distribution of our good offices, or for the direction and employment of our very limited powers of beneficence: first, towards individuals; and secondly, towards societies.

The same unerring wisdom, it will be found, which regulates every other part of her conduct, directs, in this respect too, the order of her recommendations; which are always stronger or weaker in proportion as our beneficence is more or less necessary, or can be more or less useful.

Chap. I : Of the Order in which Individuals are recommended by Nature to our care and attention

Every man, as the Stoics used to say, is first and principally recommended to his own care; and every man is certainly, in every respect, fitter and abler to take care of himself than of any other person. Every man feels his own pleasures and his own pains more sensibly than those of other people. The former are the original sensations; the latter the reflected or sympathetic images of those sensations. The former may be said to be the substance; the latter the shadow.

After himself, the members of his own family, those who usually live in the same house with him, his parents, his children, his brothers and sisters, are naturally the objects of his warmest affections. They are naturally and usually the persons upon whose happiness or misery his conduct must have the greatest influence. He is more habituated to sympathize with them. He knows better how every thing is likely to affect them, and his sympathy with them is more precise and determinate, than it can be with the greater part of other people. It approaches nearer, in short, to what he feels for himself.

This sympathy too, and the affections which are founded on it, are by nature more strongly directed towards his children than towards his parents, and his tenderness for the former seems generally a more active principle, than his reverence and gratitude towards the latter. In the natural state of things, it has already been observed, the existence of the child, for some time after it comes into the world, depends altogether upon the care of the parent; that of the parent does not naturally depend upon the care of the child. In the eye of nature, it would seem, a child is a more important object than an old man; and excites a much more lively, as well as a much more universal sympathy. It ought to do so. Every thing may be expected, or at least hoped, from the child. In ordinary cases, very little can be either expected or hoped from the old man. The weakness of childhood interests the affections of the most brutal and hard-hearted. It is only to the virtuous and humane, that the infirmities of old age are not the objects of contempt and aversion. In ordinary cases, an old man dies without being much regretted by any body. Scarce a child can die without rending asunder the heart of somebody.

The earliest friendships, the friendships which are naturally contracted when the heart is most susceptible of that feeling, are those among brothers and sisters. Their good agreement, while they remain in the same family, is necessary for its tranquillity and happiness. They are capable of giving more pleasure or pain to one another than to the greater part of other people. Their situation renders their mutual sympathy of the utmost importance to their common happiness; and, by the wisdom of nature, the same situation, by obliging them to accommodate to one another, renders that sympathy more habitual, and thereby more lively, more distinct, and more determinate.

The children of brothers and sisters are naturally connected by the friendship which, after separating into different families, continues to take place between their parents. Their good agreement improves the enjoyment of that friendship; their discord would disturb it. As they seldom live in the same family, however, though of more importance to one another, than to the greater part of other people, they are of much less than brothers and sisters. As their mutual sympathy is less necessary, so it is less habitual, and therefore proportionably weaker.

The children of cousins, being still less connected, are of still less importance to one another; and the affection gradually diminishes as the relation grows more and more remote.

What is called affection, is in reality nothing but habitual sympathy. Our concern in the happiness or misery of those who are the objects of what we call our affections; our desire to promote the one, and to prevent the other; are either the actual feeling of that habitual sympathy, or the necessary consequences of that feeling. Relations being usually placed in situations which naturally create this habitual sympathy, it is expected that a suitable degree of affection should take place among them. We generally find that it actually does take place; we therefore naturally expect that it should; and we are, upon that account, more shocked when, upon any occasion, we find that it does not. The general rule is established, that persons related to one another in a certain degree, ought always to be affected towards one another in a certain manner, and that there is always the highest impropriety, and sometimes even a sort of impiety, in their being affected in a different manner. A parent without parental tenderness, a child devoid of all filial reverence, appear monsters, the objects, not of hatred only, but of horror.

Though in a particular instance, the circumstances which usually produce those natural affections, as they are called, may, by some accident, not have taken place, yet respect for the general rule will

frequently, in some measure, supply their place, and produce something which, though not altogether the same, may bear, however, a very considerable resemblance to those affections. A father is apt to be less attached to a child, who, by some accident, has been separated from him in its infancy, and who does not return to him till it is grown up to manhood. The father is apt to feel less paternal tenderness for the child; the child, less filial reverence for the father. Brothers and sisters, when they have been educated in distant countries, are apt to feel a similar diminution of affection. With the dutiful and the virtuous, however, respect for the general rule will frequently produce something which, though by no means the same, yet may very much resemble those natural affections. Even during the separation, the father and the child, the brothers or the sisters, are by no means indifferent to one another. They all consider one another as persons to and from whom certain affections are due, and they live in the hopes of being some time or another in a situation to enjoy that friendship which ought naturally to have taken place among persons so nearly connected. Till they meet, the absent son, the absent brother, are frequently the favourite son, the favourite brother. They have never offended, or, if they have, it is so long ago, that the offence is forgotten, as some childish trick not worth the remembering. Every account they have heard of one another, if conveyed by people of any tolerable good nature, has been, in the highest degree, flattering and favourable. The absent son, the absent brother, is not like other ordinary sons and brothers; but an all-perfect son, an all-perfect brother; and the most romantic hopes are entertained of the happiness to be enjoyed in the friendship and conversation of such persons. When they meet, it is often with so strong a disposition to conceive that habitual sympathy which constitutes the family affection, that they are very apt to fancy they have actually conceived it, and to behave to one another as if they had. Time and experience, however, I am afraid, too frequently undeceive them. Upon a more familiar acquaintance, they frequently discover in one another habits, humours, and inclinations, different from what they expected, to which, from want of habitual sympathy, from want of the real principle and foundation of what is properly called family-affection, they cannot now easily accommodate themselves. They have never lived in the situation which almost necessarily forces that easy accommodation, and though they may now be sincerely desirous to assume it, they have really become incapable of doing so. Their familiar conversation and intercourse soon become less pleasing to them, and, upon that account, less frequent. They may continue to live with one

another in the mutual exchange of all essential good offices, and with every other external appearance of decent regard. But that cordial satisfaction, that delicious sympathy, that confidential openness and ease, which naturally take place in the conversation of those who have lived long and familiarly with one another, it seldom happens that they can completely enjoy.

It is only, however, with the dutiful and the virtuous, that the general rule has even this slender authority. With the dissipated, the profligate, and the vain, it is entirely disregarded. They are so far from respecting it, that they seldom talk of it but with the most indecent derision. and an early and long separation of this kind never fails to estrange them most completely from one another. With such persons, respect for the general rule can at best produce only a cold and affected civility (a very slender semblance of real regard); and even this, the slightest offence, the smallest opposition of interest, commonly puts an end to altogether.

The education of boys at distant great schools, of young men at distant colleges, of young ladies in distant nunneries and boarding-schools, seems, in the higher ranks of life, to have hurt most essentially the domestic morals, and consequently the domestic happiness, both of France and England. Do you wish to educate your children to be dutiful to their parents, to be kind and affectionate to their brothers and sisters? put them under the necessity of being dutiful children, of being kind and affectionate brothers and sisters: educate them in your own house. From their parent’s house they may, with propriety and advantage, go out every day to attend public schools: but let their dwelling be always at home. Respect for you must always impose a very useful restraint upon their conduct; and respect for them may frequently impose no useless restraint upon your own. Surely no acquirement, which can possibly be derived from what is called a public education, can make any sort of compensation for what is almost certainly and necessarily lost by it. Domestic education is the institution of nature; public education, the contrivance of man. It is surely unnecessary to say, which is likely to be the wisest.

In some tragedies and romances, we meet with many beautiful and interesting scenes, founded upon, what is called, the force of blood, or upon the wonderful affection which near relations are supposed to conceive for one another, even before they know that they have any such connection. This force of blood, however, I am afraid, exists no-where but in tragedies and romances. Even in tragedies and romances, it is never supposed to take place between any relations, but those who are

naturally bred up in the same house; between parents and children, between brothers and sisters. To imagine any such mysterious affection between cousins, or even between aunts or uncles, and nephews or nieces, would be too ridiculous.

In pastoral countries, and in all countries where the authority of law is not alone sufficient to give perfect security to every member of the state, all the different branches of the same family commonly chuse to live in the neighbourhood of one another. Their association is frequently necessary for their common defence. They are all, from the highest to the lowest, of more or less importance to one another. Their concord strengthens their necessary association; their discord always weakens, and might destroy it. They have more intercourse with one another, than with the members of any other tribe. The remotest members of the same tribe claim some connection with one another; and, where all other circumstances are equal, expect to be treated with more distinguished attention than is due to those who have no such pretensions. It is not many years ago that, in the Highlands of Scotland, the Chieftain used to consider the poorest man of his clan, as his cousin and relation. The same extensive regard to kindred is said to take place among the Tartars, the Arabs, the Turkomans, and, I believe, among all other nations who are nearly in the same state of society in which the Scots Highlanders were about the beginning of the present century.

In commercial countries, where the authority of law is always perfectly sufficient to protect the meanest man in the state, the descendants of the same family, having no such motive for keeping together, naturally separate and disperse, as interest or inclination may direct. They soon cease to be of importance to one another; and, in a few generations, not only lose all care about one another, but all remembrance of their common origin, and of the connection which took place among their ancestors. Regard for remote relations becomes, in every country, less and less, according as this state of civilization has been longer and more completely established. It has been longer and more completely established in England than in Scotland; and remote relations are, accordingly, more considered in the latter country than in the former, though, in this respect, the difference between the two countries is growing less and less every day. Great lords, indeed, are, in every country, proud of remembering and acknowledging their connection with one another, however remote. The remembrance of such illustrious relations flatters not a little the family pride of them all; and it is neither from affection, nor from any thing which resembles affection,

but from the most frivolous and childish of all vanities, that this remembrance is so carefully kept up. Should some more humble, though, perhaps, much nearer kinsman, presume to put such great men in mind of his relation to their family, they seldom fail to tell him that they are bad genealogists, and miserably ill-informed concerning their own family history. It is not in that order, I am afraid, that we are to expect any extraordinary extension of, what is called, natural affection.

I consider what is called natural affection as more the effect of the moral than of the supposed physical connection between the parent and the child. A jealous husband, indeed, notwithstanding the moral connection, notwithstanding the child's having been educated in his own house, often regards, with hatred and aversion, that unhappy child which he supposes to be the offspring of his wife's infidelity. It is the lasting monument of a most disagreeable adventure; of his own dishonour, and of the disgrace of his family.

Among well-disposed people, the necessity or conveniency of mutual accommodation, very frequently produces a friendship not unlike that which takes place among those who are born to live in the same family. Colleagues in office, partners in trade, call one another brothers; and frequently feel towards one another as if they really were so. Their good agreement is an advantage to all; and, if they are tolerably reasonable people, they are naturally disposed to agree. We expect that they should do so; and their disagreement is a sort of a small scandal. The Romans expressed this sort of attachment by the word necessitudo, which, from the etymology, seems to denote that it was imposed by the necessity of the situation.

Even the trifling circumstance of living in the same neighbourhood, has some effect of the same kind. We respect the face of a man whom we see every day, provided he has never offended us. Neighbours can be very convenient, and they can be very troublesome, to one another. If they are good sort of people, they are naturally disposed to agree. We expect their good agreement; and to be a bad neighbour is a very bad character. There are certain small good offices, accordingly, which are universally allowed to be due to a neighbour in preference to any other person who has no such connection.

This natural disposition to accommodate and to assimilate, as much as we can, our own sentiments, principles, and feelings, to those which we see fixed and rooted in the persons whom we are obliged to live and converse a great deal with, is the cause of the contagious effects of both good and bad company. The man who associates chiefly with the wise

and the virtuous, though he may not himself become either wise or virtuous, cannot help conceiving a certain respect at least for wisdom and virtue; and the man who associates chiefly with the profligate and the dissolute, though he may not himself become profligate and dissolute, must soon lose, at least, all his original abhorrence of profligacy and dissolution of manners. The similarity of family characters, which we so frequently see transmitted through several successive generations, may, perhaps, be partly owing to this disposition, to assimilate ourselves to those whom we are obliged to live and converse a great deal with. The family character, however, like the family countenance, seems to be owing, not altogether to the moral, but partly too to the physical connection. The family countenance is certainly altogether owing to the latter.

But of all attachments to an individual, that which is founded altogether upon the esteem and approbation of his good conduct and behaviour, confirmed by much experience and long acquaintance, is, by far, the most respectable. Such friendships, arising not from a constrained sympathy, not from a sympathy which has been assumed and rendered habitual for the sake of conveniency and accommodation; but from a natural sympathy, from an involuntary feeling that the persons to whom we attach ourselves are the natural and proper objects of esteem and approbation; can exist only among men of virtue. Men of virtue only can feel that entire confidence in the conduct and behaviour of one another, which can, at all times, assure them that they can never either offend or be offended by one another. Vice is always capricious: virtue only is regular and orderly. The attachment which is founded upon the love of virtue, as it is certainly, of all attachments, the most virtuous; so it is likewise the happiest, as well as the most permanent and secure. Such friendships need not be confined to a single person, but may safely embrace all the wise and virtuous, with whom we have been long and intimately acquainted, and upon whose wisdom and virtue we can, upon that account, entirely depend. They who would confine friendship to two persons, seem to confound the wise security of friendship with the jealousy and folly of love. The hasty, fond, and foolish intimacies of young people, founded, commonly, upon some slight similarity of character, altogether unconnected with good conduct, upon a taste, perhaps, for the same studies, the same amusements, the same diversions, or upon their agreement in some singular principle or opinion, not commonly adopted; those intimacies which a freak begins, and which a freak puts an end to, how agreeable soever they may appear

while they last, can by no means deserve the sacred and venerable name of friendship.

Of all the persons, however, whom nature points out for our peculiar beneficence, there are none to whom it seems more properly directed than to those whose beneficence we have ourselves already experienced. Nature, which formed men for that mutual kindness, so necessary for their happiness, renders every man the peculiar object of kindness, to the persons to whom he himself has been kind. Though their gratitude should not always correspond to his beneficence, yet the sense of his merit, the sympathetic gratitude of the impartial spectator, will always correspond to it. The general indignation of other people, against the baseness of their ingratitude, will even, sometimes, increase the general sense of his merit. No benevolent man ever lost altogether the fruits of his benevolence. If he does not always gather them from the persons from whom he ought to have gathered them, he seldom fails to gather them, and with a tenfold increase, from other people. Kindness is the parent of kindness; and if to be beloved by our brethren be the great object of our ambition, the surest way of obtaining it is, by our conduct to show that we really love them.

After the persons who are recommended to our beneficence, either by their connection with ourselves, by their personal qualities, or by their past services, come those who are pointed out, not indeed to, what is called, our friendship, but to our benevolent attention and good offices; those who are distinguished by their extraordinary situation; the greatly fortunate and the greatly unfortunate, the rich and the powerful, the poor and the wretched. The distinction of ranks, the peace and order of society, are, in a great measure, founded upon the respect which we naturally conceive for the former. The relief and consolation of human misery depend altogether upon our compassion for the latter. The peace and order of society, is of more importance than even the relief of the miserable. Our respect for the great, accordingly, is most apt to offend by its excess; our fellow-feeling for the miserable, by its defect. Moralists exhort us to charity and compassion. They warn us against the fascination of greatness. This fascination, indeed, is so powerful, that the rich and the great are too often preferred to the wise and the virtuous. Nature has wisely judged that the distinction of ranks, the peace and order of society, would rest more securely upon the plain and palpable difference of birth and fortune, than upon the invisible and often uncertain difference of wisdom and virtue. The undistinguishing eyes of the great mob of mankind can well enough perceive the former: it is with

difficulty that the nice discernment of the wise and the virtuous can sometimes distinguish the latter. In the order of all those recommendations, the benevolent wisdom of nature is equally evident.

It may, perhaps, be unnecessary to observe, that the combination of two, or more, of those exciting causes of kindness, increases the kindness. The favour and partiality which, when there is no envy in the case, we naturally bear to greatness, are much increased when it is joined with wisdom and virtue. If, notwithstanding that wisdom and virtue, the great man should fall into those misfortunes, those dangers and distresses, to which the most exalted stations are often the most exposed, we are much more deeply interested in his fortune than we should be in that of a person equally virtuous, but in a more humble situation. The most interesting subjects of tragedies and romances are the misfortunes of virtuous and magnanimous kings and princes. If, by the wisdom and manhood of their exertions, they should extricate themselves from those misfortunes, and recover completely their former superiority and security, we cannot help viewing them with the most enthusiastic and even extravagant admiration. The grief which we felt for their distress, the joy which we feel for their prosperity, seem to combine together in enhancing that partial admiration which we naturally conceive both for the station and the character.

When those different beneficent affections happen to draw different ways, to determine by any precise rules in what cases we ought to comply with the one, and in what with the other, is, perhaps, altogether impossible. In what cases friendship ought to yield to gratitude, or gratitude to friend, ship. in what cases the strongest of all natural affections ought to yield to a regard for the safety of those superiors upon whose safety often depends that of the whole society; and in what cases natural affection may, without impropriety, prevail over that regard; must be left altogether to the decision of the man within the breast, the supposed impartial spectator, the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. If we place ourselves completely in his situation, if we really view ourselves with his eyes, and as he views us, and listen with diligent and reverential attention to what he suggests to us, his voice will never deceive us. We shall stand in need of no casuistic rules to direct our conduct. These it is often impossible to accommodate to all the different shades and gradations of circumstance, character, and situation, to differences and distinctions which, though not imperceptible, are, by their nicety and delicacy, often altogether undefinable. In that beautiful tragedy of Voltaire, the Orphan of China, while we admire the

magnanimity of Zamti, who is willing to sacrifice the life of his own child, in order to preserve that of the only feeble remnant of his ancient sovereigns and masters; we not only pardon, but love the maternal tenderness of Idame, who, at the risque of discovering the important secret of her husband, reclaims her infant from the cruel hands of the Tartars, into which it had been delivered.

Chap. II : Of the order in which Societies are by nature recommended to our Beneficence

The same principles that direct the order in which individuals are recommended to our beneficence, direct that likewise in which societies are recommended to it. Those to which it is, or may be of most importance, are first and principally recommended to it.

The state or sovereignty in which we have been born and educated, and under the protection of which we continue to live, is, in ordinary cases, the greatest society upon whose happiness or misery, our good or bad conduct can have much influence. It is accordingly, by nature, most strongly recommended to us. Not only we ourselves, but all the objects of our kindest affections, our children, our parents, our relations, our friends, our benefactors, all those whom we naturally love and revere the most, are commonly comprehended within it; and their prosperity and safety depend in some measure upon its prosperity and safety. It is by nature, therefore, endeared to us, not only by all our selfish, but by all our private benevolent affections. Upon account of our own connexion with it, its prosperity and glory seem to reflect some sort of honour upon ourselves. When we compare it with other societies of the same kind, we are proud of its superiority, and mortified in some degree, if it appears in any respect below them. All the illustrious characters which it has produced in former times (for against those of our own times envy may sometimes prejudice us a little), its warriors, its statesmen, its poets, its philosophers, and men of letters of all kinds; we are disposed to view with the most partial admiration, and to rank them (sometimes most unjustly) above those of all other nations. The patriot who lays down his life for the safety, or even for the vain-glory of this society, appears to act with the most exact propriety. He appears to view himself in the light in which the impartial spectator naturally and necessarily views him, as but one of the multitude, in the eye of that equitable judge, of no more consequence than any other in it, but bound at all times to sacrifice and devote himself to the safety, to the service, and even to the glory of the greater number. But though this sacrifice appears to be perfectly just and proper, we know how difficult it is to make it, and how few people are capable of making it. His conduct, therefore, excites not only our entire approbation, but our highest wonder and admiration, and seems to merit

all the applause which can be due to the most heroic virtue. The traitor, on the contrary, who, in some peculiar situation, fancies he can promote his own little interest by betraying to the public enemy that of his native country. who, regardless of the judgment of the man within the breast, prefers himself, in this respect so shamefully and so basely, to all those with whom he has any connexion; appears to be of all villains the most detestable.

The love of our own nation often disposes us to view, with the most malignant jealousy and envy, the prosperity and aggrandisement of any other neighbouring nation. Independent and neighbouring nations, having no common superior to decide their disputes, all live in continual dread and suspicion of one another. Each sovereign, expecting little justice from his neighbours, is disposed to treat them with as little as he expects from them. The regard for the laws of nations, or for those rules which independent states profess or pretend to think themselves bound to observe in their dealings with one another, is often very little more than mere pretence and profession. From the smallest interest, upon the slightest provocation, we see those rules every day, either evaded or directly violated without shame or remorse. Each nation foresees, or imagines it foresees, its own subjugation in the increasing power and aggrandisement of any of its neighbours; and the mean principle of national prejudice is often founded upon the noble one of the love of our own country. The sentence with which the elder Cato is said to have concluded every speech which he made in the senate, whatever might be the subject, ‘It is my opinion likewise that Carthage ought to be destroyed,’ was the natural expression of the savage patriotism of a strong but coarse mind, enraged almost to madness against a foreign nation from which his own had suffered so much. The more humane sentence with which Scipio Nasica is said to have concluded all his speeches, ‘It is my opinion likewise that Carthage ought not to be destroyed,’ was the liberal expression of a more enlarged and enlightened mind, who felt no aversion to the prosperity even of an old enemy, when reduced to a state which could no longer be formidable to Rome. France and England may each of them have some reason to dread the increase of the naval and military power of the other; but for either of them to envy the internal happiness and prosperity of the other, the cultivation of its lands, the advancement of its manufactures, the increase of its commerce, the security and number of its ports and harbours, its proficiency in all the liberal arts and sciences, is surely beneath the dignity of two such great nations. These are all real improvements of the

world we live in. Mankind are benefited, human nature is ennobled by them. In such improvements each nation ought, not only to endeavour itself to excel, but from the love of mankind, to promote, instead of obstructing the excellence of its neighbours. These are all proper objects of national emulation, not of national prejudice or envy.

The love of our own country seems not to be derived from the love of mankind. The former sentiment is altogether independent of the latter, and seems sometimes even to dispose us to act inconsistently with it. France may contain, perhaps, near three times the number of inhabitants which Great Britain contains. In the great society of mankind, therefore, the prosperity of France should appear to be an object of much greater importance than that of Great Britain. The British subject, however, who, upon that account, should prefer upon all occasions the prosperity of the former to that of the latter country, would not be thought a good citizen of Great Britain. We do not love our country merely as a part of the great society of mankind: we love it for its own sake, and independently of any such consideration. That wisdom which contrived the system of human affections, as well as that of every other part of nature, seems to have judged that the interest of the great society of mankind would be best promoted by directing the principal attention of each individual to that particular portion of it, which was most within the sphere both of his abilities and of his understanding.

National prejudices and hatreds seldom extend beyond neighbouring nations. We very weakly and foolishly, perhaps, call the French our natural enemies; and they perhaps, as weakly and foolishly, consider us in the same manner. Neither they nor we bear any sort of envy to the prosperity of China or Japan. It very rarely happens, however, that our good-will towards such distant countries can be exerted with much effect.

The most extensive public benevolence which can commonly be exerted with any considerable effect, is that of the statesmen, who project and form alliances among neighbouring or not very distant nations, for the preservation either of, what is called, the balance of power, or of the general peace and tranquillity of the states within the circle of their negotiations. The statesmen, however, who plan and execute such treaties, have seldom any thing in view, but the interest of their respective countries. Sometimes, indeed, their views are more extensive. The Count d’Avaux, the plenipotentiary of France, at the treaty of Munster, would have been willing to sacrifice his life (according to the Cardinal de Retz, a man not over-credulous in the virtue of other people)

in order to have restored, by that treaty, the general tranquillity of Europe. King William seems to have had a real zeal for the liberty and independency of the greater part of the sovereign states of Europe; which, perhaps, might be a good deal stimulated by his particular aversion to France, the state from which, during his time, that liberty and independency were principally in danger. Some share of the same spirit seems to have descended to the first ministry of Queen Anne.

Every independent state is divided into many different orders and societies, each of which has its own particular powers, privileges, and immunities. Every individual is naturally more attached to his own particular order or society, than to any other. His own interest, his own vanity the interest and vanity of many of his friends and companions, are commonly a good deal connected with it. He is ambitious to extend its privileges and immunities. He is zealous to defend them against the encroachments of every other order or society.

Upon the manner in which any state is divided into the different orders and societies which compose it, and upon the particular distribution which has been made of their respective powers, privileges, and immunities, depends, what is called, the constitution of that particular state.

Upon the ability of each particular order or society to maintain its own powers, privileges, and immunities, against the encroachments of every other, depends the stability of that particular constitution. That particular constitution is necessarily more or less altered, whenever any of its subordinate parts is either raised above or depressed below whatever had been its former rank and condition.

All those different orders and societies are dependent upon the state to which they owe their security and protection. That they are all subordinate to that state, and established only in subserviency to its prosperity and preservation, is a truth acknowledged by the most partial member of every one of them. It may often, however, be hard to convince him that the prosperity and preservation of the state require any diminution of the powers, privileges, and immunities of his own particular order or society. This partiality, though it may sometimes be unjust, may not, upon that account, be useless. It checks the spirit of innovation. It tends to preserve whatever is the established balance among the different orders and societies into which the state is divided; and while it sometimes appears to obstruct some alterations of government which may be fashionable and popular at the time, it

contributes in reality to the stability and permanency of the whole system.

The love of our country seems, in ordinary cases, to involve in it two different principles; first, a certain respect and reverence for that constitution or form of government which is actually established; and secondly, an earnest desire to render the condition of our fellow-citizens as safe, respectable, and happy as we can. He is not a citizen who is not disposed to respect the laws and to obey the civil magistrate; and he is certainly not a good citizen who does not wish to promote, by every means in his power, the welfare of the whole society of his fellow-citizens.

In peaceable and quiet times, those two principles generally coincide and lead to the same conduct. The support of the established government seems evidently the best expedient for maintaining the safe, respectable, and happy situation of our fellow-citizens; when we see that this government actually maintains them in that situation. But in times of public discontent, faction, and disorder, those two different principles may draw different ways, and even a wise man may be disposed to think some alteration necessary in that constitution or form of government, which, in its actual condition, appears plainly unable to maintain the public tranquillity. In such cases, however, it often requires, perhaps, the highest effort of political wisdom to determine when a real patriot ought to support and endeavour to re-establish the authority of the old system, and when he ought to give way to the more daring, but often dangerous spirit of innovation.

Foreign war and civil faction are the two situations which afford the most splendid opportunities for the display of public spirit. The hero who serves his country successfully in foreign war gratifies the wishes of the whole nation, and is, upon that account, the object of universal gratitude and admiration. In times of civil discord, the leaders of the contending parties, though they may be admired by one half of their fellow-citizens, are commonly execrated by the other. Their characters and the merit of their respective services appear commonly more doubtful. The glory which is acquired by foreign war is, upon this account, almost always more pure and more splendid than that which can be acquired in civil faction.

The leader of the successful party, however, if he has authority enough to prevail upon his own friends to act with proper temper and moderation (which he frequently has not), may sometimes render to his country a service much more essential and important than the greatest

victories and the most extensive conquests. He may re-establish and improve the constitution, and from the very doubtful and ambiguous character of the leader of a party, he may assume the greatest and noblest of all characters, that of the reformer and legislator of a great state; and, by the wisdom of his institutions, secure the internal tranquillity and happiness of his fellow-citizens for many succeeding generations.

Amidst the turbulence and disorder of faction, a certain spirit of system is apt to mix itself with that public spirit which is founded upon the love of humanity, upon a real fellow-feeling with the inconveniencies and distresses to which some of our fellow-citizens may be exposed. This spirit of system commonly takes the direction of that more gentle public spirit; always animates it, and often inflames it even to the madness of fanaticism. The leaders of the discontented party seldom fail to hold out some plausible plan of reformation which, they pretend, will not only remove the inconveniencies and relieve the distresses immediately complained of, but will prevent, in all time coming, any return of the like inconveniencies and distresses. They often propose, upon this account, to new-model the constitution, and to alter, in some of its most essential parts, that system of government under which the subjects of a great empire have enjoyed, perhaps, peace, security, and even glory, during the course of several centuries together. The great body of the party are commonly intoxicated with the imaginary beauty of this ideal system, of which they have no experience, but which has been represented to them in all the most dazzling colours in which the eloquence of their leaders could paint it. Those leaders themselves, though they originally may have meant nothing but their own aggrandisement, become many of them in time the dupes of their own sophistry, and are as eager for this great reformation as the weakest and foolishest of their followers. Even though the leaders should have preserved their own heads, as indeed they commonly do, free from this fanaticism, yet they dare not always disappoint the expectation of their followers; but are often obliged, though contrary to their principle and their conscience, to act as if they were under the common delusion. The violence of the party, refusing all palliatives, all temperaments, all reasonable accommodations, by requiring too much frequently obtains nothing; and those inconveniencies and distresses which, with a little moderation, might in a great measure have been removed and relieved, are left altogether without the hope of a remedy.

The man whose public spirit is prompted altogether by humanity and benevolence, will respect the established powers and privileges even of

individuals, and still more those of the great orders and societies, into which the state is divided. Though he should consider some of them as in some measure abusive, he will content himself with moderating, what he often cannot annihilate without great violence. When he cannot conquer the rooted prejudices of the people by reason and persuasion, he will not attempt to subdue them by force; but will religiously observe what, by Cicero, is justly called the divine maxim of Plato, never to use violence to his country no more than to his parents. He will accommodate, as well as he can, his public arrangements to the confirmed habits and prejudices of the people; and will remedy as well as he can, the inconveniencies which may flow from the want of those regulations which the people are averse to submit to. When he cannot establish the right, he will not disdain to ameliorate the wrong; but like Solon, when he cannot establish the best system of laws, he will endeavour to establish the best that the people can bear.

The man of system, on the contrary, is apt to be very wise in his own conceit; and is often so enamoured with the supposed beauty of his own ideal plan of government, that he cannot suffer the smallest deviation from any part of it. He goes on to establish it completely and in all its parts, without any regard either to the great interests, or to the strong prejudices which may oppose it. He seems to imagine that he can arrange the different members of a great society with as much ease as the hand arranges the different pieces upon a chess-board. He does not consider that the pieces upon the chess-board have no other principle of motion besides that which the hand impresses upon them; but that, in the great chess-board of human society, every single piece has a principle of motion of its own, altogether different from that which the legislature might chuse to impress upon it. If those two principles coincide and act in the same direction, the game of human society will go on easily and harmoniously, and is very likely to be happy and successful. If they are opposite or different, the game will go on miserably, and the society must be at all times in the highest degree of disorder.

Some general, and even systematical, idea of the perfection of policy and law, may no doubt be necessary for directing the views of the statesman. But to insist upon establishing, and upon establishing all at once, and in spite of all opposition, every thing which that idea may seem to require, must often be the highest degree of arrogance. It is to erect his own judgment into the supreme standard of right and wrong. It is to fancy himself the only wise and worthy man in the commonwealth, and that his fellow-citizens should accommodate themselves to him and

not he to them. It is upon this account, that of all political speculators, sovereign princes are by far the most dangerous. This arrogance is perfectly familiar to them. They entertain no doubt of the immense superiority of their own judgment. When such imperial and royal reformers, therefore, condescend to contemplate the constitution of the country which is committed to their government, they seldom see any thing so wrong in it as the obstructions which it may sometimes oppose to the execution of their own will. They hold in contempt the divine maxim of Plato, and consider the state as made for themselves, not themselves for the state. The great object of their reformation, therefore, is to remove those obstructions; to reduce the authority of the nobility; to take away the privileges of cities and provinces, and to render both the greatest individuals and the greatest orders of the state, as incapable of opposing their commands, as the weakest and most insignificant.

Chap. III : Of universal Benevolence

Though our effectual good offices can very seldom be extended to any wider society than that of our own country; our good-will is circumscribed by no boundary, but may embrace the immensity of the universe. We cannot form the idea of any innocent and sensible being, whose happiness we should not desire, or to whose misery, when distinctly brought home to the imagination, we should not have some degree of aversion. The idea of a mischievous, though sensible, being, indeed, naturally provokes our hatred: but the ill-will which, in this case, we bear to it, is really the effect of our universal benevolence. It is the effect of the sympathy which we feel with the misery and resentment of those other innocent and sensible beings, whose happiness is disturbed by its malice.

This universal benevolence, how noble and generous soever, can be the source of no solid happiness to any man who is not thoroughly convinced that all the inhabitants of the universe, the meanest as well as the greatest, are under the immediate care and protection of that great, benevolent, and all-wise Being, who directs all the movements of nature; and who is determined, by his own unalterable perfections, to maintain in it, at all times, the greatest possible quantity of happiness. To this universal benevolence, on the contrary, the very suspicion of a fatherless world, must be the most melancholy of all reflections; from the thought that all the unknown regions of infinite and incomprehensible space may be filled with nothing but endless misery and wretchedness. All the splendour of the highest prosperity can never enlighten the gloom with which so dreadful an idea must necessarily over-shadow the imagination; nor, in a wise and virtuous man, can all the sorrow of the most afflicting adversity ever dry up the joy which necessarily springs from the habitual and thorough conviction of the truth of the contrary system.

The wise and virtuous man is at all times willing that his own private interest should be sacrificed to the public interest of his own particular order or society. He is at all times willing, too, that the interest of this order or society should be sacrificed to the greater interest of the state or sovereignty, of which it is only a subordinate part. He should, therefore, be equally willing that all those inferior interests should be sacrificed to the greater interest of the universe, to the interest of that great society of all sensible and intelligent beings, of which God himself is the

immediate administrator and director. If he is deeply impressed with the habitual and thorough conviction that this benevolent and all-wise Being can admit into the system of his government, no partial evil which is not necessary for the universal good, he must consider all the misfortunes which may befal himself, his friends, his society, or his country, as necessary for the prosperity of the universe, and therefore as what he ought, not only to submit to with resignation, but as what he himself, if he had known all the connexions and dependencies of things, ought sincerely and devoutly to have wished for.

Nor does this magnanimous resignation to the will of the great Director of the universe, seem in any respect beyond the reach of human nature. Good soldiers, who both love and trust their general, frequently march with more gaiety and alacrity to the forlorn station, from which they never expect to return, than they would to one where there was neither difficulty nor danger. In marching to the latter, they could feel no other sentiment than that of the dulness of ordinary duty: in marching to the former, they feel that they are making the noblest exertion which it is possible for man to make. They know that their general would not have ordered them upon this station, had it not been necessary for the safety of the army, for the success of the war. They cheerfully sacrifice their own little systems to the prosperity of a greater system. They take an affectionate leave of their comrades, to whom they wish all happiness and success; and march out, not only with submissive obedience, but often with shouts of the most joyful exultation, to that fatal, but splendid and honourable station to which they are appointed. No conductor of an army can deserve more unlimited trust, more ardent and zealous affection, than the great Conductor of the universe. In the greatest public as well as private disasters, a wise man ought to consider that he himself, his friends and countrymen, have only been ordered upon the forlorn station of the universe; that had it not been necessary for the good of the whole, they would not have been so ordered; and that it is their duty, not only with humble resignation to submit to this allotment, but to endeavour to embrace it with alacrity and joy. A wise man should surely be capable of doing what a good soldier holds himself at all times in readiness to do.

The idea of that divine Being, whose benevolence and wisdom have, from all eternity, contrived and conducted the immense machine of the universe, so as at all times to produce the greatest possible quantity of happiness, is certainly of all the objects of human contemplation by far the most sublime. Every other thought necessarily appears mean in the

comparison. The man whom we believe to be principally occupied in this sublime contemplation, seldom fails to be the object of our highest veneration; and though his life should be altogether contemplative, we often regard him with a sort of religious respect much superior to that with which we look upon the most active and useful servant of the commonwealth. The Meditations of Marcus Antoninus, which turn principally upon this subject, have contributed more, perhaps, to the general admiration of his character, than all the different transactions of his just, merciful, and beneficent reign.

The administration of the great system of the universe, however, the care of the universal happiness of all rational and sensible beings, is the business of God and not of man. To man is allotted a much humbler department, but one much more suitable to the weakness of his powers, and to the narrowness of his comprehension; the care of his own happiness, of that of his family, his friends, his country: that he is occupied in contemplating the more sublime, can never be an excuse for his neglecting the more humble department; and he must not expose himself to the charge which Avidius Cassius is said to have brought, perhaps unjustly, against Marcus Antoninus; that while he employed himself in philosophical speculations, and contemplated the prosperity of the universe, he neglected that of the Roman empire. The most sublime speculation of the contemplative philosopher can scarce compensate the neglect of the smallest active duty.

Section III : Of Self-command

The man who acts according to the rules of perfect prudence, of strict justice, and of proper benevolence, may be said to be perfectly virtuous. But the most perfect knowledge of those rules will not alone enable him to act in this manner: his own passions are very apt to mislead him; sometimes to drive him and sometimes to seduce him to violate all the rules which he himself, in all his sober and cool hours, approves of. The most perfect knowledge, if it is not supported by the most perfect self-command, will not always enable him to do his duty.

Some of the best of the ancient moralists seem to have considered those passions as divided into two different classes: first, into those which it requires a considerable exertion of self-command to restrain even for a single moment; and secondly, into those which it is easy to restrain for a single moment, or even for a short period of time; but which, by their continual and almost incessant solicitations, are, in the course of a life, very apt to mislead into great deviations.

Fear and anger, together with some other passions which are mixed or connected with them, constitute the first class. The love of ease, of pleasure, of applause, and of many other selfish gratifications, constitute the second. Extravagant fear and furious anger, it is often difficult to restrain even for a single moment. The love of ease, of pleasure, of applause, and other selfish gratifications, it is always easy to restrain for a single moment, or even for a short period of time; but, by their continual solicitations, they often mislead us into many weaknesses which we have afterwards much reason to be ashamed of. The former set of passions may often be said to drive, the latter, to seduce us from our duty. The command of the former was, by the ancient moralists above alluded to, denominated fortitude, manhood, and strength of mind; that of the latter, temperance, decency, modesty, and moderation.

The command of each of those two sets of passions, independent of the beauty which it derives from its utility; from its enabling us upon all occasions to act according to the dictates of prudence, of justice, and of proper benevolence; has a beauty of its own, and seems to deserve for its own sake a certain degree of esteem and admiration. In the one case, the strength and greatness of the exertion excites some degree of that esteem and admiration. In the other, the uniformity, the equality and unremitting steadiness of that exertion.

The man who, in danger, in torture, upon the approach of death, preserves his tranquillity unaltered, and suffers no word, no gesture to escape him which does not perfectly accord with the feelings of the most indifferent spectator, necessarily commands a very high degree of admiration. If he suffers in the cause of liberty and justice, for the sake of humanity and the love of his country, the most tender compassion for his sufferings, the strongest indignation against the injustice of his persecutors, the warmest sympathetic gratitude for his beneficent intentions, the highest sense of his merit, all join and mix themselves with the admiration of his magnanimity, and often inflame that sentiment into the most enthusiastic and rapturous veneration. The heroes of ancient and modern history, who are remembered with the most peculiar favour and affection, are, many of them, those who, in the cause of truth, liberty, and justice, have perished upon the scaffold, and who behaved there with that ease and dignity which became them. Had the enemies of Socrates suffered him to die quietly in his bed, the glory even of that great philosopher might possibly never have acquired that dazzling splendour in which it has been beheld in all succeeding ages. In the english history, when we look over the illustrious heads which have been engraven by Vertue and Howbraken, there is scarce any body, I imagine, who does not feel that the axe, the emblem of having been beheaded, which is engraved under some of the most illustrious of them. under those of the Sir Thomas Mores, of the Rhaleighs, the Russels, the Sydneys, etc. sheds a real dignity and interestingness over the characters to which it is affixed, much superior to what they can derive from all the futile ornaments of heraldry, with which they are sometimes accompanied.

Nor does this magnanimity give lustre only to the characters of innocent and virtuous men. It draws some degree of favourable regard even upon those of the greatest criminals; and when a robber or highwayman is brought to the scaffold, and behaves there with decency and firmness, though we perfectly approve of his punishment, we often cannot help regretting that a man who possessed such great and noble powers should have been capable of such mean enormities.

War is the great school both for acquiring and exercising this species of magnanimity. Death, as we say, is the king of terrors; and the man who has conquered the fear of death, is not likely to lose his presence of mind at the approach of any other natural evil. In war, men become Familiar with death, and are thereby necessarily cured of that superstitious horror with which it is viewed by the weak and

unexperienced. They consider it merely as the loss of life, and as no further the object of aversion than as life may happen to be that of desire. They learn from experience, too, that many seemingly great dangers are not so great as they appear; and that, with courage, activity, and presence of mind, there is often a good probability of extricating themselves with honour from situations where at first they could see no hope. The dread of death is thus greatly diminished; and the confidence or hope of escaping it, augmented. They learn to expose themselves to danger with less reluctance. They are less anxious to get out of it, and less apt to lose their presence of mind while they are in it. It is this habitual contempt of danger and death which ennobles the profession of a soldier, and bestows upon it, in the natural apprehensions of mankind, a rank and dignity superior to that of any other profession. The skilful and successful exercise of this profession, in the service of their country, seems to have constituted the most distinguishing feature in the character of the favourite heroes of all ages.

Great warlike exploit, though undertaken contrary to every principle of justice, and carried on without any regard to humanity, sometimes interests us, and commands even some degree of a certain sort of esteem for the very worthless characters which conduct it. We are interested even in the exploits of the Buccaneers; and read with some sort of esteem and admiration, the history of the most worthless men, who, in pursuit of the most criminal purposes, endured greater hardships, surmounted greater difficulties, and encountered greater dangers, than, perhaps, any which the ordinary course of history gives an account of.

The command of anger appears upon many occasions not less generous and noble than that of fear. The proper expression of just indignation composes many of the most splendid and admired passages both of ancient and modern eloquence. The Philippics of Demosthenes, the Catalinarians of Cicero, derive their whole beauty from the noble propriety with which this passion is expressed. But this just indignation is nothing but anger restrained and properly attempered to what the impartial spectator can enter into. The blustering and noisy passion which goes beyond this, is always odious and offensive, and interests us, not for the angry man, but for the man with whom he is angry. The nobleness of pardoning appears, upon many occasions, superior even to the most perfect propriety of resenting. When either proper acknowledgments have been made by the offending party; or, even without any such acknowledgments, when the public interest requires that the most mortal enemies should unite for the discharge of some

important duty, the man who can cast away all animosity, and act with confidence and cordiality towards the person who had most grievously offended him, seems justly to merit our highest admiration.

The command of anger, however, does not always appear in such splendid colours. Fear is contrary to anger, and is often the motive which restrains it; and in such cases the meanness of the motive takes away all the nobleness of the restraint. Anger prompts to attack, and the indulgence of it seems sometimes to shew a sort of courage and superiority to fear. The indulgence of anger is sometimes an object of vanity. That of fear never is. Vain and weak men, among their inferiors, or those who dare not resist them, often affect to be ostentatiously passionate, and fancy that they show, what is called, spirit in being so. A bully tells many stories of his own insolence, which are not true, and imagines that he thereby renders himself, if not more amiable and respectable, at least more formidable to his audience. Modern manners, which, by favouring the practice of duelling, may be said, in some cases, to encourage private revenge, contribute, perhaps, a good deal to render, in modern times, the restraint of anger by fear still more contemptible than it might otherwise appear to be. There is always something dignified in the command of fear, whatever may be the motive upon which it is founded. It is not so with the command of anger. Unless it is founded altogether in the sense of decency, of dignity, and propriety, it never is perfectly agreeable.

To act according to the dictates of prudence, of justice, and proper beneficence, seems to have no great merit where there is no temptation to do otherwise. But to act with cool deliberation in the midst of the greatest dangers and difficulties; to observe religiously the sacred rules of justice in spite both of the greatest interests which might tempt, and the greatest injuries which might provoke us to violate them; never to suffer the benevolence of our temper to be damped or discouraged by the malignity and ingratitude of the individuals towards whom it may have been exercised; is the character of the most exalted wisdom and virtue. Self-command is not only itself a great virtue, but from it all the other virtues seem to derive their principal lustre.

The command of fear, the command of anger, are always great and noble powers. When they are directed by justice and benevolence, they are not only great virtues, but increase the splendour of those other virtues. They may, however, sometimes be directed by very different motives; and in this case, though still great and respectable, they may be excessively dangerous. The most intrepid valour may be employed in the

cause of the greatest injustice. Amidst great provocations, apparent tranquillity and good humour may sometimes conceal the most determined and cruel resolution to revenge. The strength of mind requisite for such dissimulation, though always and necessarily contaminated by the baseness of falsehood, has, however, been often much admired by many people of no contemptible judgment. The dissimulation of Catharine of Medicis is often celebrated by the profound historian Davila; that of Lord Digby, afterwards Earl of Bristol, by the grave and conscientious Lord Clarendon; that of the first Ashley Earl of Shaftesbury, by the judicious Mr . Locke. Even Cicero seems to consider this deceitful character, not indeed as of the highest dignity, but as not unsuitable to a certain flexibility of manners, which, he thinks, may, notwithstanding, be, upon the whole, both agreeable and respectable. He exemplifies it by the characters of Homer’s Ulysses, of the Athenian Themistocles, of the Spartan Lysander, and of the Roman Marcus Crassus. This character of dark and deep dissimulation occurs most commonly in times of great public disorder; amidst the violence of faction and civil war. When law has become in a great measure impotent, when the most perfect innocence cannot alone insure safety, regard to self-defence obliges the greater part of men to have recourse to dexterity, to address, and to apparent accommodation to whatever happens to be, at the moment, the prevailing party. This false character, too, is frequently accompanied with the coolest and most determined courage. The proper exercise of it supposes that courage, as death is commonly the certain consequence of detection. It may be employed indifferently, either to exasperate or to allay those furious animosities of adverse factions which impose the necessity of assuming it; and though it may sometimes be useful, it is at least equally liable to be excessively pernicious.

The command of the less violent and turbulent passions seems much less liable to be abused to any pernicious purpose. Temperance, decency, modesty, and moderation, are always amiable, and can seldom be directed to any bad end. It is from the unremitting steadiness of those gentler exertions of self-command, that the amiable virtue of chastity, that the respectable virtues of industry and frugality, derive all that sober lustre which attends them. The conduct of all those who are contented to walk in the humble paths of private and peaceable life, derives from the same principle the greater part of the beauty and grace which belong to it; a beauty and grace, which, though much less dazzling, is not always less pleasing than those which accompany the more splendid actions of the hero, the statesman, or the legislator.

After what has already been said, in several different parts of this discourse, concerning the nature of self-command, I judge it unnecessary to enter into any further detail concerning those virtues. I shall only observe at present, that the point of propriety, the degree of any passion which the impartial spectator approves of, is differently situated in different passions. In some passions the excess is less disagreeable than the defect; and in such passions the point of propriety seems to stand high, or nearer to the excess than to the defect. In other passions, the defect is less disagreeable than the excess; and in such passions the point of propriety seems to stand low, or nearer to the defect than to the excess. The former are the passions which the spectator is most, the latter, those which he is least disposed to sympathize with. The former, too, are the passions of which the immediate feeling or sensation is agreeable to the person principally concerned; the latter, those of which it is disagreeable. It may be laid down as a general rule, that the passions which the spectator is most disposed to sympathize with, and in which, upon that account, the point of propriety may be said to stand high, are those of which the immediate feeling or sensation is more or less agreeable to the person principally concerned: and that, on the contrary, the passions which the spectator is least disposed to sympathize with, and in which, upon that account, the point of propriety may be said to stand low, are those of which the immediate feeling or sensation is more or less disagreeable, or even painful, to the person principally concerned. This general rule, so far as I have been able to observe, admits not of a single exception. A few examples will at once, both sufficiently explain it and demonstrate the truth of it.

The disposition to the affections which tend to unite men in society, to humanity, kindness, natural affection, friendship, esteem, may sometimes be excessive. Even the excess of this disposition, however, renders a man interesting to every body. Though we blame it, we still regard it with compassion, and even with kindness, and never with dislike. We are more sorry for it than angry at it. To the person himself, the indulgence even of such excessive affections is, upon many occasions, not only agreeable, but delicious. Upon some occasions, indeed, especially when directed, as is too often the case, towards unworthy objects, it exposes him to much real and heartfelt distress. Even upon such occasions, however, a well-disposed mind regards him with the most exquisite pity, and feels the highest indignation against those who affect to despise him for his weakness and imprudence. The defect of this disposition, on the contrary, what is called hardness of heart, while it renders a man

insensible to the feelings and distresses of other people, renders other people equally insensible to his; and, by excluding him from the friendship of all the world, excludes him from the best and most comfortable of all social enjoyments.

The disposition to the affections which drive men from one another, and which tend, as it were, to break the bands of human society; the disposition to anger, hatred, envy, malice, revenge; is, on the contrary, much more apt to offend by its excess than by its defect. The excess renders a man wretched and miserable in his own mind, and the object of hatred, and sometimes even of horror, to other people. The defect is very seldom complained of. It may, however, be defective. The want of proper indignation is a most essential defect in the manly character, and, upon many occasions, renders a man incapable of protecting either himself or his friends from insult and injustice. Even that principle, in the excess and improper direction of which consists the odious and detestable passion of envy, may be defective. Envy is that passion which views with malignant dislike the superiority of those who are really entitled to all the superiority they possess. The man, however, who, in matters of consequence, tamely suffers other people, who are entitled to no such superiority, to rise above him or get before him, is justly condemned as mean-spirited. This weakness is commonly founded in indolence, sometimes in good nature, in an aversion to opposition, to bustle and solicitation, and sometimes, too, in a sort of ill-judged magnanimity, which fancies that it can always continue to despise the advantage which it then despises, and, therefore, so easily gives up. Such weakness, however, is commonly followed by much regret and repentance; and what had some appearance of magnanimity in the beginning frequently gives place to a most malignant envy in the end, and to a hatred of that superiority, which those who have once attained it, may often become really entitled to, by the very circumstance of having attained it. In order to live comfortably in the world, it is, upon all occasions, as necessary to defend our dignity and rank, as it is to defend our life or our fortune.

Our sensibility to personal danger and distress, like that to personal provocation, is much more apt to offend by its excess than by its defect. No character is more contemptible than that of a coward; no character is more admired than that of the man who faces death with intrepidity, and maintains his tranquillity and presence of mind amidst the most dreadful dangers. We esteem the man who supports pain and even torture with manhood and firmness; and we can have little regard for him who sinks under them, and abandons himself to useless outcries and womanish

lamentations. A fretful temper, which feels, with too much sensibility, every little cross accident, renders a man miserable in himself and offensive to other people. A calm one, which does not allow its tranquillity to be disturbed, either by the small injuries, or by the little disasters incident to the usual course of human affairs; but which, amidst the natural and moral evils infesting the world, lays its account and is contented to suffer a little from both, is a blessing to the man himself, and gives ease and security to all his companions.

Our sensibility, however, both to our own injuries and to our own misfortunes, though generally too strong, may likewise be too weak. The man who feels little for his own misfortunes must always feel less for those of other people, and be less disposed to relieve them. The man who has little resentment for the injuries which are done to himself, must always have less for those which are done to other people, and be less disposed either to protect or to avenge them. A stupid insensibility to the events of human life necessarily extinguishes all that keen and earnest attention to the propriety of our own conduct, which constitutes the real essence of virtue. We can feel little anxiety about the propriety of our own actions, when we are indifferent about the events which may result from them. The man who feels the full distress of the calamity which has befallen him, who feels the whole baseness of the injustice which has been done to him, but who feels still more strongly what the dignity of his own character requires; who does not abandon himself to the guidance of the undisciplined passions which his situation might naturally inspire; but who governs his whole behaviour and conduct according to those restrained and corrected emotions which the great inmate, the great demi-god within the breast prescribes and approves of; is alone the real man of virtue, the only real and proper object of love, respect, and admiration. Insensibility and that noble firmness, that exalted self-command, which is founded in the sense of dignity and propriety, are so far from being altogether the same, that in proportion as the former takes place, the merit of the latter is, in many cases, entirely taken away.

But though the total want of sensibility to personal injury, to personal danger and distress, would, in such situations, take away the whole merit of self-command, that sensibility, however, may very easily be too exquisite, and it frequently is so. When the sense of propriety, when the authority of the judge within the breast, can control this extreme sensibility, that authority must no doubt appear very noble and very great. But the exertion of it may be too fatiguing; it may have too much

to do. The individual, by a great effort, may behave perfectly well. But the contest between the two principles, the warfare within the breast, may be too violent to be at all consistent with internal tranquillity and happiness. The wise man whom Nature has endowed with this too exquisite sensibility, and whose too lively feelings have not been sufficiently blunted and hardened by early education and proper exercise, will avoid, as much as duty and propriety will permit, the situations for which he is not perfectly fitted. The man whose feeble and delicate constitution renders him too sensible to pain, to hardship, and to every sort of bodily distress, should not wantonly embrace the profession of a soldier. The man of too much sensibility to injury, should not rashly engage in the contests of faction. Though the sense of propriety should be strong enough to command all those sensibilities, the composure of the mind must always be disturbed in the struggle. In this disorder the judgment cannot always maintain its ordinary acuteness and precision; and though he may always mean to act properly, he may often act rashly and imprudently, and in a manner which he himself will, in the succeeding part of his life, be for ever ashamed of. A certain intrepidity, a certain firmness of nerves and hardiness of constitution, whether natural or acquired, are undoubtedly the best preparatives for all the great exertions of self-command.

Though war and faction are certainly the best schools for forming every man to this hardiness and firmness of temper, though they are the best remedies for curing him of the opposite weaknesses, yet, if the day of trial should happen to come before he has completely learned his lesson, before the remedy has had time to produce its proper effect, the consequences might not be agreeable.

Our sensibility to the pleasures, to the amusements and enjoyments of human life, may offend, in the same manner, either by its excess or by its defect. Of the two, however, the excess seems less disagreeable than the defect. Both to the spectator and to the person principally concerned, a strong propensity to joy is certainly more pleasing than a dull insensibility to the objects of amusement and diversion. We are charmed with the gaiety of youth, and even with the playfulness of childhood: but we soon grow weary of the flat and tasteless gravity which too frequently accompanies old age. When this propensity, indeed, is not restrained by the sense of propriety, when it is unsuitable to the time or to the place, to the age or to the situation of the person, when, to indulge it, he neglects either his interest or his duty; it is justly blamed as excessive, and as hurtful both to the individual and to the society. In the greater part of

such cases, however, what is chiefly to be found fault with is, not so much the strength of the propensity to joy, as the weakness of the sense of propriety and duty. A young man who has no relish for the diversions and amusements that are natural and suitable to his age, who talks of nothing but his book or his business, is disliked as formal and pedantic; and we give him no credit for his abstinence even from improper indulgences, to which he seems to have so little inclination.

The principle of self-estimation may be too high, and it may likewise be too low. It is so very agreeable to think highly, and so very disagreeable to think meanly of ourselves, that, to the person himself, it cannot well be doubted, but that some degree of excess must be much less disagreeable than any degree of defect. But to the impartial spectator, it may perhaps be thought, things must appear quite differently, and that to him, the defect must always be less disagreeable than the excess. And in our companions, no doubt, we much more frequently complain of the latter than of the former. When they assume upon us, or set themselves before us, their self-estimation mortifies our own. Our own pride and vanity prompt us to accuse them of pride and vanity, and we cease to be the impartial spectators of their conduct. When the same companions, however, suffer any other man to assume over them a superiority which does not belong to him, we not only blame them, but often despise them as mean-spirited. When, on the contrary, among other people, they push themselves a little more forward, and scramble to an elevation disproportioned, as we think, to their merit, though we may not perfectly approve of their conduct, we are often, upon the whole, diverted with it; and, where there is no envy in the case, we are almost always much less displeased with them, than we should have been, had they suffered themselves to sink below their proper station.

In estimating our own merit, in judging of our own character and conduct, there are two different standards to which we naturally compare them. The one is the idea of exact propriety and perfection, so far as we are each of us capable of comprehending that idea. The other is that degree of approximation to this idea which is commonly attained in the world, and which the greater part of our friends and companions, of our rivals and competitors, may have actually arrived at. We very seldom (I am disposed to think, we never) attempt to judge of ourselves without giving more or less attention to both these different standards. But the attention of different men, and even of the same man at different times, is often very unequally divided between them; and is sometimes principally directed towards the one, and sometimes towards the other.

So far as our attention is directed towards the first standard, the wisest and best of us all, can, in his own character and conduct, see nothing but weakness and imperfection; can discover no ground for arrogance and presumption, but a great deal for humility, regret and repentance. So far as our attention is directed towards the second, we may be affected either in the one way or in the other, and feel ourselves, either really above, or really below, the standard to which we compare ourselves.

The wise and virtuous man directs his principal attention to the first standard; the idea of exact propriety and perfection. There exists in the mind of every man, an idea of this kind, gradually formed from his observations upon the character and conduct both of himself and of other people. It is the slow, gradual, and progressive work of the great demigod within the breast, the great judge and arbiter of conduct. This idea is in every man more or less accurately drawn, its colouring is more or less just, its outlines are more or less exactly designed, according to the delicacy and acuteness of that sensibility, with which those observations were made, and according to the care and attention employed in making them. In the wise and virtuous man they have been made with the most acute and delicate sensibility, and the utmost care and attention have been employed in making them. Every day some feature is improved; every day some blemish is corrected. He has studied this idea more than other people, he comprehends it more distinctly, he has formed a much more correct image of it, and is much more deeply enamoured of its exquisite and divine beauty. He endeavours as well as he can, to assimilate his own character to this archetype of perfection. But he imitates the work of a divine artist, which can never be equalled. He feels the imperfect success of all his best endeavours, and sees, with grief and affliction, in how many different features the mortal copy falls short of the immortal original. He remembers, with concern and humilation, how often, from want of attention, from want of judgment, from want of temper, he has, both in words and actions, both in conduct and conversation, violated the exact rules of perfect propriety; and has so far departed from that model, according to which he wished to fashion his own character and conduct. When he directs his attention towards the second standard, indeed, that degree of excellence which his friends and acquaintances have commonly arrived at, he may be sensible of his own superiority. But, as his principal attention is always directed towards the first standard, he is necessarily much more humbled by the one comparison, than he ever can be elevated by the other. He is never so elated as to look down with insolence even upon those who are really

below him. He feels so well his own imperfection, he knows so well the difficulty with which he attained his own distant approximation to rectitude, that he cannot regard with contempt the still greater imperfection of other people. Far from insulting over their inferiority, he views it with the most indulgent commiseration, and, by his advice as well as example, is at all times willing to promote their further advancement. If, in any particular qualification, they happen to be superior to him (for who is so perfect as not to have many superiors in many different qualifications?), far from envying their superiority, he, who knows how difficult it is to excel, esteems and honours their excellence, and never fails to bestow upon it the full measure of applause which it deserves. His whole mind, in short, is deeply impressed, his whole behaviour and deportment are distinctly stamped with the character of real modesty; with that of a very moderate estimation of his own merit, and, at the same time, of a full sense of the merit of other people.

In all the liberal and ingenious arts, in painting, in poetry, in music, in eloquence, in philosophy, the great artist feels always the real imperfection of his own best works, and is more sensible than any man how much they fall short of that ideal perfection of which he has formed some conception, which he imitates as well as he can, but which he despairs of ever equalling. It is the inferior artist only, who is ever perfectly satisfied with his own performances. He has little conception of this ideal perfection, about which he has little employed his thoughts; and it is chiefly to the works of other artists, of, perhaps, a still lower order, that he deigns to compare his own works. Boileau, the great French poet (in some of his works, perhaps not inferior to the greatest poet of the same kind, either ancient or modern), used to say, that no great man was ever completely satisfied with his own works. His acquaintance Santeuil (a writer of Latin verses, and who, on account of that schoolboy accomplishment, had the weakness to fancy himself a poet), assured him, that he himself was always completely satisfied with his own. Boileau replied, with, perhaps, an arch ambiguity, that he certainly was the only great man that ever was so. Boileau, in judging of his own works, compared them with the standard of ideal perfection, which, in his own particular branch of the poetic art, he had, I presume, meditated as deeply, and conceived as distinctly, as it is possible for man to conceive it. Santeuil, in judging of his own works, compared them, I suppose, chiefly to those of the other Latin poets of his own time, to the greater part of whom he was certainly very far from being inferior. But to

support and finish off, if I may say so, the conduct and conversation of a whole life to some resemblance of this ideal perfection, is surely much more difficult than to work up to an equal resemblance any of the productions of any of the ingenious arts. The artist sits down to his work undisturbed, at leisure, in the full possession and recollection of all his skill, experience, and knowledge. The wise man must support the propriety of his own conduct in health and in sickness, in success and in disappointment, in the hour of fatigue and drowsy indolence, as well as in that of the most awakened attention. The most sudden and unexpected assaults of difficulty and distress must never surprise him. The injustice of other people must never provoke him to injustice. The violence of faction must never confound him. All the hardships and hazards of war must never either dishearten or appal him.

Of the persons who, in estimating their own merit, in judging of their own character and conduct, direct by far the greater part of their attention to the second standard, to that ordinary degree of excellence which is commonly attained by other people, there are some who really and justly feel themselves very much above it, and who, by every intelligent and impartial spectator, are acknowledged to be so. The attention of such persons, however, being always principally directed, not to the standard of ideal, but to that of ordinary perfection, they have little sense of their own weaknesses and imperfections; they have little modesty; are often assuming, arrogant, and presumptuous; great admirers of themselves, and great contemners of other people. Though their characters are in general much less correct, and their merit much inferior to that of the man of real and modest virtue; yet their excessive presumption, founded upon their own excessive self-admiration, dazzles the multitude, and often imposes even upon those who are much superior to the multitude. The frequent, and often wonderful, success of the most ignorant quacks and imposters, both civil and religious, sufficiently demonstrate how easily the multitude are imposed upon by the most extravagant and groundless pretensions. But when those pretensions are supported by a very high degree of real and solid merit, when they are displayed with all the splendour which ostentation can bestow upon them, when they are supported by high rank and great power, when they have often been successfully exerted, and are, upon that account, attended by the loud acclamations of the multitude; even the man of sober judgment often abandons himself to the general admiration. The very noise of those foolish acclamations often contributes to confound his understanding, and while he sees those great men only at a certain distance, he is often

disposed to worship them with a sincere admiration, superior even to that with which they appear to worship themselves. When there is no envy in the case, we all take pleasure in admiring, and are, upon that account, naturally disposed, in our own fancies, to render complete and perfect in every respect the characters which, in many respects, are so very worthy of admiration. The excessive self-admiration of those great men is well understood, perhaps, and even seen through, with some degree of derision, by those wise men who are much in their familiarity, and who secretly smile at those lofty pretensions, which, by people at a distance, are often regarded with reverence, and almost with adoration. Such, however, have been, in all ages, the greater part of those men who have procured to themselves the most noisy fame, the most extensive reputation; a fame and reputation, too, which have often descended to the remotest posterity.

Great success in the world, great authority over the sentiments and opinions of mankind, have very seldom been acquired without some degree of this excessive self-admiration. The most splendid characters, the men who have performed the most illustrious actions, who have brought about the greatest revolutions, both in the situations and opinions of mankind; the most successful warriors, the greatest statesmen and legislators, the eloquent founders and leaders of the most numerous and most successful sects and parties; have many of them been, not more distinguished for their very great merit, than for a degree of presumption and self-admiration altogether disproportioned even to that very great merit. This presumption was, perhaps, necessary, not only to prompt them to undertakings which a more sober mind would never have thought of, but to command the submission and obedience of their followers to support them in such undertakings. When crowned with success, accordingly, this presumption has often betrayed them into a vanity that approached almost to insanity and folly. Alexander the Great appears, not only to have wished that other people should think him a God, but to have been at least very well disposed to fancy himself such. Upon his death-bed, the most ungodlike of all situations, he requested of his friends that, to the respectable list of Deities, into which himself had long before been inserted, his old mother Olympia might likewise have the honour of being added. Amidst the respectful admiration of his followers and disciples, amidst the universal applause of the public, after the oracle, which probably had followed the voice of that applause, had pronounced him the wisest of men, the great wisdom of Socrates, though it did not suffer him to fancy himself a God, yet was not great enough to

hinder him from fancying that he had secret and frequent intimations from some invisible and divine Being. The sound head of Caesar was not so perfectly sound as to hinder him from being much pleased with his divine genealogy from the goddess Venus; and, before the temple of this pretended great-grandmother, to receive, without rising from his seat, the Roman Senate, when that illustrious body came to present him with some decrees conferring upon him the most extravagant honours. This insolence, joined to some other acts of an almost childish vanity, little to be expected from an understanding at once so very acute and comprehensive, seems, by exasperating the public jealousy, to have emboldened his assassins, and to have hastened the execution of their conspiracy. The religion and manners of modern times give our great men little encouragement to fancy themselves either Gods or even Prophets. Success, however, joined to great popular favour, has often so far turned the heads of the greatest of them, as to make them ascribe to themselves both an importance and an ability much beyond what they really possessed; and, by this presumption, to precipitate themselves into many rash and sometimes ruinous adventures. It is a characteristic almost peculiar to the great Duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterrupted and such splendid success as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarce into a single rash word or expression. The same temperate coolness and self-command cannot, I think, be ascribed to any other great warrior of later times; not to Prince Eugene, not to the late King of Prussia, not to the great Prince of Conde, not even to Gustavus Adolphus. Turrenne seems to have approached the nearest to it; but several different transactions of his life sufficiently demonstrate that it was in him by no means so perfect as in the great Duke of Marlborough.

In the humble project of private life, as well as in the ambitious and proud pursuit of high stations, great abilities and successful enterprise, in the beginning, have frequently encouraged to undertakings which necessarily led to bankruptcy and ruin in the end.

The esteem and admiration which every impartial spectator conceives for the real merit of those spirited, magnanimous, and high-minded persons, as it is a just and well-founded sentiment, so it is a steady and permanent one, and altogether independent of their good or bad fortune. It is otherwise with that admiration which he is apt to conceive for their excessive self-estimation and presumption. While they are successful, indeed, he is often perfectly conquered and overborne by them. Success covers from his eyes, not only the great imprudence, but frequently the

great injustice of their enterprises; and, far from blaming this defective part of their character, he often views it with the most enthusiastic admiration. When they are unfortunate, however, things change their colours and their names. What was before heroic magnanimity, resumes its proper appellation of extravagant rashness and folly; and the blackness of that avidity and injustice, which was before hid under the splendour of prosperity, comes full into view, and blots the whole lustre of their enterprise. Had Caesar, instead of gaining, lost the battle of Pharsalia, his character would, at this hour, have ranked a little above that of Catiline, and the weakest man would have viewed his enterprise against the laws of his country in blacker colours, than, perhaps, even Cato, with all the animosity of a party-man, ever viewed it at the time. His real merit, the justness of his taste, the simplicity and elegance of his writings, the propriety of his eloquence, his skill in war, his resources in distress, his cool and sedate judgment in danger, his faithful attachment to his friends, his unexampled generosity to his enemies, would all have been acknowledged; as the real merit of Catiline, who had many great qualities, is acknowledged at this day. But the insolence and injustice of his all-grasping ambition would have darkened and extinguished the glory of all that real merit. Fortune has in this, as well as in some other respects already mentioned, great influence over the moral sentiments of mankind, and, according as she is either favourable or adverse, can render the same character the object, either of general love and admiration, or of universal hatred and contempt. This great disorder in our moral sentiments is by no means, however, without its utility; and we may on this, as well as on many other occasions, admire the wisdom of God even in the weakness and folly of man. Our admiration of success is founded upon the same principle with our respect for wealth and greatness, and is equally necessary for establishing the distinction of ranks and the order of society. By this admiration of success we are taught to submit more easily to those superiors, whom the course of human affairs may assign to us; to regard with reverence, and sometimes even with a sort of respectful affection, that fortunate violence which we are no longer capable of resisting; not only the violence of such splendid characters as those of a Caesar or an Alexander, but often that of the most brutal and savage barbarians, of an Attila, a Gengis, or a Tamerlane. To all such mighty conquerors the great mob of mankind are naturally disposed to look up with a wondering, though, no doubt, with a very weak and foolish admiration. By this admiration, however, they are taught to acquiesce with less reluctance under that government which an

irresistible force imposes upon them, and from which no reluctance could deliver them.

Though in prosperity, however, the man of excessive self-estimation may sometimes appear to have some advantage over the man of correct and modest virtue; though the applause of the multitude, and of those who see them both only at a distance, is often much louder in favour of the one than it ever is in favour of the other; yet, all things fairly computed, the real balance of advantage is, perhaps in all cases, greatly in favour of the latter and against the former. The man who neither ascribes to himself, nor wishes that other people should ascribe to him, any other merit besides that which really belongs to him, fears no humiliation, dreads no detection; but rests contented and secure upon the genuine truth and solidity of his own character. His admirers may neither be very numerous nor very loud in their applauses; but the wisest man who sees him the nearest and who knows him the best, admires him the most. To a real wise man the judicious and well-weighed approbation of a single wise man, gives more heartfelt satisfaction than all the noisy applauses of ten thousand ignorant though enthusiastic admirers. He may say with Parmenides, who, upon reading a philosophical discourse before a public assembly at Athens, and observing, that, except Plato, the whole company had left him, continued, notwithstanding, to read on, and said that Plato alone was audience sufficient for him.

It is otherwise with the man of excessive self-estimation. The wise men who see him the nearest, admire him the least. Amidst the intoxication of prosperity, their sober and just esteem falls so far short of the extravagance of his own self-admiration, that he regards it as mere malignity and envy. He suspects his best friends. Their company becomes offensive to him. He drives them from his presence, and often rewards their services, not only with ingratitude, but with cruelty and injustice. He abandons his confidence to flatterers and traitors, who pretend to idolize his vanity and presumption; and that character which in the beginning, though in some respects defective, was, upon the whole, both amiable and respectable, becomes contemptible and odious in the end. Amidst the intoxication of prosperity, Alexander killed Clytus, for having preferred the exploits of his father Philip to his own; put Calisthenes to death in torture, for having refused to adore him in the Persian manner; and murdered the great friend of his father, the venerable Parmenio, after having, upon the most groundless suspicions, sent first to the torture and afterwards to the scaffold the only remaining son of that old man, the rest having all before died in his own service.

This was that Parmenio of whom Philip used to say, that the Athenians were very fortunate who could find ten generals every year, while he himself, in the whole course of his life, could never find one but Parmenio. It was upon the vigilance and attention of this Parmenio that he reposed at all times with confidence and security, and, in his hours of mirth and jollity, used to say, Let us drink, my friends, we may do it with safety, for Parmenio never drinks. It was this same Parmenio, with whose presence and counsel, it had been said, Alexander had gained all his victories; and without whose presence and counsel, he had never gained a single victory. The humble, admiring, and flattering friends, whom Alexander left in power and authority behind him, divided his empire among themselves, and after having thus robbed his family and kindred of their inheritance, put, one after another, every single surviving individual of them, whether male or female, to death.

We frequently, not only pardon, but thoroughly enter into and sympathize with the excessive self-estimation of those splendid characters in which we observe a great and distinguished superiority above the common level of mankind. We call them spirited, magnanimous, and high-minded; words which all involve in their meaning a considerable degree of praise and admiration. But we cannot enter into and sympathize with the excessive self-estimation of those characters in which we can discern no such distinguished superiority. We are disgusted and revolted by it; and it is with some difficulty that we can either pardon or suffer it: We call it pride or vanity; two words, of which the latter always, and the former for the most part, involve in their meaning a considerable degree of blame.

Those two vices, however, though resembling, in some respects, as being both modifications of excessive self-estimation, are yet, in many respects, very different from one another.

The proud man is sincere, and, in the bottom of his heart, is convinced of his own superiority; though it may sometimes be difficult to guess upon what that conviction is founded. He wishes you to view him in no other light than that in which, when he places himself in your situation, he really views himself. He demands no more of you than, what he thinks, justice. If you appear not to respect him as he respects himself, he is more offended than mortified, and feels the same indignant resentment as if he had suffered a real injury. He does not even then, however, deign to explain the grounds of his own pretensions. He disdains to court your esteem. He affects even to despise it, and endeavours to maintain his assumed station, not so much by making you sensible of his superiority,

as of your own meanness. He seems to wish, not so much to excite your esteem for himself as to mortify that for yourself.

The vain man is not sincere, and, in the bottom of his heart, is very seldom convinced of that superiority which he wishes you to ascribe to him. He wishes you to view him in much more splendid colours than those in which, when he places himself in your situation, and supposes you to know all that he knows, he can really view himself. When you appear to view him, therefore, in different colours, perhaps in his proper colours, he is much more mortified than offended. The grounds of his claim to that character which he wishes you to ascribe to him, he takes every opportunity of displaying, both by the most ostentatious and unnecessary exhibition of the good qualities and accomplishments which he possesses in some tolerable degree, and sometimes even by false pretensions to those which he either possesses in no degree, or in so very slender a degree that he may well enough be said to possess them in no degree. Far from despising your esteem, he courts it with the most anxious assiduity. Far from wishing to mortify your self-estimation, he is happy to cherish it, in hopes that in return you will cherish his own. He flatters in order to be flattered. He studies to please, and endeavours to bribe you into a good opinion of him by politeness and complaisance, and sometimes even by real and essential good offices, though often displayed, perhaps, with unnecessary ostentation.

The vain man sees the respect which is paid to rank and fortune, and wishes to usurp this respect, as well as that for talents and virtues. His dress, his equipage, his way of living, accordingly, all announce both a higher rank and a greater fortune than really belong to him; and in order to support this foolish imposition for a few years in the beginning of his life, he often reduces himself to poverty and distress long before the end of it. As long as he can continue his expence, however, his vanity is delighted with viewing himself, not in the light in which you would view him if you knew all that he knows; but in that in which, he imagines, he has, by his own address, induced you actually to view him. Of all the illusions of vanity this is, perhaps, the most common. Obscure strangers who visit foreign countries, or who, from a remote province, come to visit, for a short time, the capital of their own country, most frequently attempt to practise it. The folly of the attempt, though always very great and most unworthy of a man of sense, may not be altogether so great upon such as upon most other occasions. If their stay is short, they may escape any disgraceful detection; and, after indulging their vanity for a

few months or a few years, they may return to their own homes, and repair, by future parsimony, the waste of their past profusion.

The proud man can very seldom be accused of this folly. His sense of his own dignity renders him careful to preserve his independency, and, when his fortune happens not to be large, though he wishes to be decent, he studies to be frugal and attentive in all his expences. The ostentatious expence of the vain man is highly offensive to him. It outshines, perhaps, his own. It provokes his indignation as an insolent assumption of a rank which is by no means due; and he never talks of it without loading it with the harshest and severest reproaches.

The proud man does not always feel himself at his ease in the company of his equals, and still less in that of his superiors. He cannot lay down his lofty pretensions, and the countenance and conversation of such company overawe him so much that he dare not display them. He has recourse to humbler company, for which he has little respect, which he would not willingly chuse; and which is by no means agreeable to him; that of his inferiors, his flatterers, and dependants. He seldom visits his superiors, or, if he does, it is rather to show that he is entitled to live in such company, than for any real satisfaction that he enjoys in it. It is as Lord Clarendon says of the Earl of Arundel, that he sometimes went to court, because he could there only find a greater man than himself; but that he went very seldom, because he found there a greater man than himself.

It is quite otherwise with the vain man. He courts the company of his superiors as much as the proud man shuns it. Their splendour, he seems to think, reflects a splendour upon those who are much about them. He haunts the courts of kings and the levees of ministers, and gives himself the air of being a candidate for fortune and preferment, when in reality he possesses the much more precious happiness, if he knew how to enjoy it, of not being one. He is fond of being admitted to the tables of the great, and still more fond of magnifying to other people the familiarity with which he is honoured there. He associates himself, as much as he can, with fashionable people, with those who are supposed to direct the public opinion, with the witty, with the learned, with the popular; and he shuns the company of his best friends whenever the very uncertain current of public favour happens to run in any respect against them. With the people to whom he wishes to recommend himself, he is not always very delicate about the means which he employs for that purpose; unnecessary ostentation, groundless pretensions, constant assentation, frequently flattery, though for the most part a pleasant and a sprightly

flattery, and very seldom the gross and fulsome flattery of a parasite. The proud man, on the contrary, never flatters, and is frequently scarce civil to any body.

Notwithstanding all its groundless pretensions, however, vanity is almost always a sprightly and a gay, and very often a good-natured passion. Pride is always a grave, a sullen, and a severe one. Even the falsehoods of the vain man are all innocent falsehoods, meant to raise himself, not to lower other people. To do the proud man justice, he very seldom stoops to the baseness of falsehood. When he does, however, his falsehoods are by no means so innocent. They are all mischievous, and meant to lower other people. He is full of indignation at the unjust superiority, as he thinks it, which is given to them. He views them with malignity and envy, and, in talking of them, often endeavours, as much as he can, to extenuate and lessen whatever are the grounds upon which their superiority is supposed to be founded. Whatever tales are circulated to their disadvantage, though he seldom forges them himself, yet he often takes pleasure in believing them, is by no means unwilling to repeat them, and even sometimes with some degree of exaggeration. The worst falsehoods of vanity are all what we call white lies: those of pride, whenever it condescends to falsehood, are all of the opposite complexion.

Our dislike to pride and vanity generally disposes us to rank the persons whom we accuse of those vices rather below than above the common level. In this judgment, however, I think, we are most frequently in the wrong, and that both the proud and the vain man are often (perhaps for the most part) a good deal above it; though not near so much as either the one really thinks himself, or as the other wishes you to think him. If we compare them with their own pretensions, they may appear the just objects of contempt. But when we compare them with what the greater part of their rivals and competitors really are, they may appear quite otherwise, and very much above the common level. Where there is this real superiority, pride is frequently attended with many respectable virtues; with truth, with integrity, with a high sense of honour, with cordial and steady friendship, with the most inflexible firmness and resolution. Vanity, with many amiable ones; with humanity, with politeness, with a desire to oblige in all little matters, and sometimes with a real generosity in great ones; a generosity, however, which it often wishes to display in the most splendid colours that it can. By their rivals and enemies, the French, in the last century, were accused of vanity; the Spaniards, of pride; and foreign nations were disposed to

consider the one as the more amiable; the other, as the more respectable people.

The words vain and vanity are never taken in a good sense. We sometimes say of a man, when we are talking of him in good humour, that he is the better for his vanity, or that his vanity is more diverting than offensive; but we still consider it as a foible and a ridicule in his character.

The words proud and pride, on the contrary, are sometimes taken in a good sense. We frequently say of a man, that he is too proud, or that he has too much noble pride, ever to suffer himself to do a mean thing. Pride is, in this case, confounded with magnanimity. Aristotle, a Philosopher who certainly knew the world, in drawing the character of the magnanimous man, paints him with many features which, in the two last centuries, were commonly ascribed to the Spanish character: that he was deliberate in all his resolutions; slow, and even tardy, in all his actions; that his voice was grave, his speech deliberate, his step and motion slow; that he appeared indolent and even slothful, not at all disposed to bustle about little matters, but to act with the most determined and vigorous resolution upon all great and illustrious occasions; that he was not a lover of danger, or forward to expose himself to little dangers, but to great dangers; and that, when he exposed himself to danger, he was altogether regardless of his life.

The proud man is commonly too well contented with himself to think that his character requires any amendment. The man who feels himself all-perfect, naturally enough despises all further improvement. His self-sufficiency and absurd conceit of his own superiority, commonly attend him from his youth to his most advanced age; and he dies, as Hamlet says, with all his sins upon his head, unanointed, unanealed.

It is frequently otherwise with the vain man. The desire of the esteem and admiration of other people, when for qualities and talents which are the natural and proper objects of esteem and admiration, is the real love of true glory; a passion which, if not the very best passion of human nature, is certainly one of the best. Vanity is very frequently no more than an attempt prematurely to usurp that glory before it is due. Though your son, under five-and-twenty years of age, should be but a coxcomb; do not, upon that account, despair of his becoming, before he is forty, a very wise and worthy man, and a real proficient in all those talents and virtues to which, at present, he may only be an ostentatious and empty pretender. The great secret of education is to direct vanity to proper objects. Never suffer him to value himself upon trivial accomplishments.

But do not always discourage his pretensions to those that are of real importance. He would not pretend to them if he did not earnestly desire to possess them. encourage this desire; afford him every means to facilitate the acquisition; and do not take too much offence, although he should sometimes assume the air of having attained it a little before the time.

Such, I say, are the distinguishing characteristics of pride and vanity, when each of them acts according to its proper character. But the proud man is often vain; and the vain man is often proud. Nothing can be more natural than that the man, who thinks much more highly of himself than he deserves, should wish that other people should think still more highly of him: or that the man, who wishes that other people should think more highly of him than he thinks of himself, should, at the same time, think much more highly of himself than he deserves. Those two vices being frequently in the same character, the characteristics of both are necessarily confounded; and we sometimes find the superficial and impertinent ostentation of vanity joined to the most malignant and derisive insolence of pride. We are sometimes, upon that account, at a loss how to rank a particular character, or whether to place it among the proud or among the vain.

Men of merit considerably above the common level, sometimes under-rate as well as over-rate themselves. Such characters, though not very dignified, are often, in private society, far from being disagreeable. His companions all feel themselves much at their ease in the society of a man so perfectly modest and unassuming. If those companions, however, have not both more discernment and more generosity than ordinary, though they may have some kindness for him, they have seldom much respect; and the warmth of their kindness is very seldom sufficient to compensate the coldness of their respect. Men of no more than ordinary discernment never rate any person higher than he appears to rate himself. He seems doubtful himself, they say, whether he is perfectly fit for such a situation or such an office; and immediately give the preference to some impudent blockhead who entertains no doubt about his own qualifications. Though they should have discernment, yet, if they want generosity, they never fail to take advantage of his simplicity, and to assume over him an impertinent superiority which they are by no means entitled to. His good-nature may enable him to bear this for some time; but he grows weary at last, and frequently when it is too late, and when that rank, which he ought to have assumed, is lost irrecoverably, and usurped, in consequence of his own backwardness, by some of his more

forward, though much less meritorious companions. A man of this character must have been very fortunate in the early choice of his companions, if, in going through the world, he meets always with fair justice, even from those whom, from his own past kindness, he might have some reason to consider as his best friends; and a youth, too unassuming and too unambitious, is frequently followed by an insignificant, complaining, and discontented old age.

Those unfortunate persons whom nature has formed a good deal below the common level, seem sometimes to rate themselves still more below it than they really are. This humility appears sometimes to sink them into idiotism. Whoever has taken the trouble to examine idiots with attention, will find that, in many of them, the faculties of the understanding are by no means weaker than in several other people, who, though acknowledged to be dull and stupid, are not, by any body, accounted idiots. Many idiots, with no more than ordinary education, have been taught to read, write, and account tolerably well. Many persons, never accounted idiots, notwithstanding the most careful education, and notwithstanding that, in their advanced age, they have had spirit enough to attempt to learn what their early education had not taught them, have never been able to acquire, in any tolerable degree, any one of those three accomplishments. By an instinct of pride, however, they set themselves upon a level with their equals in age and situation; and, with courage and firmness, maintain their proper station among their companions. By an opposite instinct, the idiot feels himself below every company into which you can introduce him. Ill-usage, to which he is extremely liable, is capable of throwing him into the most violent fits of rage and fury. But no good usage, no kindness or indulgence, can ever raise him to converse with you as your equal. If you can bring him to converse with you at all, however, you will frequently find his answers sufficiently pertinent, and even sensible. But they are always stamped with a distinct consciousness of his own great inferiority. He seems to shrink and, as it were, to retire from your look and conversation; and to feel, when he places himself in your situation, that, notwithstanding your apparent condescension, you cannot help considering him as immensely below you. Some idiots, perhaps the greater part, seem to be so, chiefly or altogether, from a certain numbness or torpidity in the faculties of the understanding. But there are others, in whom those faculties do not appear more torpid or benumbed than in many other people who are not accounted idiots. But that instinct

of pride, necessary to support them upon an equality with their brethren, seems totally wanting in the former and not in the latter.

That degree of self-estimation, therefore, which contributes most to the happiness and contentment of the person himself, seems likewise most agreeable to the impartial spectator. The man who esteems himself as he ought, and no more than he ought, seldom fails to obtain from other people all the esteem that he himself thinks due. He desires no more than is due to him, and he rests upon it with complete satisfaction.

The proud and the vain man, on the contrary, are constantly dissatisfied. The one is tormented with indignation at the unjust superiority, as he thinks it, of other people. The other is in continual dread of the shame which, he foresees, would attend upon the detection of his groundless pretensions. Even the extravagant pretensions of the man of real magnanimity, though, when supported by splendid abilities and virtues, and, above all, by good fortune, they impose upon the multitude, whose applauses he little regards, do not impose upon those wise men whose approbation he can only value, and whose esteem he is most anxious to acquire. He feels that they see through, and suspects that they despise his excessive presumption; and he often suffers the cruel misfortune of becoming, first the jealous and secret, and at last the open, furious, and vindictive enemy of those very persons, whose friendship it would have given him the greatest happiness to enjoy with unsuspicious security.

Though our dislike to the proud and the vain often disposes us to rank them rather below than above their proper station, yet, unless we are provoked by some particular and personal impertinence, we very seldom venture to use them ill. In common cases, we endeavour, for our own ease, rather to acquiesce, and, as well as we can, to accommodate ourselves to their folly. But, to the man who under-rates himself, unless we have both more discernment and more generosity than belong to the greater part of men, we seldom fail to do, at least, all the injustice which he does to himself, and frequently a great deal more. He is not only more unhappy in his own feelings than either the proud or the vain, but he is much more liable to every sort of ill-usage from other people. In almost all cases, it is better to be a little too proud, than, in any respect, too humble; and, in the sentiment of self-estimation, some degree of excess seems, both to the person and to the impartial spectator, to be less disagreeable than any degree of defect.

In this, therefore, as well as in every other emotion, passion, and habit, the degree that is most agreeable to the impartial spectator is

likewise most agreeable to the person himself; and according as either the excess or the defect is least offensive to the former, so, either the one or the other is in proportion least disagreeable to the latter.

Conclusion of the Sixth Part

Concern for our own happiness recommends to us the virtue of prudence: concern for that of other people, the virtues of justice and beneficence; of which, the one restrains us from hurting, the other prompts us to promote that happiness. Independent of any regard either to what are, or to what ought to be, or to what upon a certain condition would be, the sentiments of other people, the first of those three virtues is originally recommended to us by our selfish, the other two by our benevolent affections. Regard to the sentiments of other people, however, comes afterwards both to enforce and to direct the practice of all those virtues; and no man during, either the whole of his life, or that of any considerable part of it, ever trod steadily and uniformly in the paths of prudence, of justice, or of proper beneficence, whose conduct was not principally directed by a regard to the sentiments of the supposed impartial spectator, of the great inmate of the breast, the great judge and arbiter of conduct. If in the course of the day we have swerved in any respect from the rules which he prescribes to us; if we have either exceeded or relaxed in our frugality; if we have either exceeded or relaxed in our industry; if, through passion or inadvertency, we have hurt in any respect the interest or happiness of our neighbour; if we have neglected a plain and proper opportunity of promoting that interest and happiness; it is this inmate who, in the evening, calls us to an account for all those omissions and violations, and his reproaches often make us blush inwardly both for our folly and inattention to our own happiness, and for our still greater indifference and inattention, perhaps, to that of other people.

But though the virtues of prudence, justice, and beneficence, may, upon different occasions, be recommended to us almost equally by two different principles; those of self-command are, upon most occasions, principally and almost entirely recommended to us by one; by the sense of propriety, by regard to the sentiments of the supposed impartial spectator. Without the restraint which this principle imposes, every passion would, upon most occasions, rush headlong, if I may say so, to its own gratification. Anger would follow the suggestions of its own fury; fear those of its own violent agitations. Regard to no time or place would induce vanity to refrain from the loudest and most impertinent ostentation; or voluptuousness from the most open, indecent, and

scandalous indulgence. Respect for what are, or for what ought to be, or for what upon a certain condition would be, the sentiments of other people, is the sole principle which, upon most occasions, overawes all those mutinous and turbulent passions into that tone and temper which the impartial spectator can enter into and sympathize with.

Upon some occasions, indeed, those passions are restrained, not so much by a sense of their impropriety, as by prudential considerations of the bad consequences which might follow from their indulgence. In such cases, the passions, though restrained, are not always subdued, but often remain lurking in the breast with all their original fury. The man whose anger is restrained by fear, does not always lay aside his anger, but only reserves its gratification for a more safe opportunity. But the man who, in relating to some other person the injury which has been done to him, feels at once the fury of his passion cooled and becalmed by sympathy with the more moderate sentiments of his companion, who at once adopts those more moderate sentiments, and comes to view that injury, not in the black and atrocious colours in which he had originally beheld it, but in the much milder and fairer light in which his companion naturally views it; not only restrains, but in some measure subdues, his anger. The passion becomes really less than it was before, and less capable of exciting him to the violent and bloody revenge which at first, perhaps, he might have thought of inflicting.

Those passions which are restrained by the sense of propriety, are all in some degree moderated and subdued by it. But those which are restrained only by prudential considerations of any kind, are, on the contrary, frequently inflamed by the restraint, and sometimes (long after the provocation given, and when nobody is thinking about it) burst out absurdly and unexpectedly, and with tenfold fury and violence.

Anger, however, as well as every other passion, may, upon many occasions, be very properly restrained by prudential considerations. Some exertion of manhood and self-command is even necessary for this sort of restraint; and the impartial spectator may sometimes view it with that sort of cold esteem due to that species of conduct which he considers as a mere matter of vulgar prudence; but never with that affectionate admiration with which he surveys the same passions, when, by the sense of propriety, they are moderated and subdued to what he himself can readily enter into. In the former species of restraint, he may frequently discern some degree of propriety, and, if you will, even of virtue; but it is a propriety and virtue of a much inferior order to those which he always feels with transport and admiration in the latter.

The virtues of prudence, justice, and beneficence, have no tendency to produce any but the most agreeable effects. Regard to those effects, as it originally recommends them to the actor, so does it afterwards to the impartial spectator. In our approbation of the character of the prudent man, we feel, with peculiar complacency, the security which he must enjoy while he walks under the safeguard of that sedate and deliberate virtue. In our approbation of the character of the just man, we feel, with equal complacency, the security which all those connected with him, whether in neighbourhood, society, or business, must derive from his scrupulous anxiety never either to hurt or offend. In our approbation of the character of the beneficent man, we enter into the gratitude of all those who are within the sphere of his good offices, and conceive with them the highest sense of his merit. In our approbation of all those virtues, our sense of their agreeable effects, of their utility, either to the person who exercises them, or to some other persons, joins with our sense of their propriety, and constitutes always a considerable, frequently the greater part of that approbation.

But in our approbation of the virtues of self-command, complacency with their effects sometimes constitutes no part, and frequently but a small part, of that approbation. Those effects may sometimes be agreeable, and sometimes disagreeable; and though our approbation is no doubt stronger in the former case, it is by no means altogether destroyed in the latter. The most heroic valour may be employed indifferently in the cause either of justice or of injustice; and though it is no doubt much more loved and admired in the former case, it still appears a great and respectable quality even in the latter. In that, and in all the other virtues of self-command, the splendid and dazzling quality seems always to be the greatness and steadiness of the exertion, and the strong sense of propriety which is necessary in order to make and to maintain that exertion. The effects are too often but too little regarded.

Part VII: Of Systems of Moral Philosophy Consisting of Four Section

Section I: Of the Questions which ought to be examined in a Theory of Moral Sentiments

Introduction

If we examine the most celebrated and remarkable of the different theories which have been given concerning the nature and origin of our moral sentiments, we shall find that almost all of them coincide with some part or other of that which I have been endeavouring to give an account of; and that if every thing which has already been said be fully considered, we shall be at no loss to explain what was the view or aspect of nature which led each particular author to form his particular system. From some one or other of those principles which I have been endeavouring to unfold, every system of morality that ever had any reputation in the world has, perhaps, ultimately been derived. As they are all of them, in this respect, founded upon natural principles, they are all of them in some measure in the right. But as many of them are derived from a partial and imperfect view of nature, there are many of them too in some respects in the wrong.

In treating of the principles of morals there are two questions to be considered. First, wherein does virtue consist? Or what is the tone of temper, and tenour of conduct, which constitutes the excellent and praise-worthy character, the character which is the natural object of esteem, honour, and approbation? And, secondly, by what power or faculty in the mind is it, that this character, whatever it be, is recommended. to us? Or in other words, how and by what means does it come to pass, that the mind prefers one tenour of conduct to another, denominates the one right and the other wrong; considers the one as the object of approbation, honour, and reward, and the other of blame, censure, and punishment?

We examine the first question when we consider whether virtue consists in benevolence, as Dr Hutcheson imagines; or in acting suitably to the different relations we stand in, as Dr Clarke supposes; or in the wise and prudent pursuit of our own real and solid happiness, as has been the opinion of others.

We examine the second question, when we consider, whether the virtuous character, whatever it consists in, be recommended to us by self-love, which makes us perceive that this character, both in ourselves and others, tends most to promote our own private interest; or by reason, which points out to us the difference between one character and another, in the same manner as it does that between truth and falsehood; or by a

peculiar power of perception, called a moral sense, which this virtuous character gratifies and pleases, as the contrary disgusts and displeases it; or last of all, by some other principle in human nature, such as a modification of sympathy, or the like.

I shall begin with considering the systems which have been formed concerning the first of these questions, and shall proceed afterwards to examine those concerning the second.

Section II: Of the different Accounts which have been given of the Nature of Virtue

Introduction

The different accounts which have been given of the nature of virtue, or of the temper of mind which constitutes the excellent and praise-worthy character, may be reduced to three different classes. According to some, the virtuous temper of mind does not consist in any one species of affections, but in the proper government and direction of all our affections, which may be either virtuous or vicious according to the objects which they pursue, and the degree of vehemence with which they pursue them. According to these authors, therefore, virtue consists in propriety.

According to others, virtue consists in the judicious pursuit of our own private interest and happiness, or in the proper government and direction of those selfish affections which aim solely at this end. In the opinion of these authors, therefore, virtue consists in prudence.

Another set of authors make virtue consist in those affections only which aim at the happiness of others, not in those which aim at our own. According to them, therefore, disinterested benevolence is the only motive which can stamp upon any action the character of virtue.

The character of virtue, it is evident, must either be ascribed indifferently to all our affections, when under proper government and direction; or it must be confined to some one class or division of them. The great division of our affections is into the selfish and the benevolent. If the character of virtue, therefore, cannot be ascribed indifferently to all our affections, when under proper government and direction, it must be confined either to those which aim directly at our own private happiness, or to those which aim directly at that of others. If virtue, therefore, does not consist in propriety, it must consist either in prudence or in benevolence. Besides these three, it is scarce possible to imagine that any other account can be given of the nature of virtue. I shall endeavour to show hereafter how all the other accounts, which are seemingly different from any of these, coincide at bottom with some one or other of them.

Chap. I: Of those Systems which make Virtue consist in Propriety

According to Plato, to Aristotle, and to Zeno, virtue consists in the propriety of conduct, or in the suitableness of the affection from which we act to the object which excites it.

I. In the system of Plato the soul is considered as something like a little state or republic, composed of three different faculties or orders.

The first is the judging faculty, the faculty which determines not only what are the proper means for attaining any end, but also what ends are fit to be pursued, and what degree of relative value we ought to put upon each. This faculty Plato called, as it is very properly called, reason, and considered it as what had a right to be the governing principle of the whole. Under this appellation, it is evident, he comprehended not only that faculty by which we judge of truth and falsehood, but that by which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of desires and affections.

The different passions and appetites, the natural subjects of this ruling principle, but which are so apt to rebel against their master, he reduced to two different classes or orders. The first consisted of those passions, which are founded in pride and resentment, or in what the schoolmen called the irascible part of the soul; ambition, animosity, the love of honour, and the dread of shame, the desire of victory, superiority, and revenge; all those passions, in short, which are supposed either to rise from, or to denote what, by a metaphor in our language, we commonly call spirit or natural fire. The second consisted of those passions which are founded in the love of pleasure, or in what the schoolmen called the concupiscible part of the soul. It comprehended all the appetites of the body, the love of ease and security, and of all sensual gratifications.

It rarely happens that we break in upon that plan of conduct, which the governing principle prescribes, and which in all our cool hours we had laid down to ourselves as what was most proper for us to pursue, but when prompted by one or other of those two different sets of passions; either by ungovernable ambition and resentment, or by the importunate solicitations of present ease and pleasure. But though these two orders of passions are so apt to mislead us, they are still considered as necessary parts of human nature: the first having been given to defend us against injuries, to assert our rank and dignity in the world, to make us aim at what is noble and honourable, and to make us distinguish those who act

in the same manner; the second, to provide for the support and necessities of the body.

In the strength, acuteness, and perfection of the governing principle was placed the essential virtue of prudence, which, according to Plato, consisted in a just and clear discernment, founded upon general and scientific ideas, of the ends which were proper to be pursued, and of the means which were proper for attaining them.

When the first set of passions, those of the irascible part of the soul, had that degree of strength and firmness, which enabled them, under the direction of reason, to despise all dangers in the pursuit of what was honourable and noble; it constituted the virtue of fortitude and magnanimity. This order of passions, according to this system, was of a more generous and noble nature than the other. They were considered upon many occasions as the auxiliaries of reason, to check and restrain the inferior and brutal appetites. We are often angry at ourselves, it was observed, we often become the objects of our own resentment and indignation, when the love of pleasure prompts to do what we disapprove of; and the irascible part of our nature is in this manner called in to assist the rational against the concupiscible.

When all those three different parts of our nature were in perfect concord with one another, when neither the irascible nor concupiscible passions ever aimed at any gratification which reason did not approve of, and when reason never commanded any thing, but what these of their own accord were willing to perform: this happy composure, this perfect and complete harmony of soul, constituted that virtue which in their language is expressed by a word which we commonly translate temperance, but which might more properly be translated good temper, or sobriety and moderation of mind.

Justice, the last and greatest of the four cardinal virtues, took place, according to this system, when each of those three faculties of the mind confined itself to its proper office, without attempting to encroach upon that of any other; when reason directed and passion obeyed, and when each passion performed its proper duty, and exerted itself towards its proper object easily and without reluctance, and with that degree of force and energy, which was suitable to the value of what it pursued. In this consisted that complete virtue, that perfect propriety of conduct, which Plato, after some of the ancient Pythagoreans, denominated Justice.

The word, it is to be observed, which expresses justice in the Greek language, has several different meanings; and as the correspondent word in all other languages, so far as I know, has the same, there must be some

natural affinity among those various significations. In one sense we are said to do justice to our neighbour when we abstain from doing him any positive harm, and do not directly hurt him, either in his person, or in his estate, or in his reputation. This is that justice which I have treated of above, the observance of which may be extorted by force, and the violation of which exposes to punishment. In another sense we are said not to do justice to our neighbour unless we conceive for him all that love, respect, and esteem, which his character, his situation, and his connexion with ourselves, render suitable and proper for us to feel, and unless we act accordingly. It is in this sense that we are said to do injustice to a man of merit who is connected with us, though we abstain from hurting him in every respect, if we do not exert ourselves to serve him and to place him in that situation in which the impartial spectator would be pleased to see him. The first sense of the word coincides with what Aristotle and the Schoolmen call commutative justice, and with what Grotius calls the justitia expletrix, which consists in abstaining from what is another's, and in doing voluntarily whatever we can with propriety be forced to do. The second sense of the word coincides with what some have called distributive justice, and with the justitia attributrix of Grotius, which consists in proper beneficence, in the becoming use of what is our own, and in the applying it to those purposes either of charity or generosity, to which it is most suitable, in our situation, that it should be applied. In this sense justice comprehends all the social virtues: There is yet another sense in which the word justice is sometimes taken, still more extensive than either of the former, though very much a-kin to the last; and which runs too, so far as I know, through all languages. It is in this last sense that we are said to be unjust, when we do not seem to value any particular object with that degree of esteem, or to pursue it with that degree of ardour which to the impartial spectator it may appear to deserve or to be naturally fitted for exciting. Thus we are said to do injustice to a poem or a picture, when we do not admire them enough, and we are said to do them more than justice when we admire them too much. In the same manner we are said to do injustice to ourselves when we appear not to give sufficient attention to any particular object of self-interest. In this last sense, what is called justice means the same thing with exact and perfect propriety of conduct and behaviour, and comprehends in it, not only the offices of both commutative and distributive justice, but of every other virtue, of prudence, of fortitude, of temperance. It is in this last sense that Plato evidently understands what he calls justice, and which, therefore,

according to him, comprehends in it the perfection of every sort of virtue.

Such is the account given by Plato of the nature of virtue, or of that temper of mind which is the proper object of praise and approbation. It consists, according to him, in that state of mind in which every faculty confines itself within its proper sphere without encroaching upon that of any other, and performs its proper office with that precise degree of strength and vigour which belongs to it. His account, it is evident, coincides in every respect with what we have said above concerning the propriety of conduct.

II. Virtue, according to Aristotle, consists in the habit of mediocrity according to right reason. Every particular virtue, according to him, lies in a kind of middle between two opposite vices, of which the one offends from being too much, the other from being too little affected by a particular species of objects. Thus the virtue of fortitude or courage lies in the middle between the opposite vices of cowardice and of presumptuous rashness, of which the one offends from being too much, and the other from being too little affected by the objects of fear. Thus too the virtue of frugality lies in a middle between avarice and profusion, of which the one consists in an excess, the other in a defect of the proper attention to the objects of self-interest. Magnanimity, in the same manner, lies in a middle between the excess of arrogance and the defect of pusillanimity, of which the one consists in too extravagant, the other in too weak a sentiment of our own worth and dignity. It is unnecessary to observe that this account of virtue corresponds too pretty exactly with what has been said above concerning the propriety and impropriety of conduct.

According to Aristotle, indeed, virtue did not so much consist in those moderate and right affections, as in the habit of this moderation. In order to understand this, it is to be observed, that virtue may be considered either as the quality of an action, or as the quality of a person. Considered as the quality of an action, it consists, even according to Aristotle, in the reasonable moderation of the affection from which the action proceeds, whether this disposition be habitual to the person or not. Considered as the quality of a person, it consists in the habit of this reasonable moderation, in its having become the customary and usual disposition of the mind. Thus the action which proceeds from an occasional fit of generosity is undoubtedly a generous action, but the man who performs it, is not necessarily a generous person, because it may be the single action of the kind which he ever performed. The

motive and disposition of heart, from which this action was performed, may have been quite just and proper: but as this happy mood seems to have been the effect rather of accidental humour than of any thing steady or permanent in the character, it can reflect no great honour on the performer. When we denominate a character generous or charitable, or virtuous in any respect, we mean to signify that the disposition expressed by each of those appellations is the usual and customary disposition of the person. But single actions of any kind, how proper and suitable soever, are of little consequence to show that this is the case. If a single action was sufficient to stamp the character of any virtue upon the person who performed it, the most worthless of mankind. might lay claim to all the virtues; since there is no man who has not, upon some occasions, acted with prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. But though single actions, how laudable soever, reflect very little praise upon the person who performs them, a single vicious action performed by one whose conduct is usually very regular, greatly diminishes and sometimes destroys altogether our opinion of his virtue. A single action of this kind sufficiently shows that his habits are not perfect, and that he is less to be depended upon, than, from the usual train of his behaviour, we might have been apt to imagine.

Aristotle too, when he made virtue to consist in practical habits, had it probably in his view to oppose the doctrine of Plato, who seems to have been of opinion that just sentiments and reasonable judgments concerning what was fit to be done or to be avoided, were alone sufficient to constitute the most perfect virtue. Virtue, according to Plato, might be considered as a species of science, and no man, he thought, could see clearly and demonstratively what was right and what was wrong, and not act accordingly. Passion might make us act contrary to doubtful and uncertain opinions, not to plain and evident judgments. Aristotle, on the contrary, was of opinion, that no conviction of the understanding was capable of getting the better of inveterate habits, and that good morals arose not from knowledge but from action.

III. According to Zeno, the founder of the Stoical doctrine, every animal was by nature recommended to its own care, and was endowed with the principle of self-love, that it might endeavour to preserve, not only its existence, but all the different parts of its nature, in the best and most perfect state of which they were capable.

The self-love of man embraced, if I may say so, his body and all its different members, his mind and all its different faculties and powers, and desired the preservation and maintenance of them all in their best

and most perfect condition. Whatever tended to support this state of existence was, therefore, by nature pointed out to him as fit to be chosen; and whatever tended to destroy it, as fit to be rejected. Thus health, strength, agility and ease of body as well as the eternal conveniencies which could promote these; wealth, power, honours, the respect and esteem of those we live with; were naturally pointed out to us as things eligible, and of which the possession was preferable to the want. On the other hand, sickness, infirmity, unwieldiness, pain of body, as well as all the eternal inconveniencies which tend to occasion or bring on any of them; poverty, the want of authority, the contempt or hatred of those we live with; were, in the same manner, pointed out to us as things to be shunned and avoided. In each of those two opposite classes of objects, there were some which appeared to be more the objects either of choice or rejection, than others in the same class. Thus, in the first class, health appeared evidently preferable to strength, and strength to agility; reputation to power, and power to riches. And thus too, in the second class, sickness was more to be avoided than unwieldiness of body, ignominy than poverty, and poverty than the loss of power. Virtue and the propriety of conduct consisted in choosing and rejecting all different objects and circumstances according as they were by nature rendered more or less the objects of choice or rejection; in selecting always from among the several objects of choice presented to us, that which was most to be chosen, when we could not obtain them all; and in selecting too, out of the several objects of rejection offered to us, that which was least to be avoided, when it was not in our power to avoid them all. By choosing and rejecting with this just and accurate discernment, by thus bestowing upon every object the precise degree of attention it deserved, according to the place which it held in this natural scale of things, we maintained, according to the Stoics, that perfect rectitude of conduct which constituted the essence of virtue. This was what they called to live consistently, to live according to nature, and to obey those laws and directions which nature, or the Author of nature, had prescribed for our conduct.

So far the Stoical idea of propriety and virtue is not very different from that of Aristotle and the ancient Peripatetics.

Among those primary objects which nature had recommended to us as eligible, was the prosperity of our family, of our relations, of our friends, of our country, of mankind, and of the universe in general. Nature, too, had taught us, that as the prosperity of two was preferable to that of one, that of many, or of all, must be infinitely more so. That we ourselves

were but one, and that consequently wherever our prosperity was inconsistent with that, either of the whole, or of any considerable part of the whole, it ought, even in our own choice, to yield to what was so vastly preferable. As all the events in this world were conducted by the providence of a wise, powerful, and good God, we might be assured that whatever happened tended to the prosperity and perfection of the whole. If we ourselves, therefore, were in poverty, in sickness, or in any other calamity, we ought, first of all, to use our utmost endeavours, so far as justice and our duty to others would allow, to rescue ourselves from this disagreeable circumstance. But if, after all we could do, we found this impossible, we ought to rest satisfied that the order and perfection of the universe required that we should in the mean time continue in this situation. And as the prosperity of the whole should, even to us, appear preferable to so insignificant a part as ourselves, our situation, whatever it was, ought from that moment to become the object of our liking, if we would maintain that complete propriety and rectitude of sentiment and conduct in which consisted the perfection of our nature. If, indeed, any opportunity of extricating ourselves should offer, it became our duty to embrace it. The order of the universe, it was evident, no longer required our continuance in this situation, and the great Director of the world plainly called upon us to leave it, by so clearly pointing out the road which we were to follow. It was the same case with the adversity of our relations, our friends, our country. If, without violating any more sacred obligation, it was in our power to prevent or put an end to their calamity, it undoubtedly was our duty to do so. The propriety of action, the rule which Jupiter had given us for the direction of our conduct, evidently required this of us. But if it was altogether out of our power to do either, we ought then to consider this event as the most fortunate which could possibly have happened; because we might be assured that it tended most to the prosperity and order of the whole, which was what we ourselves, if we were wise and equitable, ought most of all to desire. It was our own final interest considered as a part of that whole, of which the prosperity ought to be, not only the principal, but the sole object of our desire.

‘In what sense,’ says Epictetus, ‘are some things said to be according to our nature, and others contrary to it? It is in that sense in which we consider ourselves as separated and detached from all other things. For thus it may be said to be according to the nature of the foot to be always clean. But if you consider it as a foot, and not as something detached from the rest of the body, it must behove it sometimes to trample in the dirt, and sometimes to tread upon thorns, and sometimes, too, to be cut

off for the sake of the whole body; and if it refuses this, it is no longer a foot. Thus, too, ought we to conceive with regard to ourselves. What are you? A man. If you consider yourself as something separated and detached, it is agreeable to your nature to live to old age, to be rich, to be in health. But if you consider yourself as a man, and as a part of a whole, upon account of that whole, it will behove you sometimes to be in sickness, sometimes to be exposed to the inconveniency of a sea voyage, sometimes to be in want; and at last, perhaps, to die before your time. Why then do you complain? Do not you know that by doing so, as the foot ceases to be a foot, so you cease to be a man?'

A wise man never complains of the destiny of Providence, nor thinks the universe in confusion when he is out of order. He does not look upon himself as a whole, separated and detached from every other part of nature, to be taken care of by itself and for itself. He regards himself in the light in which he imagines the great genius of human nature, and of the world, regards him. He enters, if I may say so, into the sentiments of that divine Being, and considers himself as an atom, a particle, of an immense and infinite system, which must and ought to be disposed of, according to the conveniency of the whole. Assured of the wisdom which directs all the events of human life, whatever lot befalls him, he accepts it with joy, satisfied that, if he had known all the connections and dependencies of the different parts of the universe, it is the very lot which he himself would have wished for. If it is life, he is contented to live; and if it is death, as nature must have no further occasion for his presence here, he willingly goes where he is appointed. I accept, said a cynical philosopher, whose doctrines were in this respect the same as those of the Stoics, I accept, with equal joy and satisfaction, whatever fortune can befall me. Riches or poverty, pleasure or pain, health or sickness, all is alike: nor would I desire that the Gods should in any respect change my destination. If I was to ask of them any thing beyond what their bounty has already bestowed, it should be that they would inform me before-hand what it was their pleasure should be done with me, that I might of my own accord place myself in this situation, and demonstrate the cheerfulness with which I embraced their allotment. If I am going to sail, says Epictetus, I chuse the best ship and the best pilot, and I wait for the fairest weather that my circumstances and duty will allow. Prudence and propriety, the principles which the Gods have given me for the direction of my conduct, require this of me; but they require no more: and if, notwithstanding, a storm arises, which neither the strength of the vessel nor the skill of the pilot are likely to withstand, I

give myself no trouble about the consequence. All that I had to do is done already. The directors of my conduct never command me to be miserable, to be anxious, desponding, or afraid. Whether we are to be drowned, or to come to a harbour, is the business of Jupiter, not mine. I leave it entirely to his determination, nor ever break my rest with considering which way he is likely to decide it, but receive whatever comes with equal indifference and security.

From this perfect confidence in that benevolent wisdom which governs the universe, and from this entire resignation to whatever order that wisdom might think proper to establish, it necessarily followed, that, to the Stoical wise man, all the events of human life must be in a great measure indifferent. His happiness consisted altogether, first, in the contemplation of the happiness and perfection of the great system of the universe, of the good government of the great republic of Gods and men, of all rational and sensible beings; and, secondly, in discharging his duty, in acting properly in the affairs of this great republic whatever little part that wisdom had assigned to him. The propriety or impropriety of his endeavours might be of great consequence to him. Their success or disappointment could be of none at all; could excite no passionate joy or sorrow, no passionate desire or aversion. If he preferred some events to others, if some situations were the objects of his choice and others of his rejection, it was not because he regarded the one as in themselves in any respect better than the other, or thought that his own happiness would be more complete in what is called the fortunate than in what is regarded as the distressful situation; but because the propriety of action, the rule which the Gods had given him for the direction of his conduct, required him to chuse and reject in this manner. All his affections were absorbed and swallowed up in two great affections; in that for the discharge of his own duty, and in that for the greatest possible happiness of all rational and sensible beings. For the gratification of this latter affection, he rested with the most perfect security upon the wisdom and power of the great Superintendant of the universe. His sole anxiety was about the gratification of the former; not about the event, but about the propriety of his own endeavours. Whatever the event might be, he trusted to a superior power and wisdom for turning it to promote that great end which he himself was most desirous of promoting.

This propriety of chusing and rejecting, though originally pointed out to us, and as it were recommended and introduced to our acquaintance by the things, and for the sake of the things, chosen and rejected; yet when we had once become thoroughly acquainted with it, the order, the grace,

the beauty which we discerned in this conduct, the happiness which we felt resulted from it, necessarily appeared to us of much greater value than the actual obtaining of all the different objects of choice, or the actual avoiding of all those of rejection. From the observation of this propriety arose the happiness and the glory; from the neglect of it, the misery and the disgrace of human nature.

But to a wise man, to one whose passions were brought under perfect subjection to the ruling principles of his nature, the exact observation of this propriety was equally easy upon all occasions. Was he in prosperity, he returned thanks to Jupiter for having joined him with circumstances which were easily mastered, and in which there was little temptation to do wrong. Was he in adversity, he equally returned thanks to the director of this spectacle of human life, for having opposed to him a vigorous athlete, over whom, though the contest was likely to be more violent, the victory was more glorious, and equally certain. Can there be any shame in that distress which is brought upon us without any fault of our own, and in which we behave with perfect propriety? There can, therefore, be no evil, but, on the contrary, the greatest good and advantage. A brave man exults in those dangers in which, from no rashness of his own, his fortune has involved him. They afford an opportunity of exercising that heroic intrepidity, whose exertion gives the exalted delight which flows from the consciousness of superior propriety and deserved admiration. One who is master of all his exercises has no aversion to measure his strength and activity with the strongest. And, in the same manner, one who is master of all his passions, does not dread any circumstance in which the Superintendant of the universe may think proper to place him. The bounty of that divine Being has provided him with virtues which render him superior to every situation. If it is pleasure, he has temperance to refrain from it; if it is pain, he has constancy to bear it; if it is danger or death, he has magnanimity and fortitude to despise it. The events of human life can never find him unprepared, or at a loss how to maintain that propriety of sentiment and conduct which, in his own apprehension, constitutes at once his glory and his happiness.

Human life the Stoics appear to have considered as a game of great skill; in which, however, there was a mixture of chance, or of what is vulgarly understood to be chance. In such games the stake is commonly a trifle, and the whole pleasure of the game arises from playing well, from playing fairly, and playing skilfully. If notwithstanding all his skill, however, the good player should, by the influence of chance, happen to lose, the loss ought to be a matter, rather of merriment, than of serious

sorrow. He has made no false stroke; he has done nothing which he ought to be ashamed of; he has enjoyed completely the whole pleasure of the game. If, on the contrary, the bad player, notwithstanding all his blunders, should, in the same manner, happen to win, his success can give him but little satisfaction. He is mortified by the remembrance of all the faults which he committed. Even during the play he can enjoy no part of the pleasure which it is capable of affording. From ignorance of the rules of the game, fear and doubt and hesitation are the disagreeable sentiments that precede almost every stroke which he plays; and when he has played it, the mortification of finding it a gross blunder, commonly completes the unpleasing circle of his sensations. Human life, with all the advantages which can possibly attend it, ought, according to the Stoics, to be regarded but as a mere two-penny stake; a matter by far too insignificant to merit any anxious concern. Our only anxious concern ought to be, not about the stake, but about the proper method of playing. If we placed our happiness in winning the stake, we placed it in what depended upon causes beyond our power, and out of our direction. We necessarily exposed ourselves to perpetual fear and uneasiness, and frequently to grievous and mortifying disappointments. If we placed it in playing well, in playing fairly, in playing wisely and skilfully; in the propriety of our own conduct in short; we placed it in what, by proper discipline, education, and attention, might be altogether in our own power, and under our own direction. Our happiness was perfectly secure, and beyond the reach of fortune. The event of our actions, if it was out of our power, was equally out of our concern, and we could never feel either fear or anxiety about it; nor ever suffer any grievous, or even any serious disappointment.

Human life itself, as well as every different advantage or disadvantage which can attend it, might, they said, according to Different circumstances, be the proper object either of our choice or of our rejection. If, in our actual situation, there were more circumstances agreeable to nature than contrary to it; more circumstances which were the objects of choice than of rejection; life, in this case, was, upon the whole, the proper object of choice, and the propriety of conduct required that we should remain in it. If, on the other hand, there were, in our actual situation, without any probable hope of amendment, more circumstances contrary to nature than agreeable to it; more circumstances which were the objects of rejection than of choice; life itself, in this case, became, to a wise man, the object of rejection, and he was not only at liberty to remove out of it, but the propriety of conduct, the rule which

the Gods had given him for the direction of his conduct, required him to do so. I am ordered, says Epictetus, not to dwell at Nicopolis. I do not dwell there. I am ordered not to dwell at Athens. I do not dwell at Athens. I am ordered not to dwell in Rome. I do not dwell in Rome. I am ordered to dwell in the little and rocky island of Gyarae. I go and dwell there. But the house smokes in Gyarae. If the smoke is moderate, I will bear it, and stay there. If it is excessive, I will go to a house from whence no tyrant can remove me. I keep in mind always that the door is open, that I can walk out when I please, and retire to that hospitable house which is at all times open to all the world; for beyond my undermost garment, beyond my body, no man living has any power over me. If your situation is upon the whole disagreeable; if your house smokes too much for you, said the Stoics, walk forth by all means. But walk forth without, repining, without murmuring or complaining. Walk forth calm, contented, rejoicing, returning thanks to the Gods, who, from their infinite bounty, have opened the safe and quiet harbour of death, at all times ready to receive us from the stormy ocean of human life; who have prepared this sacred, this inviolable, this great asylum, always open, always accessible; altogether beyond the reach of human rage and injustice; and large enough to contain both all those who wish, and all those who do not wish to retire to it: an asylum which takes away from every man every pretence of complaining, or even of fancying that there can be any evil in human life, except such as he may suffer from his own folly and weakness.

The Stoics, in the few fragments of their philosophy which have come down to us, sometimes talk of leaving life with a gaiety, and even with a levity, which, were we to consider those passages by themselves, might induce us to believe that they imagined we could with propriety leave it whenever we had a mind, wantonly and capriciously, upon the slightest disgust or uneasiness. ‘When you sup with such a person,’ says Epictetus, ‘you complain of the long stories which he tells you about his Mysian wars. “Now my friend, says he, having told you how I took possession of an eminence at such a place, I will tell you how I was besieged in such another place.” But if you have a mind not to be troubled with his long stories, do not accept of his supper. If you accept of his supper, you have not the least pretence to complain of his long stories. It is the same case with what you call the evils of human life. Never complain of that of which it is at all times in your power to rid yourself.’ Notwithstanding this gaiety and even levity of expression, however, the alternative of leaving life, or of remaining in it, was,

according to the Stoics, a matter of the most serious and important deliberation. We ought never to leave it till we were distinctly called upon to do so by that superintending power which had originally placed us in it. But we were to consider ourselves as called upon to do so, not merely at the appointed and unavoidable term of human life. Whenever the providence of that superintending Power had rendered our condition in life upon the whole the proper object rather of rejection than of choice; the great rule which he had given us for the direction of our conduct, then required us to leave it. We might then be said to hear the awful and benevolent voice of that divine Being distinctly calling upon us to do so.

It was upon this account that, according to the Stoics, it might be the duty of a wise man to remove out of life though he was perfectly happy; while, on the contrary, it might be the duty of a weak man to remain in it, though he was necessarily miserable. If, in the situation of the wise man, there were more circumstances which were the natural objects of rejection than of choice, the whole situation became the object of rejection, and the rule which the Gods had given him for the direction of his conduct, required that he should remove out of it as speedily as particular circumstances might render convenient. He was, however, perfectly happy even during the time that he might think proper to remain in it. He had placed his happiness, not in obtaining the objects of his choice, or in avoiding those of his rejection; but in always choosing and rejecting with exact propriety; not in the success, but in the fitness of his endeavours and exertions. If, in the situation of the weak man, on the contrary, there were more circumstances which were the natural objects of choice than of rejection; his whole situation became the proper object of choice, and it was his duty to remain in it. He was unhappy, however, from not knowing how to use those circumstances. Let his cards be ever so good, he did not know how to play them, and could enjoy no sort of real satisfaction, either in the progress, or in the event of the game, in whatever manner it might happen to turn out.

The propriety, upon some occasions, of voluntary death, though it was, perhaps, more insisted upon by the Stoics, than by any other sect of ancient philosophers, was, however, a doctrine common to them all, even to the peaceable and indolent Epicureans. During the age in which flourished the founders of all the principal sects of ancient philosophy; during the Peloponnesian war and for many years after its conclusion, all the different republics of Greece were, at home, almost always distracted by the most furious factions; and abroad, involved in the most sanguinary wars, in which each sought, not merely superiority or

dominion, but either completely to extirpate all its enemies, or, what was not less cruel, to reduce them into the vilest of all states, that of domestic slavery, and to sell them, man, woman, and child, like so many herds of cattle, to the highest bidder in the market. The smallness of the greater part of those states, too, rendered it, to each of them, no very improbable event, that it might itself fall into that very calamity which it had so frequently, either, perhaps, actually inflicted, or at least attempted to inflict upon some of its neighbours. In this disorderly state of things, the most perfect innocence, joined to both the highest rank and the greatest public services, could give no security to any man that, even at home and among his own relations and fellow-citizens, he was not, at some time or another, from the prevalence of some hostile and furious faction, to be condemned to the most cruel and ignominious punishment. If he was taken prisoner in war, or if the city of which he was a member was conquered, he was exposed, if possible, to still greater injuries and insults. But every man naturally, or rather necessarily, familiarizes his imagination with the distresses to which he foresees that his situation may frequently expose him. It is impossible that a sailor should not frequently think of storms and shipwrecks, and foundering at sea, and of how he himself is likely both to feel and to act upon such occasions. It was impossible, in the same manner, that a Grecian patriot or hero should not familiarize his imagination with all the different calamities to which he was sensible his situation must frequently, or rather constantly expose him. As an American savage prepares his death-song, and considers how he should act when he has fallen into the hands of his enemies, and is by them put to death in the most lingering tortures, and amidst the insults and derision of all the spectators; so a Grecian patriot or hero could not avoid frequently employing his thoughts in considering what he ought both to suffer and to do in banishment, in captivity, when reduced to slavery, when put to the torture, when brought to the scaffold. But the philosophers of all the different sects very justly represented virtue; that is, wise, just, firm, and temperate conduct; not only as the most probable, but as the certain and infallible road to happiness even in this life. This conduct, however, could not always exempt, and might even sometimes expose the person who followed it to all the calamities which were incident to that unsettled situation of public affairs. They endeavoured, therefore, to show that happiness was either altogether, or at least in a great measure, independent of fortune; the Stoics, that it was so altogether; the Academic and Peripatetic philosophers, that it was so in a great measure. Wise, prudent, and good conduct was, in the first place,

the conduct most likely to ensure success in every species of undertaking; and secondly, though it should fail of success, yet the mind was not left without consolation. The virtuous man might still enjoy the complete approbation of his own breast; and might still feel that, how untoward soever things might be without, all was calm and peace and concord within. He might generally comfort himself, too, with the assurance that he possessed the love and esteem of every intelligent and impartial spectator, who could not fail both to admire his conduct, and to regret his misfortune.

Those philosophers endeavoured, at the same time, to show, that the greatest misfortunes to which human life was liable, might be supported more easily than was commonly imagined. They endeavoured to point out the comforts which a man might still enjoy when reduced to poverty, when driven into banishment, when exposed to the injustice of popular clamour, when labouring under blindness, under deafness, in the extremity of old age, upon the approach of death. They pointed out, too, the considerations which might contribute to support his constancy under the agonies of pain and even of torture, in sickness, in sorrow for the loss of children, for the death of friends and relations, etc. The few fragments which have come down to us of what the ancient philosophers had written upon these subjects, form, perhaps, one of the most instructive, as well as one of the most interesting remains of antiquity. The spirit and manhood of their doctrines make a wonderful contrast with the desponding, plaintive, and whining tone of some modern systems.

But while those ancient philosophers endeavoured in this manner to suggest every consideration which could, as Milton says, arm the obdured breast with stubborn patience, as with triple steel; they, at the same time, laboured above all to convince their followers that there neither was nor could be any evil in death; and that, if their situation became at any time too hard for their constancy to support, the remedy was at hand, the door was open, and they might, without fear, walk out when they pleased. If there was no world beyond the present, death, they said, could be no evil; and if there was another world, the Gods must likewise be in that other, and a just man could fear no evil while under their protection. Those philosophers, in short, prepared a death-song, if I may say so, which the Grecian patriots and heroes might make use of upon the proper occasions; and, of all the different sects, the Stoics, I think it must be acknowledged, had prepared by far the most animated and spirited song.

Suicide, however, never seems to have been very common among the Greeks. Excepting Cleomenes, I cannot at present recollect any very illustrious either patriot or hero of Greece, who died by his own hand. The death of Aristomenes is as much beyond the period of true history as that of Ajax. The common story of the death of Themistocles, though within that period, bears upon its face all the marks of a most romantic fable. Of all the Greek heroes whose lives have been written by Plutarch, Cleomenes appears to have been the only one who perished in this manner. Theramines, Socrates, and Phocion, who certainly did not want courage, suffered themselves to be sent to prison, and submitted patiently to that death to which the injustice of their fellow-citizens had condemned them. The brave Eumenes allowed himself to be delivered up, by his own mutinous soldiers, to his enemy Antigonus, and was starved to death, without attempting any violence. The gallant Philopoemen suffered himself to be taken prisoner by the Messenians, was thrown into a dungeon, and was supposed to have been privately poisoned. Several of the philosophers, indeed, are said to have died in this manner; but their lives have been so very foolishly written, that very little credit is due to the greater part of the tales which are told of them. Three different accounts have been given of the death of Zeno the Stoic. One is, that after enjoying, for ninety-eight years, the most perfect state of health, he happened, in going out of his school, to fall; and though he suffered no other damage than that of breaking or dislocating one of his fingers, he struck the ground with his hand, and, in the words of the Niobe of Euripides, said, I come, why doest thou call me? and immediately went home and hanged himself. At that great age, one should think, he might have had a little more patience. Another account is, that, at the same age, and in consequence of a like accident, he starved himself to death. The third account is, that, at seventy-two years of age, he died in the natural way; by far the most probable account of the three, and supported too by the authority of a co-temporary, who must have had every opportunity of being well informed; of Persaeus, originally the slave, and afterwards the friend and disciple of Zeno. The first account is given by Apollonius of Tyre, who flourished about the time of Augustus Caesar, between two and three hundred years after the death of Zeno. I know not who is the author of the second account. Apollonius, who was himself a Stoic, had probably thought it would do honour to the founder of a sect which talked so much about voluntary death, to die in this manner by his own hand. Men of letters, though, after their death, they are frequently more talked of than the greatest princes or statesmen of

their times, are generally, during their life, so obscure and insignificant that their adventures are seldom recorded by co-temporary historians. Those of after-ages, in order to satisfy the public curiosity, and having no authentic documents either to support or to contradict their narratives, seem frequently to have fashioned them according to their own fancy; and almost always with a great mixture of the marvellous. In this particular case the marvellous, though supported by no authority, seems to have prevailed over the probable, though supported by the best. Diogenes Laertius plainly gives the preference to the story of Apollonius. Lucian and Lactantius appear both to have given credit to that of the great age and of the violent death.

This fashion of voluntary death appears to have been much more prevalent among the proud Romans, than it ever was among the lively, ingenious, and accommodating Greeks. Even among the Romans, the fashion seems not to have been established in the early and, what are called, the virtuous ages of the republic. The common story of the death of Regulus, though probably a fable, could never have been invented, had it been supposed that any dishonour could fall upon that hero, from patiently submitting to the tortures which the Carthaginians are said to have inflicted upon him. In the later ages of the republic some dishonour I apprehend, would have attended this submission. In the different civil wars which preceded the fall of the commonwealth, many of the eminent men of all the contending parties chose rather to perish by their own hands, than to fall into those of their enemies. The death of Cato, celebrated by Cicero, and censured by Caesar, and become the subject of a very serious controversy between, perhaps, the two most illustrious advocates that the world had ever beheld, stamped a character of splendour upon this method of dying which it seems to have retained for several ages after. The eloquence of Cicero was superior to that of Caesar. The admiring prevailed greatly over the censuring party, and the lovers of liberty, for many ages afterwards, looked up to Cato as to the most venerable martyr of the republican party. The head of a party, the Cardinal de Retz observes, may do what he pleases; as long as he retains the confidence of his own friends, he can never do wrong; a maxim of which his Eminence had himself, upon several occasions, an opportunity of experiencing the truth. Cato, it seems, joined to his other virtues that of an excellent bottle companion. His enemies accused him of drunkenness, but, says Seneca, whoever objected this vice to Cato, will find it much easier to prove that drunkenness is a virtue, than that Cato could be addicted to any vice.

Under the Emperors this method of dying seems to have been, for a long time, perfectly fashionable. In the epistles of Pliny we find an account of several persons who chose to die in this manner, rather from vanity and ostentation, it would seem, than from what would appear, even to a sober and judicious Stoic, any proper or necessary reason. Even the ladies, who are seldom behind in following the fashion, seem frequently to have chosen, most unnecessarily, to die in this manner; and, like the ladies in Bengal, to accompany, upon some occasions, their husbands to the tomb. The prevalence of this fashion certainly occasioned many deaths which would not otherwise have happened. All the havock, however, which this, perhaps the highest exertion of human vanity and impertinence, could occasion, would, probably, at no time, be very great.

The principle of suicide, the principle which would teach us, upon some occasions, to consider that violent action as an object of applause and approbation, seems to be altogether a refinement of philosophy. Nature, in her sound and healthful state, seems never to prompt us to suicide. There is, indeed, a species of melancholy (a disease to which human nature, among its other calamities, is unhappily subject) which seems to be accompanied with, what one may call, an irresistible appetite for self-destruction. In circumstances often of the highest external prosperity, and sometimes too, in spite even of the most serious and deeply impressed sentiments of religion, this disease has frequently been known to drive its wretched victims to this fatal extremity. The unfortunate persons who perish in this miserable manner, are the proper objects, not of censure, but of commiseration. To attempt to punish them, when they are beyond the reach of all human punishment, is not more absurd than it is unjust. That punishment can fall only on their surviving friends and relations, who are always perfectly innocent, and to whom the loss of their friend, in this disgraceful manner, must always be alone a very heavy calamity. Nature, in her sound and healthful state, prompts us to avoid distress upon all occasions; upon many occasions to defend ourselves against it, though at the hazard, or even with the certainty of perishing in that defence. But, when we have neither been able to defend ourselves from it, nor have perished in that defence, no natural principle, no regard to the approbation of the supposed impartial spectator, to the judgment of the man within the breast, seems to call upon us to escape from it by destroying ourselves. It is only the consciousness of our own weakness, of our own incapacity to support the calamity with proper manhood and firmness, which can drive us to this resolution. I do not

remember to have either read or heard of any American savage, who, upon being taken prisoner by some hostile tribe, put himself to death, in order to avoid being afterwards put to death in torture, and amidst the insults and mockery of his enemies. He places his glory in supporting those torments with manhood, and in retorting those insults with tenfold contempt and derision.

This contempt of life and death, however, and, at the same time, the most entire submission to the order of Providence; the most complete contentment with every event which the current of human affairs could possibly cast up, may be considered as the two fundamental doctrines upon which rested the whole fabric of Stoical morality. The independent and spirited, but often harsh Epictetus, may be considered as the great apostle of the first of those doctrines: the mild, the humane, the benevolent Antoninus, of the second.

The emancipated slave of Epaphriditus, who, in his youth, had been subjected to the insolence of a brutal master, who, in his riper years, was, by the jealousy and caprice of Domitian, banished from Rome and Athens, and obliged to dwell at Nicopolis, and who, by the same tyrant, might expect every moment to be sent to Gyarae, or, perhaps, to be put to death; could preserve his tranquillity only by fostering in his mind the most sovereign contempt of human life. He never exults so much, accordingly his eloquence is never so animated as when he represents the futility and nothingness of all its pleasures and all its pains.

The good-natured Emperor, the absolute sovereign of the whole civilized part of the world, who certainly had no peculiar reason to complain of his own allotment, delights in expressing his contentment with the ordinary course of things, and in pointing out beauties even in those parts of it where vulgar observers are not apt to see any. There is a propriety and even an engaging grace, he observes, in old age as well as in youth; and the weakness and decrepitude of the one state are as suitable to nature as the bloom and vigour of the other. Death, too, is just as proper a termination of old age, as youth is of childhood, or manhood of youth. As we frequently say, he remarks upon another occasion, that the physician has ordered to such a man to ride on horseback, or to use the cold bath, or to walk barefooted; so ought we to say, that Nature, the great conductor and physician of the universe, has ordered to such a man a disease, or the amputation of a limb, or the loss of a child. By the prescriptions of ordinary physicians the patient swallows many a bitter potion; undergoes many a painful operation. From the very uncertain hope, however, that health may be the consequence, he gladly submits to

all. The harshest prescriptions of the great Physician of nature, the patient may, in the same manner, hope will contribute to his own health, to his own final prosperity and happiness: and he may be perfectly assured that they not only contribute, but are indispensably necessary to the health, to the prosperity and happiness of the universe, to the furtherance and advancement of the great plan of Jupiter. Had they not been so, the universe would never have produced them; its all-wise Architect and Conductor would never have suffered them to happen. As all, even the smallest of the co-existent parts of the universe, are exactly fitted to one another, and all contribute to compose one immense and connected system; so all, even apparently the most insignificant of the successive events which follow one another, make parts, and necessary parts, of that great chain of causes and effects which had no beginning, and which will have no end; and which, as they all necessarily result from the original arrangement and contrivance of the whole; so they are all essentially necessary, not only to its prosperity, but to its continuance and preservation. Whoever does not cordially embrace whatever befals him, whoever is sorry that it has befallen him, whoever wishes that it had not befallen him, wishes, so far as in him lies, to stop the motion of the universe, to break that great chain of succession, by the progress of which that system can alone be continued and preserved, and, for some little conveniency of his own, to disorder and discompose the whole machine of the world. ‘O world,’ says he, in another place, ‘all things are suitable to me which are suitable to thee. Nothing is too early or too late to me which is seasonable for thee. All is fruit to me which thy seasons bring forth. From thee are all things; in thee are all things; for thee are all things. One man says, O beloved city of Cecrops. Wilt not thou say, O beloved city of God?’

From these very sublime doctrines the Stoics, or at least some of the Stoics, attempted to deduce all their paradoxes.

The Stoical wise man endeavoured to enter into the views of the great Superintendant of the universe, and to see things in the same light in which that divine Being beheld them. But, to the great Superintendant of the universe, all the different events which the course of his providence may bring forth, what to us appear the smallest and the greatest, the bursting of a bubble, as Mr Pope says, and that of a world, for example, were perfectly equal, were equally parts of that great chain which he had predestined from all eternity, were equally the effects of the same unerring wisdom, of the same universal and boundless benevolence. To the Stoical wise man, in the same manner, all those different events were

perfectly equal. In the course of those events, indeed, a little department, in which he had himself some little management and direction, had been assigned to him. In this department he endeavoured to act as properly as he could, and to conduct himself according to those orders which, he understood, had been prescribed to him. But he took no anxious or passionate concern either in the success, or in the disappointment of his own most faithful endeavours. The highest prosperity and the total destruction of that little department, of that little system which had been in some measure committed to his charge, were perfectly indifferent to him. If those events had depended upon him, he would have chosen the one, and he would have rejected the other. But as they did not depend upon him, he trusted to a superior wisdom, and was perfectly satisfied that the event which happened, whatever it might be, was the very event which he himself, had he known all the connections and dependencies of things, would most earnestly and devoutly have wished for. Whatever he did under the influence and direction of those principles was equally perfect; and when he stretched out his finger, to give the example which they commonly made use of, he performed an action in every respect as meritorious, as worthy of praise and admiration, as when he laid down his life for the service of his country. As, to the great Superintendant of the universe, the greatest and the smallest exertions of his power, the formation and dissolution of a world, the formation and dissolution of a bubble, were equally easy, were equally admirable, and equally the effects of the same divine wisdom and benevolence; so, to the Stoical wise man, what we would call the great action required no more exertion than the little one, was equally easy, proceeded from exactly the same principles, was in no respect more meritorious, nor worthy of any higher degree of praise and admiration.

As all those who had arrived at this state of perfection, were equally happy. so all those who fell in the smallest degree short of it, how nearly soever they might approach to it, were equally miserable. As the man, they said, who was but an inch below the surface of the water, could no more breathe than he who was an hundred yards below it; so the man who had not completely subdued all his private, partial, and selfish passions, who had any other earnest desire but that for the universal happiness, who had not completely emerged from that abyss of misery and disorder into which his anxiety for the gratification of those private, partial, and selfish passions had involved him, could no more breathe the free air of liberty and independency, could no more enjoy the security and happiness of the wise man, than he who was most remote from that

situation. As all the actions of the wise man were perfect, and equally perfect; so all those of the man who had not arrived at this supreme wisdom were faulty, and, as some Stoics pretended, equally faulty. As one truth, they said, could not be more true, nor one falsehood more false than another; so an honourable action could not be more honourable, nor a shameful one more shameful than another. As in shooting at a mark, the man who missed it by an inch had equally missed it with him who had done so by a hundred yards; so the man who, in what to us appears the most insignificant action, had acted improperly and without a sufficient reason, was equally faulty with him who had done so in, what to us appears, the most important; the man who has killed a cock, for example, improperly and without a sufficient reason, with him who had murdered his father.

If the first of those two paradoxes should appear sufficiently violent, the second is evidently too absurd to deserve any serious consideration. It is, indeed, so very absurd that one can scarce help suspecting that it must have been in some measure misunderstood or misrepresented. At any rate, I cannot allow myself to believe that such men as Zeno or Cleanthes, men, it is said, of the most simple as well as of the most sublime eloquence, could be the authors, either of these, or of the greater part of the other Stoical paradoxes, which are in general mere impertinent quibbles, and do so little honour to their system that I shall give no further account of them. I am disposed to impute them rather to Chrysippus, the disciple and follower, indeed, of Zeno and Cleanthes, but who, from all that has been delivered down to us concerning him, seems to have been a mere dialectical pedant, without taste or elegance of any kind. He may have been the first who reduced their doctrines into a scholastic or technical system of artificial definitions, divisions, and subdivisions; one of the most effectual expedients, perhaps, for extinguishing whatever degree of good sense there may be in any moral or metaphysical doctrine. Such a man may very easily be supposed to have understood too literally some animated expressions of his masters in describing the happiness of the man of perfect virtue, and the unhappiness of whoever fell short of that character.

The Stoics in general seem to have admitted that there might be a degree of proficiency in those who had not advanced to perfect virtue and happiness. They distributed those proficients into different classes, according to the degree of their advancement; and they called the imperfect virtues which they supposed them capable of exercising, not rectitudes, but proprieties, fitnesses, decent and becoming actions, for

which a plausible or probable reason could be assigned, what Cicero expresses by the Latin word officia, and Seneca, I think more exactly, by that of convenientia. The doctrine of those imperfect, but attainable virtues, seems to have constituted what we may call the practical morality of the Stoics. It is the subject of Cicero's Offices; and is said to have been that of another book written by Marcus Brutus, but which is now lost.

The plan and system which Nature has sketched out for our conduct, seems to be altogether different from that of the Stoical philosophy.

By Nature the events which immediately affect that little department in which we ourselves have some little management and direction, which immediately affect ourselves, our friends, our country, are the events which interest us the most, and which chiefly excite our desires and aversions, our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows. Should those passions be, what they are very apt to be, too vehement, Nature has provided a proper remedy and correction. The real or even the imaginary presence of the impartial spectator, the authority of the man within the breast, is always at hand to overawe them into the proper tone and temper of moderation.

If, notwithstanding our most faithful exertions, all the events which can affect this little department, should turn out the most unfortunate and disastrous, Nature has by no means left us without consolation. That consolation may be drawn, not only from the complete approbation of the man within the breast, but, if possible, from a still nobler and more generous principle, from a firm reliance upon, and a reverential submission to, that benevolent wisdom which directs all the events of human life, and which, we may be assured, would never have suffered those misfortunes to happen, had they not been indispensably necessary for the good of the whole.

Nature has not prescribed to us this sublime contemplation as the great business and occupation of our lives. She only points it out to us as the consolation of our misfortunes. The Stoical philosophy prescribes it as the great business and occupation of our lives. That philosophy teaches us to interest ourselves earnestly and anxiously in no events, external to the good order of our own minds, to the propriety of our own choosing and rejecting, except in those which concern a department where we neither have nor ought to have any sort of management or direction, the department of the great Superintendant of the universe. By the perfect apathy which it prescribes to us, by endeavouring, not merely to moderate, but to eradicate all our private, partial, and selfish

affections, by suffering us to feel for whatever can befall ourselves, our friends, our country, not even the sympathetic and reduced passions of the impartial spectator, it endeavours to render us altogether indifferent and unconcerned in the success or miscarriage of every thing which Nature has prescribed to us as the proper business and occupation of our lives.

The reasonings of philosophy, it may be said, though they may confound and perplex the understanding, can never break down the necessary connection which Nature has established between causes and their effects. The causes which naturally excite our desires and aversions, our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows, would no doubt, notwithstanding all the reasonings of Stoicism, produce upon each individual, according to the degree of his actual sensibility, their proper and necessary effects. The judgments of the man within the breast, however, might be a good deal affected by those reasonings, and that great inmate might be taught by them to attempt to overawe all our private, partial, and selfish affections into a more or less perfect tranquillity. To direct the judgments of this inmate is the great purpose of all systems of morality. That the Stoical philosophy had very great influence upon the character and conduct of its followers, cannot be doubted; and that though it might sometimes incite them to unnecessary violence, its general tendency was to animate them to actions of the most heroic magnanimity and most extensive benevolence.

IV. Besides these ancient, there are some modern systems, according to which virtue consists in propriety; or in the suitableness of the affection from which we act, to the cause or object which excites it. The system of Dr Clark, which places virtue in acting according to the relations of things, in regulating our conduct according to the fitness or incongruity which there may be in the application of certain actions to certain things, or to certain relations: that of Mr Woollaston, which places it in acting according to the truth of things, according to their proper nature and essence, or in treating them as what they really are, and not as what they are not: that of my Lord Shaftesbury, which places it in maintaining a proper balance of the affections, and in allowing no passion to go beyond its proper sphere; are all of them more or less inaccurate descriptions of the same fundamental idea.

None of those systems either give, or even pretend to give, any precise or distinct measure by which this fitness or propriety of affection can be ascertained or judged of. That precise and distinct measure can be

found nowhere but in the sympathetic feelings of the impartial and well-informed spectator.

The description of virtue, besides, which is either given, or at least meant and intended to be given in each of those systems, for some of the modern authors are not very fortunate in their manner of expressing themselves, is no doubt quite just, so far as it goes. There is no virtue without propriety, and wherever there is propriety some degree of approbation is due. But still this description is imperfect. For though propriety is an essential ingredient in every virtuous action, it is not always the sole ingredient. Beneficent actions have in them another quality by which they appear not only to deserve approbation but recompense. None of those systems account either easily or sufficiently for that superior degree of esteem which seems due to such actions, or for that diversity of sentiment which they naturally excite. Neither is the description of vice more complete. For, in the same manner, though impropriety is a necessary ingredient in every vicious action, it is not always the sole ingredient; and there is often the highest degree of absurdity and impropriety in very harmless and insignificant actions. Deliberate actions, of a pernicious tendency to those we live with, have, besides their impropriety, a peculiar quality of their own by which they appear to deserve, not only disapprobation, but punishment; and to be the objects, not of dislike merely, but of resentment and revenge: and none of those systems easily and sufficiently account for that superior degree of detestation which we feel for such actions.

Chap. II: Of those Systems which make Virtue consist in Prudence

The most ancient of those systems which make virtue consist in prudence, and of which any considerable remains have come down to us, is that of Epicurus, who is said, however, to have borrowed all the leading principles of his philosophy from some of those who had gone before him, particularly from Aristippus; though it is very probable, notwithstanding this allegation of his enemies, that at least his manner of applying those principles was altogether his own.

According to Epicurus, bodily pleasure and pain were the sole ultimate objects of natural desire and aversion. That they were always the natural objects of those passions, he thought required no proof. Pleasure might, indeed, appear sometimes to be avoided; not, however, because it was pleasure, but because, by the enjoyment of it, we should either forfeit some greater pleasure, or expose ourselves to some pain that was more to be avoided than this pleasure was to be desired. Pain, in the same manner, might appear sometimes to be eligible; not, however, because it was pain, but because by enduring it we might either avoid a still greater pain, or acquire some pleasure of much more importance. That bodily pain and pleasure, therefore, were always the natural objects of desire and aversion, was, he thought, abundantly evident. Nor was it less so, he imagined, that they were the sole ultimate objects of those passions. Whatever else was either desired or avoided, was so, according to him, upon account of its tendency to produce one or other of those sensations. The tendency to procure pleasure rendered power and riches desirable, as the contrary tendency to produce pain made poverty and insignificancy the objects of aversion. Honour and reputation were valued, because the esteem and love of those we live with were of the greatest consequence both to procure pleasure and to defend us from pain. Ignominy and bad fame, on the contrary, were to be avoided, because the hatred, contempt and resentment of those we lived with, destroyed all security, and necessarily exposed us to the greatest bodily evils.

All the pleasures and pains of the mind were, according to Epicurus, ultimately derived from those of the body. The mind was happy when it thought of the past pleasures of the body, and hoped for others to come:

and it was miserable when it thought of the pains which the body had formerly endured, and dreaded the same or greater thereafter.

But the pleasures and pains of the mind, though ultimately derived from those of the body, were vastly greater than their originals. The body felt only the sensation of the present instant, whereas the mind felt also the past and the future, the one by remembrance, the other by anticipation, and consequently both suffered and enjoyed much more. When we are under the greatest bodily pain, he observed, we shall always find, if we attend to it, that it is not the suffering of the present instant which chiefly torments us, but either the agonizing remembrance of the past, or the yet more horrible dread of the future. The pain of each instant, considered by itself, and cut off from all that goes before and all that comes after it, is a trifle, not worth the regarding. Yet this is all which the boDy can ever be said to suffer. In the same manner, when we enjoy the greatest pleasure, we shall always find that the bodily sensation, the sensation of the present instant, makes but a small part of our happiness, that our enjoyment chiefly arises either from the cheerful recollection of the past, or the still more joyous anticipation of the future, and that the mind always contributes by much the largest share of the entertainment.

Since our happiness and misery, therefore, depended chiefly on the mind, if this part of our nature was well disposed, if our thoughts and opinions were as they should be, it was of little importance in what manner our body was affected. Though under great bodily pain, we might still enjoy a considerable share of happiness, if our reason and judgment maintained their superiority. We might entertain ourselves with the remembrance of past, and with the hopes of future pleasure; we might soften the rigour of our pains, by recollecting what it was which, even in this situation, we were under any necessity of suffering. That this was merely the bodily sensation, the pain of the present instant, which by itself could never be very great. That whatever agony we suffered from the dread of its continuance, was the effect of an opinion of the mind, which might be corrected by juster sentiments; by considering that, if our pains were violent, they would probably be of short duration; and that if they were of long continuance, they would probably be moderate, and admit of many intervals of ease; and that, at any rate, death was always at hand and within call to deliver us, which as, according to him, it put an end to all sensation, either of pain or pleasure, could not be regarded as an evil. When we are, said he, death is not; and when death is, we are not; death therefore can be nothing to us.

If the actual sensation of positive pain was in itself so little to be feared, that of pleasure was still less to be desired. Naturally the sensation of pleasure was much less pungent than that of pain. If, therefore, this last could take so very little from the happiness of a well-disposed mind, the other could add scarce any thing to it. When the body was free from pain and the mind from fear and anxiety, the superadded sensation of bodily pleasure could be of very little importance; and though it might diversify could not properly be said to increase the happiness of the situation.

In ease of body, therefore, and in security or tranquillity of mind, consisted, according to Epicurus, the most perfect state of human nature, the most complete happiness which man was capable of enjoying. To obtain this great end of natural desire was the sole object of all the virtues, which, according to him, were not desirable upon their own account, but upon account of their tendency to bring about this situation.

Prudence, for example, though, according to this philosophy, the source and principle of all the virtues, was not desirable upon its own account. That careful and laborious and circumspect state of mind, ever watchful and ever attentive to the most distant consequences of every action. could not be a thing pleasant or agreeable for its own sake, but upon account of its tendency to procure the greatest goods and to keep off the greatest evils.

To abstain from pleasure too, to curb and restrain our natural passions for enjoyment, which was the office of temperance, could never be desirable for its own sake. The whole value of this virtue arose from its utility, from its enabling us to postpone the present enjoyment for the sake of a greater to come, or to avoid a greater pain that might ensue from it. Temperance, in short, was nothing but prudence with regard to pleasure.

To support labour, to endure pain, to be exposed to danger or to death, the situations which fortitude would often lead us into, were surely still less the objects of natural desire. They were chosen only to avoid greater evils. We submitted to labour, in order to avoid the greater shame and pain of poverty, and we exposed ourselves to danger and to death in defence of our liberty and property, the means and instruments of pleasure and happiness; or in defence of our country, in the safety of which our own was necessarily comprehended. Fortitude enabled us to do all this cheerfully, as the best which, in our present situation, could possibly be done, and was in reality no more than prudence, good

judgment, and presence of mind in properly appreciating pain, labour, and danger, always choosing the less in order to avoid the greater.

It is the same case with justice. To abstain from what is another's was not desirable on its own account, and it could not surely be better for you, that I should possess what is my own, than that you should possess it. You ought, however, to abstain from whatever belongs to me, because by doing otherwise you will provoke the resentment and indication of mankind. The security and tranquillity of your mind will be entirely destroyed. You will be filled with fear and consternation at the thought of that punishment which you will imagine that men are at all times ready to inflict upon you, and from which no power, no art, no concealment, will ever, in your own fancy, be sufficient to protect you. That other species of justice which. consists in doing proper good offices to different persons, according to the various relations of neighbours, kinsmen, friends, benefactors, superiors, or equals, which they may stand in to us, is recommended by the same reasons. To act properly in all these different relations procures us the esteem and love of those we live with; as to do otherwise excites their contempt and hatred. By the one we naturally secure, by the other we necessarily endanger our own ease and tranquillity, the great and ultimate objects of all our desires. The whole virtue of justice, therefore, the most important of all the virtues, is no more than discreet and prudent conduct with regard to our neighbours.

Such is the doctrine of Epicurus concerning the nature of virtue. It may seem extraordinary that this philosopher, who is described as a person of the most amiable manners, should never have observed, that, whatever may be the tendency of those virtues, or of the contrary vices, with regard to our bodily ease and security, the sentiments which they naturally excite in others are the objects of a much more passionate desire or aversion than all their other consequences; that to be amiable, to be respectable, to be the proper object of esteem, is by every well-disposed mind more valued than all the ease and security which love, respect, and esteem can procure us; that, on the contrary, to be odious, to be contemptible, to be the proper object of indignation, is more dreadful than all that we can suffer in our body from hatred, contempt, or indignation; and that consequently our desire of the one character, and our aversion to the other, cannot arise from any regard to the effects which either of them is likely to produce upon the body.

This system is, no doubt, altogether inconsistent with that which I have been endeavouring to establish. It is not difficult, however, to discover from what phasis, if I may say so, from what particular view or

aspect of nature, this account of things derives its probability. By the wise contrivance of the Author of nature, virtue is upon all ordinary occasions, even with regard to this life, real wisdom, and the surest and readiest means of obtaining both safety and advantage. Our success or disappointment in our undertakings must very much depend upon the good or bad opinion which is commonly entertained of us, and upon the general disposition of those we live with, either to assist or to oppose us. But the best, the surest, the easiest, and the readiest way of obtaining the advantageous and of avoiding the unfavourable judgments of others, is undoubtedly to render ourselves the proper objects of the former and not of the latter. ‘Do you desire,’ said Socrates, ‘the reputation of a good musician? The only sure way of obtaining it, is to become a good musician. Would you desire in the same manner to be thought capable of serving your country either as a general or as a statesman? The best way in this case too is really to acquire the art and experience of war and government, and to become really fit to be a general or a statesman. And in the same manner if you would be reckoned sober, temperate, just, and equitable, the best way of acquiring this reputation is to become sober, temperate, just, and equitable. If you can really render yourself amiable, respectable, and the proper object of esteem, there is no fear of your not soon acquiring the love, the respect, and esteem of those you live with.’ Since the practice of virtue, therefore, is in general so advantageous, and that of vice so contrary to our interest, the consideration of those opposite tendencies undoubtedly stamps an additional beauty and propriety upon the one, and a new deformity and impropriety upon the other. Temperance, magnanimity, justice, and beneficence, come thus to be approved of, not only under their proper characters, but under the additional character of the highest wisDom and most real prudence. And in the same manner, the contrary vices of intemperance, pusillanimity, injustice, and either malevolence or sordid selfishness, come to be disapproved of, not only under their proper characters, but under the additional character of the most short-sighted folly and weakness. Epicurus appears in every virtue to have attended to this species of propriety only. It is that which is most apt to occur to those who are endeavouring to persuade others to regularity of conduct. When men by their practice, and perhaps too by their maxims, manifestly show that the natural beauty of virtue is not like to have much effect upon them, how is it possible to move them but by representing the folly of their conduct, and how much they themselves are in the end likely to suffer by it?

By running up all the different virtues too to this one species of propriety, Epicurus indulged a propensity, which is natural to all men, but which philosophers in particular are apt to cultivate with a peculiar fondness, as the great means of displaying their ingenuity, the propensity to account for all appearances from as few principles as possible. And he, no doubt, indulged this propensity still further, when he referred all the primary objects of natural desire and aversion to the pleasures and pains of the body. The great patron of the atomical philosophy, who took so much pleasure in deducing all the powers and qualities of bodies from the most obvious and familiar, the figure, motion, and arrangement of the small parts of matter, felt no doubt a similar satisfaction, when he accounted, in the same manner, for all the sentiments and passions of the mind from those which are most obvious and familiar.

The system of Epicurus agreed with those of Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno, in making virtue consist in acting in the most suitable manner to obtain the primary objects of natural desire. It differed from all of them in two other respects; first, in the account which it gave of those primary objects of natural desire; and secondly, in the account which it gave of the excellence of virtue, or of the reason why that quality ought to be esteemed.

The primary objects of natural desire consisted, according to Epicurus, in bodily pleasure and pain, and in nothing else: whereas, according to the other three philosophers, there were many other objects, such as knowledge, such as the happiness of our relations, of our friends, of our country, which were ultimately desirable for their own sakes.

Virtue too, according to Epicurus, did not deserve to be pursued for its own sake, nor was itself one of the ultimate objects of natural appetite, but was eligible only upon account of its tendency to prevent pain and to procure ease and pleasure. In the opinion of the other three, on the contrary, it was desirable, not merely as the means of procuring the other primary objects of natural desire, but as something which was in itself more valuable than them all. Man, they thought, being born for action, his happiness must consist, not merely in the agreeableness of his passive sensations, but also in the propriety of his active exertions.

Chap. III: Of those Systems which make Virtue consist in Benevolence

The system which makes virtue consist in benevolence, though I think not so ancient as all of those which I have already given an account of, is, however, of very great antiquity. It seems to have been the doctrine of the greater part of those philosophers who, about and after the age of Augustus, called themselves Eclectics, who pretended to follow chiefly the opinions of Plato and Pythagoras, and who upon that account are commonly known by the name of the later Platonists.

In the divine nature, according to these authors, benevolence or love was the sole principle of action, and directed the exertion of all the other attributes. The wisdom of the Deity was employed in finding out the means for bringing about those ends which his goodness suggested, as his infinite power was exerted to execute them. Benevolence, however, was still the supreme and governing attribute, to which the others were subservient, and from which the whole excellency, or the whole morality, if I may be allowed such an expression, of the divine operations, was ultimately derived. The whole perfection and virtue of the human mind consisted in some resemblance or participation of the divine perfections, and, consequently, in being filled with the same principle of benevolence and love which influenced all the actions of the Deity. The actions of men which flowed from this motive were alone truly praise-worthy, or could claim any merit in the sight of the Deity. It was by actions of charity and love only that we could imitate, as became us, the conduct of God, that we could express our humble and devout admiration of his infinite perfections, that by fostering in our own minds the same divine principle, we could bring our own affections to a greater resemblance with his holy attributes, and thereby become more proper objects of his love and esteem; till at last we arrived at that immediate converse and communication with the Deity to which it was the great object of this philosophy to raise us.

This system, as it was much esteemed by many ancient fathers of the Christian church, so after the Reformation it was adopted by several divines of the most eminent piety and learning and of the most amiable manners; particularly, by Dr Ralph Cudworth, by Dr Henry More, and by Mr John Smith of Cambridge. But of all the patrons of this system, ancient or modern, the late Dr Hutcheson was undoubtedly, beyond all

comparison, the most acute, the most distinct, the most philosophical, and what is of the greatest consequence of all, the soberest and most judicious.

That virtue consists in benevolence is a notion supported by many appearances in human nature. It has been observed already, that proper benevolence is the most graceful and agreeable of all the affections, that it is recommended to us by a double sympathy, that as its tendency is necessarily beneficent, it is the proper object of gratitude and reward, and that upon all these accounts it appears to our natural sentiments to possess a merit superior to any other. It has been observed too, that even the weaknesses of benevolence are not very disagreeable to us, whereas those of every other passion are always extremely disgusting. Who does not abhor excessive malice, excessive selfishness, or excessive resentment? But the most excessive indulgence even of partial friendship is not so offensive. It is the benevolent passions only which can exert themselves without any regard or attention to propriety, and yet retain something about them which is engaging. There is something pleasing even in mere instinctive good-will which goes on to do good offices without once reflecting whether by this conduct it is the proper object either of blame or approbation. It is not so with the other passions. The moment they are deserted, the moment they are unaccompanied by the sense of propriety, they cease to be agreeable.

As benevolence bestows upon those actions which proceed from it, a beauty superior to all others, so the want of it, and much more the contrary inclination, communicates a peculiar deformity to whatever evidences such a disposition. Pernicious actions are often punishable for no other reason than because they shew a want of sufficient attention to the happiness of our neighbour.

Besides all this, Dr Hutcheson observed that whenever in any action, supposed to proceed from benevolent affections, some other motive had been discovered, our sense of the merit of this action was just so far diminished as this motive was believed to have influenced it. If an action, supposed to proceed from gratitude, should be discovered to have arisen from an expectation of some new favour, or if what was apprehended to proceed from public spirit, should be found out to have taken its origin from the hope of a pecuniary reward, such a discovery would entirely destroy all notion of merit or praise-worthiness in either of these actions. Since, therefore, the mixture of any selfish motive, like that of a baser alloy, diminished or took away altogether the merit which would otherwise have belonged to any action, it was evident, he

imagined, that virtue must consist in pure and disinterested benevolence alone.

When those actions, on the contrary, which are commonly supposed to proceed from a selfish motive, are discovered to have arisen from a benevolent one, it greatly enhances our sense of their merit. If we believed of any person that he endeavoured to advance his fortune from no other view but that of doing friendly offices, and of making proper returns to his benefactors, we should only love and esteem him the more. And this observation seemed still more to confirm the conclusion, that it was benevolence only which could stamp upon any action the character of virtue.

Last of all, what, he imagined, was an evident proof of the justness of this account of virtue, in all the disputes of casuists concerning the rectitude of conduct, the public good, he observed, was the standard to which they constantly referred; thereby universally acknowledging that whatever tended to promote the happiness of mankind was right and laudable and virtuous, and the contrary, wrong, blamable, and vicious. In the late debates about passive obeDience and the right of resistance, the sole point in controversy among men of sense was, whether universal submission would probably be attended with greater evils than temporary insurrections when privileges were invaded. Whether what, upon the whole, tended most to the happiness of mankind, was not also morally good, was never once, he said, made a question.

Since benevolence, therefore, was the only motive which could bestow upon any action the character of virtue, the greater the benevolence which was evidenced by any action, the greater the praise which must belong to it.

Those actions which aimed at the happiness of a great community, as they demonstrated a more enlarged benevolence than those which aimed only at that of a smaller system, so were they, likewise, proportionally the more virtuous. The most virtuous of all affections, therefore, was that which embraced as its object the happiness of all intelligent beings. The least virtuous, on the contrary, of those to which the character of virtue could in any respect belong, was that which aimed no further than at the happiness of an individual, such as a son, a brother, a friend.

In directing all our actions to promote the greatest possible good, in submitting all inferior affections to the desire of the general happiness of mankind, in regarding one’s self but as one of the many, whose prosperity was to be pursued no further than it was consistent with, or conducive to that of the whole, consisted the perfection of virtue.

Self-love was a principle which could never be virtuous in any degree or in any direction. It was vicious whenever it obstructed the general good. When it had no other effect than to make the individual take care of his own happiness, it was merely innocent, and though it deserved no praise, neither ought it to incur any blame. Those benevolent actions which were performed, notwithstanding some strong motive from self-interest, were the more virtuous upon that account. They demonstrated the strength and vigour of the benevolent principle.

Dr Hutcheson was so far from allowing self-love to be in any case a motive of virtuous actions, that even a regard to the pleasure of self-approbation, to the comfortable applause of our own consciences, according to him, diminished the merit of a benevolent action. This was a selfish motive, he thought, which, so far as it contributed to any action, demonstrated the weakness of that pure and disinterested benevolence which could alone stamp upon the conduct of man the character of virtue. In the common judgments of mankind, however, this regard to the approbation of our own minds is so far from being considered as what can in any respect diminish the virtue of any action, that it is rather looked upon as the sole motive which deserves the appellation of virtuous.

Such is the account given of the nature of virtue in this amiable system, a system which has a peculiar tendency to nourish and support in the human heart the noblest and the most agreeable of all affections, and not only to check the injustice of self-love, but in some measure to discourage that principle altogether, by representing it as what could never reflect any honour upon those who were influenced by it.

As some of the other systems which I have already given an account of, do not sufficiently explain from whence arises the peculiar excellency of the supreme virtue of beneficence, so this system seems to have the contrary defect, of not sufficiently explaining from whence arises our approbation of the inferior virtues of prudence, vigilance, circumspection, temperance, constancy, firmness. The view and aim of our affections, the beneficent and hurtful effects which they tend to produce, are the only qualities at all attended to in this system. Their propriety and impropriety, their suitableness and unsuitableness, to the cause which excites them, are disregarded altogether.

Regard to our own private happiness and interest, too, appear upon many occasions very laudable principles of action. The habits of oeconomy, industry, discretion, attention, and application of thought, are generally supposed to be cultivated from self-interested motives, and at

the same time are apprehended to be very praise-worthy qualities, which deserve the esteem and approbation of every body. The mixture of a selfish motive, it is true, seems often to sully the beauty of those actions which ought to arise from a benevolent affection. The cause of this, however, is not that self-love can never be the motive of a virtuous action, but that the benevolent principle appears in this particular case to want its due degree of strength, and to be altogether unsuitable to its object. The character, therefore, seems evidently imperfect, and upon the whole to deserve blame rather than praise. The mixture of a benevolent motive in an action to which self-love alone ought to be sufficient to prompt us, is not so apt indeed to diminish our sense of its propriety, or of the virtue of the person who performs it. We are not ready to suspect any person of being defective in selfishness. This is by no means the weak side of human nature, or the failing of which we are apt to be suspicious. If we could really believe, however, of any man, that, was it not from a regard to his family and friends, he would not take that proper care of his health, his life, or his fortune, to which self-preservation alone ought to be sufficient to prompt him, it would undoubtedly be a failing, though one of those amiable failings, which render a person rather the object of pity than of contempt or hatred. It would still, however, somewhat diminish the dignity and respectableness of his character. Carelessness and want of oeconomy are universally disapproved of, not, however, as proceeding from a want of benevolence, but from a want of the proper attention to the objects of self-interest.

Though the standard by which casuists frequently determine what is right or wrong in human conduct, be its tendency to the welfare or disorder of society, it does not follow that a regard to the welfare of society should be the sole virtuous motive of action, but only that, in any competition, it ought to cast the balance against all other motives.

Benevolence may, perhaps, be the sole principle of action in the Deity, and there are several, not improbable, arguments which tend to persuade us that it is so. It is not easy to conceive what other motive an independent and all-perfect Being, who stands in need of nothing external, and whose happiness is complete in himself, can act from. But whatever may be the case with the Deity, so imperfect a creature as man, the support of whose existence requires so many things external to him, must often act from many other motives. The condition of human nature were peculiarly hard, if those affections, which, by the very nature of our being, ought frequently to influence our conduct, could upon no occasion appear virtuous, or deserve esteem and commendation from any body.

Those three systems, that which places virtue in propriety, that which places it in prudence, and that which makes it consist in benevolence, are the principal accounts which have been given of the nature of virtue. To one or other of them, all the other descriptions of virtue, how different soever they may appear, are easily reducible.

That system which places virtue in obedience to the will of the Deity, may be counted either among those which make it consist in prudence, or among those which make it consist in propriety. When it is asked, why we ought to obey the will of the Deity, this question, which would be impious and absurd in the highest degree, if asked from any doubt that we ought to obey him, can admit but of two different answers. It must either be said that we ought to obey the will of the Deity because he is a Being of infinite power, who will reward us eternally if we do so, and punish us eternally if we do otherwise: or it must be said, that independent of any regard to our own happiness, or to rewards and punishments of any kind, there is a congruity and fitness that a creature should obey its creator, that a limited and imperfect being should submit to one of infinite and incomprehensible perfections. Besides one or other of these two, it is impossible to conceive that any other answer can be given to this question. If the first answer be the proper one, virtue consists in prudence, or in the proper pursuit of our own final interest and happiness; since it is upon this account that we are obliged to obey the will of the Deity. If the second answer be the proper one, virtue must consist in propriety, since the ground of our obligation to obedience is the suitableness or congruity of the sentiments of humility and submission to the superiority of the object which excites them.

That system which places virtue in utility, coincides too with that which makes it consist in propriety. According to this system, all those qualities of the mind which are agreeable or advantageous, either to the person himself or to others, are approved of as virtuous, and the contrary disapproved of as vicious. But the agreeableness or utility of any affection depends upon the degree which it is allowed to subsist in. Every affection is useful when it is confined to a certain degree of moderation; and every affection is disadvantageous when it exceeds the proper bounds. According to this system therefore, virtue consists not in any one affection, but in the proper degree of all the affections. The only difference between it and that which I have been endeavouring to establish, is, that it makes utility, and not sympathy, or the correspondent affection of the spectator, the natural and original measure of this proper degree.

Chap. IV: Of licentious Systems

All those systems, which I have hitherto given an account of, suppose that there is a real and essential distinction between vice and virtue, whatever these qualities may consist in. There is a real and essential difference between the propriety and impropriety of any affection, between benevolence and any other principle of action, between real prudence and shortsighted folly or precipitate rashness. In the main too all of them contribute to encourage the praise-worthy, and to discourage the blamable disposition.

It may be true, perhaps, of some of them, that they tend, in some measure, to break the balance of the affections, and to give the mind a particular bias to some principles of action, beyond the proportion that is due to them. The ancient systems, which place virtue in propriety, seem chiefly to recommend the great, the awful, and the respectable virtues, the virtues of self-government and self-command; fortitude, magnanimity, independency upon fortune, the contempt of all outward accidents, of pain, poverty, exile, and death. It is in these great exertions that the noblest propriety of conduct is displayed. The soft, the amiable, the gentle virtues, all the virtues of indulgent humanity are, in comparison, but little insisted upon, and seem, on the contrary, by the Stoics in particular, to have been often regarded as mere weaknesses which it behoved a wise man not to harbour in his breast.

The benevolent system, on the other hand, while it fosters and encourages all those milder virtues in the highest degree, seems entirely to neglect the more awful and respectable qualities of the mind. It even denies them the appellation of virtues. It calls them moral abilities, and treats them as qualities which do not deserve the same sort of esteem and approbation, that is due to what is properly denominated virtue. All those principles of action which aim only at our own interest, it treats, if that be possible, still worse. So far from having any merit of their own, they diminish, it pretends, the merit of benevolence, when they co-operate with it: and prudence, it is asserted, when employed only in promoting private interest, can never even be imagined a virtue.

That system, again, which makes virtue consist in prudence only, while it gives the highest encouragement to the habits of caution, vigilance, sobriety, and judicious moderation, seems to degrade equally

both the amiable and respectable virtues, and to strip the former of all their beauty, and the latter of all their grandeur.

But notwithstanding these defects, the general tendency of each of those three systems is to encourage the best and most laudable habits of the human mind: and it were well for society, if, either mankind in general, or even those few who pretend to live according to any philosophical rule, were to regulate their conduct by the precepts of any one of them. We may learn from each of them something that is both valuable and peculiar. If it was possible, by precept and exhortation, to inspire the mind with fortitude and magnanimity, the ancient systems of propriety would seem sufficient to do this. Or if it was possible, by the same means, to soften it into humanity, and to awaken the affections of kindness and general love towards those we live with, some of the pictures with which the benevolent system presents us, might seem capable of producing this effect. We may learn from the system of Epicurus, though undoubtedly the most imperfect of all the three, how much the practice of both the amiable and respectable virtues is conducive to our own interest, to our own ease and safety and quiet even in this life. As Epicurus placed happiness in the attainment of ease and security, he exerted himself in a particular manner to show that virtue was, not merely the best and the surest, but the only means of acquiring those invaluable possessions. The good effects of virtue, upon our inward tranquillity and peace of mind, are what other philosophers have chiefly celebrated. Epicurus, without neglecting this topic, has chiefly insisted upon the influence of that amiable quality on our outward prosperity and safety. It was upon this account that his writings were so much studied in the ancient world by men of all different philosophical parties. It is from him that Cicero, the great enemy of the Epicurean system, borrows his most agreeable proofs that virtue alone is sufficient to secure happiness. Seneca, though a Stoic, the sect most opposite to that of Epicurus, yet quotes this philosopher more frequently than any other.

There is, however, another system which seems to take away altogether the distinction between vice and virtue, and of which the tendency is, upon that account, wholly pernicious: I mean the system of Dr Mandeville. Though the notions of this author are in almost every respect erroneous, there are, however, some appearances in human nature, which, when viewed in a certain manner, seem at first sight to favour them. These, described and exaggerated by the lively and humorous, though coarse and rustic eloquence of Dr Mandeville, have

thrown upon his doctrines an air of truth and probability which is very apt to impose upon the unskilful.

Dr Mandeville considers whatever is done from a sense of propriety, from a regard to what is commendable and praise-worthy, as being done from a love of praise and commendation, or as he calls it from vanity. Man, he observes, is naturally much more interested in his own happiness than in that of others, and it is impossible that in his heart he can ever really prefer their prosperity to his own. Whenever he appears to do so, we may be assured that he imposes upon us, and that he is then acting from the same selfish motives as at all other times. Among his other selfish passions, vanity is one of the strongest, and he is always easily flattered and greatly delighted with the applauses of those about him. When he appears to sacrifice his own interest to that of his companions, he knows that his conduct will be highly agreeable to their self-love, and that they will not fail to express their satisfaction by bestowing upon him the most extravagant praises. The pleasure which he expects from this, over-balances, in his opinion, the interest which he abandons in order to procure it. His conduct, therefore, upon this occasion, is in reality just as selfish, and arises from just as mean a motive, as upon any other. He is flattered, however, and he flatters himself, with the belief that it is entirely disinterested; since, unless this was supposed, it would not seem to merit any commendation either in his own eyes or in those of others. All public spirit, therefore, all preference of public to private interest, is, according to him, a mere cheat and imposition upon mankind; and that human virtue which is so much boasted of, and which is the occasion of so much emulation among men, is the mere offspring of flattery begot upon pride.

Whether the most generous and public-spirited actions may not, in some sense, be regarded as proceeding from self-love, I shall not at present examine. The decision of this question is not, I apprehend, of any importance towards establishing the reality of virtue, since self-love may frequently be a virtuous motive of action. I shall only endeavour to show that the desire of doing what is honourable and noble, of rendering ourselves the proper objects of esteem and approbation, cannot with any propriety be called vanity. Even the love of well-grounded fame and reputation, the desire of acquiring esteem by what is really estimable, does not deserve that name. The first is the love of virtue, the noblest and the best passion in human nature. The second is the love of true glory, a passion inferior no doubt to the former, but which in dignity appears to come immediately after it. He is guilty of vanity who desires praise for

qualities which are either not praise-worthy in any degree, or not in that degree in which he expects to be praised for them who sets his character upon the frivolous ornaments of dress and equipage, or upon the equally frivolous accomplishments of ordinary behaviour. He is guilty of vanity who desires praise for what indeed very well deserves it, but what he perfectly knows does not belong to him. The empty coxcomb who gives himself airs of importance which he has no title to, the silly liar who assumes the merit of adventures which never happened, the foolish plagiary who gives himself out for the author of what he has no pretensions to, are properly accused of this passion. He too is said to be guilty of vanity who is not contented with the silent sentiments of esteem and approbation, who seems to be fonder of their noisy expressions and acclamations than of the sentiments themselves, who is never satisfied but when his own praises are ringing in his ears, and who solicits with the most anxious importunity all external marks of respect, is fond of titles, of compliments, of being visited, of being attended, of being taken notice of in public places with the appearance of deference and attention. This frivolous passion is altogether different from either of the two former, and is the passion of the lowest and the least of mankind, as they are of the noblest and the greatest.

But though these three passions, the desire of rendering ourselves the proper objects of honour and esteem; or of becoming what is honourable and estimable; the desire of acquiring honour and esteem by really deserving those sentiments; and the frivolous desire of praise at any rate, are widely different; though the two former are always approved of, while the latter never fails to be despised; there is, however, a certain remote affinity among them, which, exaggerated by the humorous and diverting eloquence of this lively author, has enabled him to impose upon his readers. There is an affinity between vanity and the love of true glory, as both these passions aim at acquiring esteem and approbation. But they are different in this, that the one is a just, reasonable, and equitable passion, while the other is unjust, absurd, and ridiculous. The man who desires esteem for what is really estimable, desires nothing but what he is justly entitled to, and what cannot be refused him without some sort of injury. He, on the contrary, who desires it upon any other terms, demands what he has no just claim to. The first is easily satisfied, is not apt to be jealous or suspicious that we do not esteem him enough, and is seldom solicitous about receiving many external marks of our regard. The other, on the contrary, is never to be satisfied, is full of jealousy and suspicion that we do not esteem him so much as he desires, because he has some

secret consciousness that he desires more than he deserves. The least neglect of ceremony, he considers as a mortal affront, and as an expression of the most determined contempt. He is restless and impatient, and perpetually afraid that we have lost all respect for him, and is upon this account always anxious to obtain new expressions of esteem, and cannot be kept in temper but by continual attention and adulation.

There is an affinity too between the desire of becoming what is honourable and estimable, and the desire of honour and esteem, between the love of virtue and the love of true glory. They resemble one another not only in this respect, that both aim at really being what is honourable and noble, but even in that respect in which the love of true glory resembles what is properly called vanity, some reference to the sentiments of others. The man of the greatest magnanimity, who desires virtue for its own sake, and is most indifferent about what actually are the opinions of mankind with regard to him, is still, however, delighted with the thoughts of what they should be, with the consciousness that though he may neither be honoured nor applauded, he is still the proper object of honour and applause, and that if mankind were cool and candid and consistent with themselves, and properly informed of the motives and circumstances of his conduct, they would not fail to honour and applaud him. Though he despises the opinions which are actually entertained of him, he has the highest value for those which ought to be entertained of him. That he might think himself worthy of those honourable sentiments, and, whatever was the idea which other men might conceive of his character, that when he should put himself in their situation, and consider, not what was, but what ought to be their opinion, he should always have the highest idea of it himself, was the great and exalted motive of his conduct. As even in the love of virtue, therefore, there is still some reference, though not to what is, yet to what in reason and propriety ought to be, the opinion of others, there is even in this respect some affinity between it, and the love of true glory. There is, however, at the same time, a very great difference between them. The man who acts solely from a regard to what is right and fit to be done, from a regard to what is the proper object of esteem and approbation, though these sentiments should never be bestowed upon him, acts from the most sublime and godlike motive which human nature is even capable of conceiving. The man, on the other hand, who while he desires to merit approbation is at the same time anxious to obtain it, though he too is laudable in the main, yet his motives have a greater mixture of

human infirmity. He is in danger of being mortified by the ignorance and injustice of mankind, and his happiness is exposed to the envy of his rivals and the folly of the public. The happiness of the other, on the contrary, is altogether secure and independent of fortune, and of the caprice of those he lives with. The contempt and hatred which may be thrown upon him by the ignorance of mankind, he considers as not belonging to him, and is not at all mortified by it. Mankind despise and hate him from a false notion of his character and conduct. If they knew him better, they would esteem and love him. It is not him whom, properly speaking, they hate and despise, but another person whom they mistake him to be. Our friend, whom we should meet at a masquerade in the garb of our enemy, would be more diverted than mortified, if under that disguise we should vent our indignation against him. Such are the sentiments of a man of real magnanimity, when exposed to unjust censure. It seldom happens, however, that human nature arrives at this degree of firmness. Though none but the weakest and most worthless of mankind are much delighted with false glory, yet, by a strange inconsistency, false ignominy is often capable of mortifying those who appear the most resolute and determined.

Dr Mandeville is not satisfied with representing the frivolous motive of vanity, as the source of all those actions which are commonly accounted virtuous. He endeavours to point out the imperfection of human virtue in many other respects. In every case, he pretends, it falls short of that complete self-denial which it pretends to, and, instead of a conquest, is commonly no more than a concealed indulgence of our passions. Wherever our reserve with regard to pleasure falls short of the most ascetic abstinence, he treats it as gross luxury and sensuality. Every thing, according to him, is luxury which exceeds what is absolutely necessary for the support of human nature, so that there is vice even in the use of a clean shirt, or of a convenient habitation. The indulgence of the inclination to sex, in the most lawful union, he considers as the same sensuality with the most hurtful gratification of that passion, and derides that temperance and that chastity which can be practised at so cheap a rate. The ingenious sophistry of his reasoning, is here, as upon many other occasions, covered by the ambiguity of language. There are some of our passions which have no other names except those which mark the disagreeable and offensive degree. The spectator is more apt to take notice of them in this degree than in any other. When they shock his own sentiments, when they give him some sort of antipathy and uneasiness, he is necessarily obliged to attend to them, and is from thence naturally

led to give them a name. When they fall in with the natural state of his own mind, he is very apt to overlook them altogether, and either gives them no name at all, or, if he give them any, it is one which marks rather the subjection and restraint of the passion, than the degree which it still is allowed to subsist in, after it is so subjected and restrained. Thus the common names of the love of pleasure, and of the love of sex, denote a vicious and offensive degree of those passions. The words temperance and chastity, on the other hand, seem to mark rather the restraint and subjection which they are kept under, than the degree which they are still allowed to subsist in. When he can show, therefore, that they still subsist in some degree, he imagines, he has entirely demolished the reality of the virtues of temperance and chastity, and shown them to be mere impositions upon the inattention and simplicity of mankind. Those virtues, however, do not require an entire insensibility to the objects of the passions which they mean to govern. They only aim at restraining the violence of those passions so far as not to hurt the individual, and neither disturb nor offend the society.

It is the great fallacy of Dr. Mandeville’s book to represent every passion as wholly vicious, which is so in any degree and in any direction. It is thus that he treats every thing as vanity which has any reference, either to what are, or to what ought to be the sentiments of others: and it is by means of this sophistry, that he establishes his favourite conclusion, that private vices are public benefits. If the love of magnificence, a taste for the elegant arts and improvements of human life, for whatever is agreeable in dress, furniture, or equipage, for architecture, statuary, painting, and music, is to be regarded as luxury, sensuality, and ostentation, even in those whose situation allows, without any inconveniency, the indulgence of those passions, it is certain that luxury, sensuality, and ostentation are public benefits: since without the qualities upon which he thinks proper to bestow such opprobrious names, the arts of refinement could never find encouragement, and must languish for want of employment. Some popular ascetic doctrines which had been current before his time, and which placed virtue in the entire extirpation and annihilation of all our passions, were the real foundation of this licentious system. It was easy for Dr Mandeville to prove, first, that this entire conquest never actually took place among men; and secondly, that, if it was to take place universally, it would be pernicious to society, by putting an end to all industry and commerce, and in a manner to the whole business of human life. By the first of these propositions he seemed to prove that there was no real virtue, and that what pretended to

be such, was a mere cheat and imposition upon mankind; and by the second, that private vices were public benefits, since without them no society could prosper or flourish.

Such is the system of Dr Mandeville, which once made so much noise in the world, and which, though, perhaps, it never gave occasion to more vice than what would have been without it, at least taught that vice, which arose from other causes, to appear with more effrontery, and to avow the corruption of its motives with a profligate audaciousness which had never been heard of before.

But how destructive soever this system may appear, it could never have imposed upon so great a number of persons, nor have occasioned so general an alarm among those who are the friends of better principles, had it not in some respects bordered upon the truth. A system of natural philosophy may appear very plausible, and be for a long time very generally received in the world, and yet have no foundation in nature, nor any sort of resemblance to the truth. The vortices of Des Cartes were regarded by a very ingenious nation, for near a century together, as a most satisfactory account of the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. Yet it has been demonstrated, to the conviction of all mankind, that these pretended causes of those wonderful effects, not only do not actually exist, but are utterly impossible, and if they did exist, could produce no such effects as are ascribed to them. But it is otherwise with systems of moral philosophy, and an author who pretends to account for the origin of our moral sentiments, cannot deceive us so grossly, nor depart so very far from all resemblance to the truth. When a traveller gives an account of some distant country, he may impose upon our credulity the most groundless and absurd fictions as the most certain matters of fact. But when a person pretends to inform us of what passes in our neighbourhood, and of the affairs of the very parish which we live in, though here too, if we are so careless as not to examine things with our own eves, he may deceive us in many respects, yet the greatest falsehoods which he imposes upon us must bear some resemblance to the truth, and must even have a considerable mixture of truth in them. An author who treats of natural philosophy, and pretends to assign the causes of the great phaenomena of the universe, pretends to give an account of the affairs of a very distant country, concerning which he may tell us what he pleases, and as long as his narration keeps within the bounds of seeming possibility, he need not despair of gaining our belief. But when he proposes to explain the origin of our desires and affections, of our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation, he pretends to give an

account, not only of the affairs of the very parish that we live in, but of our own domestic concerns. Though here too, like indolent masters who put their trust in a steward who deceives them, we are very liable to be imposed upon, yet we are incapable of passing any account which does not preserve some little regard to the truth. Some of the articles, at least, must be just, and even those which are most overcharged must have had some foundation, otherwise the fraud would be detected even by that careless inspection which we are disposed to give. The author who should assign, as the cause of any natural sentiment, some principle which neither had any connexion with it, nor resembled any other principle which had some such connexion, would appear absurd and ridiculous to the most injudicious and unexperienced reader.

Section III: Of the different Systems which have been formed concerning the Principle of Approbation

Introduction

After the inquiry concerning the nature of virtue, the next question of importance in Moral Philosophy, is concerning the principle of approbation, concerning the power or faculty of the mind which renders certain characters agreeable or disagreeable to us, makes us prefer one tenour of conduct to another, denominate the one right and the other wrong, and consider the one as the object of approbation, honour, and reward; the other as that of blame, censure, and punishment.

Three different accounts have been given of this principle of approbation. According to some, we approve and disapprove both of our own actions and of those of others, from self-love only, or from some view of their tendency to our own happiness or disadvantage: according to others, reason, the same faculty by which we distinguish between truth and falsehood, enables us to distinguish between what is fit and unfit both in actions and affections: accorDing to others this distinction is altogether the effect of immediate sentiment and feeling, and arises from the satisfaction or disgust with which the view of certain actions or affections inspires us. Self-love, reason, and sentiment, therefore, are the three different sources which have been assigned for the principle of approbation.

Before I proceed to give an account of those different systems, I must observe, that the determination of this second question, though of the greatest importance in speculation, is of none in practice. The question concerning the nature of virtue necessarily has some influence upon our notions of right and wrong in many particular cases. That concerning the principle of approbation can possibly have no such effect. To examine from what contrivance or mechanism within, those different notions or sentiments arise, is a mere matter of philosophical curiosity.

Chap. I: Of those Systems which deduce the Principle of Approbation from Self-love

Those who account for the principle of approbation from self-love, do not all account for it in the same manner, and there is a good deal of confusion and inaccuracy in all their different systems. According to Mr Hobbes, and many of his followers, man is driven to take refuge in society, not by any natural love which he bears to his own kind, but because without the assistance of others he is incapable of subsisting with ease or safety. Society, upon this account, becomes necessary to him, and whatever tends to its support and welfare, he considers as having a remote tendency to his own interest; and, on the contrary, whatever is likely to disturb or destroy it, he regards as in some measure hurtful or pernicious to himself. Virtue is the great support, and vice the great disturber of human society. The former, therefore, is agreeable, and the latter offensive to every man; as from the one he foresees the prosperity, and from the other the ruin and disorder of what is so necessary for the comfort and security of his existence.

That the tendency of virtue to promote, and of vice to disturb the order of society, when we consider it coolly and philosophically, reflects a very great beauty upon the one, and a very great deformity upon the other, cannot, as I have observed upon a former occasion, be called in question. Human society, when we contemplate it in a certain abstract and philosophical light, appears like a great, an immense machine, whose regular and harmonious movements produce a thousand agreeable effects. As in any other beautiful and noble machine that was the production of human art, whatever tended to render its movements more smooth and easy, would derive a beauty from this effect, and, on the contrary, whatever tended to obstruct them would displease upon that account: so virtue, which is, as it were, the fine polish to the wheels of society, necessarily pleases; while vice, like the vile rust, which makes them jar and grate upon one another, is as necessarily offensive. This account, therefore, of the origin of approbation and disapprobation, so far as it derives them from a regard to the order of society, runs into that principle which gives beauty to utility, and which I have explained upon a former occasion; and it is from thence that this system derives all that appearance of probability which it possesses. When those authors describe the innumerable advantages of a cultivated and social, above a

savage and solitary life; when they expatiate upon the necessity of virtue and good order for the maintenance of the one, and demonstrate how infallibly the prevalence of vice and disobedience to the laws tend to bring back the other, the reader is charmed with the novelty and grandeur of those views which they open to him: he sees plainly a new beauty in virtue, and a new deformity in vice, which he had never taken notice of before, and is commonly so delighted with the discovery, that he seldom takes time to reflect, that this political view, having never occurred to him in his life before, cannot possibly be the ground of that approbation and disapprobation with which he has always been accustomed to consider those different qualities.

When those authors, on the other hand, deduce from self-love the interest which we take in the welfare of society, and the esteem which upon that account we bestow upon virtue, they do not mean, that when we in this age applaud the virtue of Cato, and detest the villany of Catiline, our sentiments are influenced by the notion of any benefit we receive from the one, or of any detriment we suffer from the other. It was not because the prosperity or subversion of society, in those remote ages and nations, was apprehended to have any influence upon our happiness or misery in the present times; that according to those philosophers, we esteemed the virtuous, and blamed the disorderly characters. They never imagined that our sentiments were influenced by any benefit or damage which we supposed actually to redound to us, from either; but by that which might have redounded to us, had we lived in those distant ages and countries; or by that which might still redound to us, if in our own times we should meet with characters of the same kind. The idea, in short, which those authors were groping about, but which they were never able to unfold distinctly, was that indirect sympathy which we feel with the gratitude or resentment of those who received the benefit or suffered the damage resulting from such opposite characters: and it was this which they were indistinctly pointing at, when they said, that it was not the thought of what we had gained or suffered which prompted our applause or indignation, but the conception or imagination of what we might gain or suffer if we were to act in society with such associates.

Sympathy, however, cannot, in any sense, be regarded as a selfish principle. When I sympathize with your sorrow or your indignation, it may be pretended, indeed, that my emotion is founded in self-love, because it arises from bringing your case home to myself, from putting myself in your situation, and thence conceiving what I should feel in the like circumstances. But though sympathy is very properly said to arise

from an imaginary change of situations with the person principally concerned, yet this imaginary change is not supposed to happen to me in my own person and character, but in that of the person with whom I sympathize. When I condole with you for the loss of your only son, in order to enter into your grief I do not consider what I, a person of such a character and profession, should suffer, if I had a son, and if that son was unfortunately to die: but I consider what I should suffer if I was really you, and I not only change circumstances with you, but I change persons and characters. My grief, therefore, is entirely upon your account, and not in the least upon my own. It is not, therefore, in the least selfish. How can that be regarded as a selfish passion, which does not arise even from the imagination of any thing that has befallen, or that relates to myself, in my own proper person and character, but which is entirely occupied about what relates to you? A man may sympathize with a woman in child-bed; though it is impossible that he should conceive himself as suffering her pains in his own proper person and character. That whole account of human nature, however, which deduces all sentiments and affections from self-love, which has made so much noise in the world, but which, so far as I know, has never yet been fully and distinctly explained, seems to me to have arisen from some confused misapprehension of the system of sympathy.

Chap. II: Of those Systems which make Reason the Principle of Approbation

It is well known to have been the doctrine of Mr Hobbes, that a state of nature is a state of war; and that antecedent to the institution of civil government there could be no safe or peaceable society among men. To preserve society, therefore, according to him, was to support civil government, and to destroy civil government was the same thing as to put an end to society. But the existence of civil government depends upon the obedience that is paid to the supreme magistrate. The moment he loses his authority, all government is at an end. As self-preservation, therefore, teaches men to applaud whatever tends to promote the welfare of society, and to blame whatever is likely to hurt it; so the same principle, if they would think and speak consistently, ought to teach them to applaud upon all occasions obedience to the civil magistrate, and to blame all disobedience and rebellion. The very ideas of laudable and blamable, ought to be the same with those of obedience and disobedience. The laws of the civil magistrate, therefore, ought to be regarded as the sole ultimate standards of what was just and unjust, of what was right and wrong.

It was the avowed intention of Mr Hobbes, by propagating these notions, to subject the consciences of men immediately to the civil, and not to the ecclesiastical powers, whose turbulence and ambition, he had been taught, by the example of his own times, to regard as the principal source of the disorders of society. His doctrine, upon this account, was peculiarly offensive to theologians, who accorDingly did not fail to vent their indignation against him with great asperity and bitterness. It was likewise offensive to all sound moralists, as it supposed that there was no natural distinction between right and wrong, that these were mutable and changeable, and depended upon the mere arbitrary will of the civil magistrate. This account of things, therefore, was attacked from all quarters, and by all sorts of weapons, by sober reason as well as by furious declamation.

In order to confute so odious a doctrine, it was necessary to prove, that antecedent to all law or positive institution, the mind was naturally endowed with a faculty, by which it distinguished in certain actions and affections, the qualities of right, laudable, and virtuous, and in others those of wrong, blamable, and vicious.

Law, it was justly observed by Dr Cudworth, could not be the original source of those distinctions; since upon the supposition of such a law, it must either be right to obey it, and wrong to disobey it, or indifferent whether we obeyed it, or disobeyed it. That law which it was indifferent whether we obeyed or disobeyed, could not, it was evident, be the source of those distinctions; neither could that which it was right to obey and wrong to disobey, since even this still supposed the antecedent notions or ideas of right and wrong, and that obedience to the law was conformable to the idea of right, and disobedience to that of wrong.

Since the mind, therefore, had a notion of those distinctions antecedent to all law, it seemed necessarily to follow, that it derived this notion from reason, which pointed out the difference between right and wrong, in the same manner in which it did that between truth and falsehood: and this conclusion, which, though true in some respects, is rather hasty in others, was more easily received at a time when the abstract science of human nature was but in its infancy, and before the distinct offices and powers of the different faculties of the human mind had been carefully examined and distinguished from one another. When this controversy with Mr Hobbes was carried on with the greatest warmth and keenness, no other faculty had been thought of from which any such ideas could possibly be supposed to arise. It became at this time, therefore, the popular doctrine, that the essence of virtue and vice did not consist in the conformity or disagreement of human actions with the law of a superior, but in their conformity or disagreement with reason, which was thus considered as the original source and principle of approbation and disapprobation.

That virtue consists in conformity to reason, is true in some respects, and this faculty may very justly be considered as, in some sense, the source and principle of approbation and disapprobation, and of all solid judgments concerning right and wrong. It is by reason that we discover those general rules of justice by which we ought to regulate our actions: and it is by the same faculty that we form those more vague and indeterminate ideas of what is prudent, of what is decent, of what is generous or noble, which we carry constantly about with us, and according to which we endeavour, as well as we can, to model the tenor of our conduct. The general maxims of morality are formed, like all other general maxims, from experience and induction. We observe in a great variety of particular cases what pleases or displeases our moral faculties, what these approve or disapprove of, and, by induction from this experience, we establish those general rules. But induction is always

regarded as one of the operations of reason. From reason, therefore, we are very properly said to derive all those general maxims and ideas. It is by these, however, that we regulate the greater part of our moral judgments, which would be extremely uncertain and precarious if they depended altogether upon what is liable to so many variations as immediate sentiment and feeling, which the different states of health and humour are capable of altering so essentially. As our most solid judgments, therefore, with regard to right and wrong, are regulated by maxims and ideas derived from an induction of reason, virtue may very properly be said to consist in a conformity to reason, and so far this faculty may be considered as the source and principle of approbation and disapprobation.

But though reason is undoubtedly the source of the general rules of morality, and of all the moral judgments which we form by means of them; it is altogether absurd and unintelligible to suppose that the first perceptions of right and wrong can be derived from reason, even in those particular cases upon the experience of which the general rules are formed. These first perceptions, as well as all other experiments upon which any general rules are founded, cannot be the object of reason, but of immediate sense and feeling. It is by finding in a vast variety of instances that one tenor of conduct constantly pleases in a certain manner, and that another as constantly displeases the mind, that we form the general rules of morality. But reason cannot render any particular object either agreeable or disagreeable to the mind for its own sake. Reason may show that this object is the means of obtaining some other which is naturally either pleasing or displeasing, and in this manner may render it either agreeable or disagreeable for the sake of something else. But nothing can be agreeable or disagreeable for its own sake, which is not rendered such by immediate sense and feeling. If virtue, therefore, in every particular instance, necessarily pleases for its own sake, and if vice as certainly displeases the mind, it cannot be reason, but immediate sense and feeling, which, in this manner, reconciles us to the one, and alienates us from the other.

Pleasure and pain are the great objects of desire and aversion: but these are distinguished not by reason, but by immediate sense and feeling. If virtue, therefore, be desirable for its own sake, and if vice be, in the same manner, the object of aversion, it cannot be reason which originally distinguishes those different qualities, but immediate sense and feeling.

As reason, however, in a certain sense, may justly be considered as the principle of approbation and disapprobation, these sentiments were, through inattention, long regarded as originally flowing from the operations of this faculty. Dr Hutcheson had the merit of being the first who distinguished with any degree of precision in what respect all moral distinctions may be said to arise from reason, and in what respect they are founded upon immediate sense and feeling. In his illustrations upon the moral sense he has explained this so fully, and, in my opinion, so unanswerably, that, if any controversy is still kept up about this subject, I can impute it to nothing, but either to inattention to what that gentleman has written, or to a superstitious attachment to certain forms of expression, a weakness not very uncommon among the learned, especially in subjects so deeply interesting as the present, in which a man of virtue is often loath to abandon, even the propriety of a single phrase which he has been accustomed to.

Chap. III: Of those Systems which make Sentiment the Principle of Approbation

Those systems which make sentiment the principle of approbation may be divided into two different classes.

I. According to some the principle of approbation is founded upon a sentiment of a peculiar nature, upon a particular power of perception exerted by the mind at the view of certain actions or affections; some of which affecting this faculty in an agreeable and others in a disagreeable manner, the former are stamped with the characters of right, laudable, and virtuous; the latter with those of wrong, blamable, and vicious. This sentiment being of a peculiar nature distinct from every other, and the effect of a particular power of perception, they give it a particular name, and call it a moral sense.

II. According to others, in order to account for the principle of approbation, there is no occasion for supposing any new power of perception which had never been heard of before: Nature, they imagine, acts here, as in all other cases, with the strictest oeconomy, and produces a multitude of effects from one and the same cause; and sympathy, a power which has always been taken notice of, and with which the mind is manifestly endowed, is, they think, sufficient to account for all the effects ascribed to this peculiar faculty.

I. Dr Hutcheson had been at great pains to prove that the principle of approbation was not founded on self-love. He had demonstrated too that it could not arise from any operation of reason. Nothing remained, he thought, but to suppose it a faculty of a peculiar kind, with which Nature had endowed the human mind, in order to produce this one particular and important effect. When self-love and reason were both excluded, it did not occur to him that there was any other known faculty of the mind which could in any respect answer this purpose.

This new power of perception he called a moral sense, and supposed it to be somewhat analogous to the external senses. As the bodies around us, by affecting these in a certain manner, appear to possess the different qualities of sound, taste, odour, colour; so the various affections of the human mind, by touching this particular faculty in a certain manner, appear to possess the different qualities of amiable and odious, of virtuous and vicious, of right and wrong.

The various senses or powers of perception, from which the human mind derives all its simple ideas, were, according to this system, of two different kinds, of which the one were called the direct or antecedent, the other, the reflex or consequent senses. The direct senses were those faculties from which the mind derived the perception of such species of things as did not presuppose the antecedent perception of any other. Thus sounds and colours were objects of the direct senses. To hear a sound or to see a colour does not presuppose the antecedent perception of any other quality or object. The reflex or consequent senses, on the other hand, were those faculties from which the mind derived the perception of such species of things as presupposed the antecedent perception of some other. Thus harmony and beauty were objects of the reflex senses. In order to perceive the harmony of a sound, or the beauty of a colour, we must first perceive the sound or the colour. The moral sense was considered as a faculty of this kind. That faculty, which Mr Locke calls reflection, and from which he derived the simple ideas of the different passions and emotions of the human mind, was, according to Dr Hutcheson, a direct internal sense. That faculty again by which we perceived the beauty or deformity, the virtue or vice of those different passions and emotions, was a reflex, internal sense.

Dr Hutcheson endeavoured still further to support this doctrine, by shewing that it was agreeable to the analogy of nature, and that the mind was endowed with a variety of other reflex senses exactly similar to the moral sense; such as a sense of beauty and deformity in external objects; a public sense, by which we sympathize with the happiness or misery of our fellow-creatures; a sense of shame and honour, and a sense of ridicule.

But notwithstanding all the pains which this ingenious philosopher has taken to prove that the principle of approbation is founded in a peculiar power of perception, somewhat analogous to the external senses, there are some consequences, which he acknowledges to follow from this doctrine, that will, perhaps, be regarded by many as a sufficient confutation of it. The qualities he allows, which belong to the objects of any sense, cannot, without the greatest absurdity, be ascribed to the sense itself. Who ever thought of calling the sense of seeing black or white, the sense of hearing loud or low, or the sense of tasting sweet or bitter? And, according to him, it is equally absurd to call our moral faculties virtuous or vicious, morally good or evil. These qualities belong to the objects of those faculties, not to the faculties themselves. If any man, therefore, was so absurdly constituted as to approve of cruelty and injustice as the

highest virtues, and to disapprove of equity and humanity as the most pitiful vices, such a constitution of mind might indeed be regarded as inconvenient both to the individual and to the society, and likewise as strange, surprising, and unnatural in itself; but it could not, without the greatest absurdity, be denominated vicious or morally evil.

Yet surely if we saw any man shouting with admiration and applause at a barbarous and unmerited execution, which some insolent tyrant had ordered, we should not think we were guilty of any great absurdity in denominating this behaviour vicious and morally evil in the highest degree, though it expressed nothing but depraved moral faculties, or an absurd approbation of this horrid action, as of what was noble, magnanimous, and great. Our heart, I imagine, at the sight of such a spectator, would forget for a while its sympathy with the sufferer, and feel nothing but horror and detestation, at the thought of so execrable a wretch. We should abominate him even more than the tyrant who might be goaded on by the strong passions of jealousy, fear, and resentment, and upon that account be more excusable. But the sentiments of the spectator would appear altogether without cause or motive, and therefore most perfectly and completely detestable. There is no perversion of sentiment or affection which our heart would be more averse to enter into, or which it would reject with greater hatred and indignation than one of this kind; and so far from regarding such a constitution of mind as being merely something strange or inconvenient, and not in any respect vicious or morally evil, we should rather consider it as the very last and most dreadful stage of moral depravity.

Correct moral sentiments, on the contrary, naturally appear in some degree laudable and morally good. The man, whose censure and applause are upon all occasions suited with the greatest accuracy to the value or unworthiness of the object, seems to deserve a degree even of moral approbation. We admire the delicate precision of his moral sentiments: they lead our own judgments, and, upon account of their uncommon and surprising justness, they even excite our wonder and applause. We cannot indeed be always sure that the conduct of such a person would be in any respect correspondent to the precision and accuracy of his judgments concerning the conduct of others. Virtue requires habit and resolution of mind, as well as delicacy of sentiment; and unfortunately the former qualities are sometimes wanting, where the latter is in the greatest perfection. This disposition of mind, however, though it may sometimes be attended with imperfections, is incompatible with any thing that is grossly criminal, and is the happiest foundation

upon which the superstructure of perfect virtue can be built. There are many men who mean very well, and seriously purpose to do what they think their duty, who notwithstanding are disagreeable on account of the coarseness of their moral sentiments.

It may be said, perhaps, that though the principle of approbation is not founded upon any power of perception that is in any respect analogous to the external senses, it may still be founded upon a peculiar sentiment which answers this one particular purpose and no other. Approbation and disapprobation, it may be pretended, are certain feelings or emotions which arise in the mind upon the view of different characters and actions; and as resentment might be called a sense of injuries, or gratitude a sense of benefits, so these may very properly receive the name of a sense of right and wrong, or of a moral sense.

But this account of things, though it may not be liable to the same objections with the foregoing, is exposed to others which are equally unanswerable.

First of all, whatever variations any particular emotion may undergo, it still preserves the general features which distinguish it to be an emotion of such a kind, and these general features are always more striking and remarkable than any variation which it may undergo in particular cases. Thus anger is an emotion of a particular kind: and accordingly its general features are always more distinguishable than all the variations it undergoes in particular cases. Anger against a man is, no doubt, somewhat different from anger against a woman, and that again from anger against a child. In each of those three cases, the general passion of anger receives a different modification from the particular character of its object, as may easily be observed by the attentive. But still the general features of the passion predominate in all these cases. To distinguish these, requires no nice observation: a very delicate attention, on the contrary, is necessary to discover their variations: every body takes notice of the former; scarce any body observes the latter. If approbation and disapprobation, therefore, were, like gratitude and resentment, emotions of a particular kind, distinct from every other, we should expect that in all the variations which either of them might undergo, it would still retain the general features which mark it to be an emotion of such a particular kind, clear, plain, and easily distinguishable. But in fact it happens quite otherwise. If we attend to what we really feel when upon different occasions we either approve or disapprove, we shall find that our emotion in one case is often totally different from that in another, and that no common features can possibly be discovered

between them. Thus the approbation with which we view a tender, delicate, and humane sentiment, is quite different from that with which we are struck by one that appears great, daring, and magnanimous. Our approbation of both may, upon different occasions, be perfect and entire; but we are softened by the one, and we are elevated by the other, and there is no sort of resemblance between the emotions which they excite in us. But according to that system which I have been endeavouring to establish, this must necessarily be the case. As the emotions of the person whom we approve of, are, in those two cases, quite opposite to one another, and as our approbation arises from sympathy with those opposite emotions, what we feel upon the one occasion, can have no sort of resemblance to what we feel upon the other. But this could not happen if approbation consisted in a peculiar emotion which had nothing in common with the sentiments we approved of, but which arose at the view of those sentiments, like any other passion at the view of its proper object. The same thing holds true with regard to disapprobation. Our horror for cruelty has no sort of resemblance to our contempt for mean-spiritedness. It is quite a different species of discord which we feel at the view of those two different vices, between our own minds and those of the person whose sentiments and behaviour we consider.

Secondly, I have already observed, that not only the different passions or affections of the human mind which are approved or disapproved of, appear morally good or evil, but that proper and improper approbation appear, to our natural sentiments, to be stamped with the same characters. I would ask, therefore, how it is, that, according to this system, we approve or disapprove of proper or improper approbation? To this question there is, I imagine, but one reasonable answer, which can possibly be given. It must be said, that when the approbation with which our neighbour regards the conduct of a third person coincides with our own, we approve of his approbation, and consider it as, in some measure, morally good; and that, on the contrary, when it does not coincide with our own sentiments, we disapprove of it, and consider it as, in some measure, morally evil. It must be allowed, therefore, that, at least in this one case, the coincidence or opposition of sentiments, between the observer and the person observed, constitutes moral approbation or disapprobation. And if it does so in this one case, I would ask, why not in every other? Or to what purpose imagine a new power of perception in order to account for those sentiments?

Against every account of the principle of approbation, which makes it depend upon a peculiar sentiment, distinct from every other, I would

object; that it is strange that this sentiment, which Providence undoubtedly intended to be the governing principle of human nature, should hitherto have been so little taken notice of, as not to have got a name in any language. The word moral sense is of very late formation, and cannot yet be considered as making part of the English tongue. The word approbation has but within these few years been appropriated to denote peculiarly any thing of this kind. In propriety of language we approve of whatever is entirely to our satisfaction, of the form of a building, of the contrivance of a machine, of the flavour of a dish of meat. The word conscience does not immediately denote any moral faculty by which we approve or disapprove. Conscience supposes, indeed, the existence of some such faculty, and properly signifies our consciousness of having acted agreeably or contrary to its directions. When love, hatred, joy, sorrow, gratitude, resentment, with so many other passions which are all supposed to be the subjects of this principle, have made themselves considerable enough to get titles to know them by, is it not surprising that the sovereign of them all should hitherto have been so little heeded, that, a few philosophers excepted, nobody has yet thought it worth while to bestow a name upon it?

When we approve of any character or action, the sentiments which we feel, are, according to the foregoing system, derived from four sources, which are in some respects different from one another. First, we sympathize with the motives of the agent; secondly, we enter into the gratitude of those who receive the benefit of his actions; thirdly, we observe that his conduct has been agreeable to the general rules by which those two sympathies generally act; and, last of all, when we consider such actions as making a part of a system of behaviour which tends to promote the happiness either of the individual or of the society, they appear to derive a beauty from this utility, not unlike that which we ascribe to any well-contrived machine. After deducting, in any one particular case, all that must be acknowledged to proceed from some one or other of these four principles, I should be glad to know what remains, and I shall freely allow this overplus to be ascribed to a moral sense, or to any other peculiar faculty, provided any body will ascertain precisely what this overplus is. It might be expected, perhaps, that if there was any such peculiar principle, such as this moral sense is supposed to be, we should feel it, in some particular cases, separated and detached from every other, as we often feel joy, sorrow, hope, and fear, pure and unmixed with any other emotion. This however, I imagine, cannot even be pretended. I have never heard any instance alleged in which this

principle could be said to exert itself alone and unmixed with sympathy or antipathy, with gratitude or resentment, with the perception of the agreement or disagreement of any action to an established rule, or last of all with that general taste for beauty and or der which is excited by inanimated as well as by animated objects.

II. There is another system which attempts to account for the origin of our moral sentiments from sympathy, distinct from that which I have been endeavouring to establish. It is that which places virtue in utility, and accounts for the pleasure with which the spectator surveys the utility of any quality from sympathy with the happiness of those who are affected by it. This sympathy is different both from that by which we enter into the motives of the agent, and from that by which we go along with the gratitude of the persons who are benefited by his actions. It is the same principle with that by which we approve of a well-contrived machine. But no machine can be the object of either of those two last mentioned sympathies. I have already, in the fourth part of this discourse, given some account of this system.

Section IV: Of the Manner in which different Authors have treated of the practical Rules of Morality

Conclusion

It was observed in the third part of this discourse, that the rules of justice are the only rules of morality which are precise and accurate; that those of all the other virtues are loose, vague, and indeterminate; that the first may be compared to the rules of grammar; the others to those which critics lay down for the attainment of what is sublime and elegant in composition, and which present us rather with a general idea of the perfection we ought to aim at, than afford us any certain and infallible directions for acquiring it.

As the different rules of morality admit such different degrees of accuracy, those authors who have endeavoured to collect and digest them into systems have done it in two Different manners; and one set has followed through the whole that loose method to which they were naturally directed by the consideration of one species of virtues; while another has as universally endeavoured to introduce into their precepts that sort of accuracy of which only some of them are susceptible. The first have wrote like critics, the second like grammarians.

I. The first, among whom we may count all the ancient moralists, have contented themselves with describing in a general manner the different vices and virtues, and with pointing out the deformity and misery of the one disposition as well as the propriety and happiness of the other, but have not affected to lay down many precise rules that are to hold good unexceptionably in all particular cases. They have only endeavoured to ascertain, as far as language is capable of ascertaining, first, wherein consists the sentiment of the heart, upon which each particular virtue is founded, what sort of internal feeling or emotion it is which constitutes the essence of friendship, of humanity, of generosity, of justice, of magnanimity, and of all the other virtues, as well as of the vices which are opposed to them: and, secondly, what is the general way of acting, the ordinary tone and tenor of conduct to which each of those sentiments would direct us, or how it is that a friendly, a generous, a brave, a just, and a humane man, would, upon ordinary occasions, chuse to act.

To characterize the sentiment of the heart, upon which each particular virtue is founded, though it requires both a delicate and an accurate pencil, is a task, however, which may be executed with some degree of exactness. It is impossible, indeed, to express all the variations which

each sentiment either does or ought to undergo, according to every possible variation of circumstances. They are endless, and language wants names to mark them by. The sentiment of friendship, for example, which we feel for an old man is different from that which we feel for a young: that which we entertain for an austere man different from that which we feel for one of softer and gentler manners: and that again from what we feel for one of gay vivacity and spirit. The friendship which we conceive for a man is different from that with which a woman affects us, even where there is no mixture of any grosser passion. What author could enumerate and ascertain these and all the other infinite varieties which this sentiment is capable of undergoing? But still the general sentiment of friendship and familiar attachment which is common to them all, may be ascertained with a sufficient degree of accuracy. The picture which is drawn of it, though it will always be in many respects incomplete, may, however, have such a resemblance as to make us know the original when we meet with it, and even distinguish it from other sentiments to which it has a considerable resemblance, such as good-will, respect, esteem, admiration.

To describe, in a general manner, what is the ordinary way of acting to which each virtue would prompt us, is still more easy. It is, indeed, scarce possible to describe the internal sentiment or emotion upon which it is founded, without doing something of this kind. It is impossible by language to express, if I may say so, the invisible features of all the different modifications of passion as they show themselves within. There is no other way of marking and distinguishing them from one another, but by describing the effects which they produce without, the alterations which they occasion in the countenance, in the air and eternal behaviour, the resolutions they suggest, the actions they prompt to. It is thus that Cicero, in the first book of his Offices, endeavours to direct us to the practice of the four cardinal virtues, and that Aristotle in the practical parts of his Ethics, points out to us the different habits by which he would have us regulate our behaviour, such as liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, and even jocularity and good-humour, qualities which that indulgent philosopher has thought worthy of a place in the catalogue of the virtues, though the lightness of that approbation which we naturally bestow upon them, should not seem to entitle them to so venerable a name.

Such works present us with agreeable and lively pictures of manners. By the vivacity of their descriptions they inflame our natural love of virtue, and increase our abhorrence of vice: by the justness as well as

delicacy of their observations they may often help both to correct and to ascertain our natural sentiments with regard to the propriety of conduct, and suggesting many nice and delicate attentions, form us to a more exact justness of behaviour, than what, without such instruction, we should have been apt to think of. In treating of the rules of morality, in this manner, consists the science which is properly called Ethics, a science which, though like criticism it does not admit of the most accurate precision, is, however, both highly useful and agreeable. It is of all others the most susceptible of the embellishments of eloquence, and by means of them of bestowing, if that be possible, a new importance upon the smallest rules of duty. Its precepts, when thus dressed and adorned, are capable of producing upon the flexibility of youth, the noblest and most lasting impressions, and as they fall in with the natural magnanimity of that generous age, they are able to inspire, for a time at least, the most heroic resolutions, and thus tend both to establish and confirm the best and most useful habits of which the mind of man is susceptible. Whatever precept and exhortation can do to animate us to the practice of virtue, is done by this science delivered in this manner.

II. The second set of moralists, among whom we may count all the casuists of the middle and latter ages of the christian church, as well as all those who in this and in the preceding century have treated of what is called natural jurisprudence, do not content themselves with characterizing in this general manner that tenor of conduct which they would recommend to us, but endeavour to lay down exact and precise rules for the direction of every circumstance of our behaviour. As justice is the only virtue with regard to which such exact rules can properly be given; it is this virtue, that has chiefly fallen under the consideration of those two different sets of writers. They treat of it, however, in a very different manner.

Those who write upon the principles of jurisprudence, consider only what the person to whom the obligation is due, ought to think himself entitled to exact by force; what every impartial spectator would approve of him for exacting, or what a judge or arbiter, to whom he had submitted his case, and who had undertaken to do him justice, ought to oblige the other person to suffer or to perform. The casuists, on the other hand, do not so much examine what it is, that might properly be exacted by force, as what it is, that the person who owes the obligation ought to think himself bound to perform from the most sacred and scrupulous regard to the general rules of justice, and from the most conscientious dread, either of wronging his neighbour, or of violating the integrity of his own

character. It is the end of jurisprudence to prescribe rules for the decisions of judges and arbiters. It is the end of casuistry to prescribe rules for the conduct of a good man. By observing all the rules of jurisprudence, supposing them ever so perfect, we should deserve nothing but to be free from external punishment. By observing those of casuistry, supposing them such as they ought to be, we should be entitled to considerable praise by the exact and scrupulous delicacy of our behaviour.

It may frequently happen that a good man ought to think himself bound, from a sacred and conscientious regard to the general rules of justice, to perform many things which it would be the highest injustice to extort from him, or for any judge or arbiter to impose upon him by force. To give a trite example; a highwayman, by the fear of death, obliges a traveller to promise him a certain sum of money. Whether such a promise, extorted in this manner by unjust force, ought to be regarded as obligatory, is a question that has been very much debated.

If we consider it merely as a question of jurisprudence, the decision can admit of no doubt. It would be absurd to suppose that the highwayman can be entitled to use force to constrain the other to perform. To extort the promise was a crime which deserved the highest punishment, and to extort the performance would only be adding a new crime to the former. He can complain of no injury who has been only deceived by the person by whom he might justly have been killed. To suppose that a judge ought to enforce the obligation of such promises, or that the magistrate ought to allow them to sustain action at law, would be the most ridiculous of all absurdities. If we consider this question, therefore, as a question of jurisprudence, we can be at no loss about the decision.

But if we consider it as a question of casuistry, it will not be so easily determined. Whether a good man, from a conscientious regard to that most sacred rule of justice, which commands the observance of all serious promises, would not think himself bound to perform, is at least much more doubtful. That no regard is due to the disappointment of the wretch who brings him into this situation, that no injury is done to the robber, and consequently that nothing can be extorted by force, will admit of no sort of dispute. But whether some regard is not, in this case, due to his own dignity and honour, to the inviolable sacredness of that part of his character which makes him reverence the law of truth and abhor every thing that approaches to treachery and falsehood, may, perhaps, more reasonably be made a question. The casuists accordingly

are greatly divided about it. One party, with whom we may count Cicero among the ancients, among the moderns, Puffendorf, Barbeyrac his commentator, and above all the late Dr Hutcheson, one who in most cases was by no means a loose casuist, determine, without any hesitation, that no sort of regard is due to any such promise, and that to think otherwise is mere weakness and superstition. Another party, among whom we may reckon some of the ancient fathers of the church, as well as some very eminent modern casuists, have been of another opinion, and have judged all such promises obligatory.

If we consider the matter according to the common sentiments of mankind, we shall find that some regard would be thought due even to a promise of this kind; but that it is impossible to determine how much, by any general rule that will apply to all cases without exception. The man who was quite frank and easy in making promises of this kind, and who violated them with as little ceremony, we should not chuse for our friend and companion. A gentleman who should promise a highwayman five pounds and not perform, would incur some blame. If the sum promised, however, was very great, it might be more doubtful, what was proper to be done. If it was such, for example, that the payment of it would entirely ruin the family of the promiser, if it was so great as to be sufficient for promoting the most useful purposes, it would appear in some measure criminal, at least extremely improper, to throw it, for the sake of a punctilio, into such worthless hands. The man who should beggar himself, or who should throw away an hundred thousand pounds, though he could afford that vast sum, for the sake of observing such a parole with a thief, would appear to the common sense of mankind, absurd and extravagant in the highest degree. Such profusion would seem inconsistent with his duty, with what he owed both to himself and others, and what, therefore, regard to a promise extorted in this manner, could by no means authorise. To fix, however, by any precise rule, what degree of regard ought to be paid to it, or what might be the greatest sum which could be due from it, is evidently impossible. This would vary according to the characters of the persons, according to their circumstances, according to the solemnity of the promise, and even according to the incidents of the rencounter. and if the promiser had been treated with a great deal of that sort of gallantry, which is sometimes to be met with in persons of the most abandoned characters, more would seem due than upon other occasions. It may be said in general, that exact propriety requires the observance of all such promises, wherever it is not inconsistent with some other duties that are more sacred; such as regard

to the public interest, to those whom gratitude, whom natural affection, or whom the laws of proper beneficence should prompt us to provide for. But, as was formerly taken notice of, we have no precise rules to determine what external actions are due from a regard to such motives, nor, consequently, when it is that those virtues are inconsistent with the observance of such promises.

It is to be observed, however, that whenever such promises are violated, though for the most necessary reasons, it is always with some degree of dishonour to the person who made them. After they are made, we may be convinced of the impropriety of observing them. But still there is some fault in having made them. It is at least a departure from the highest and noblest maxims of magnanimity and honour. A brave man ought to die, rather than make a promise which he can neither keep without folly, nor violate without ignominy. For some degree of ignominy always attends a situation of this kind. Treachery and falsehood are vices so dangerous, so dreadful, and, at the same time, such as may so easily, and, upon many occasions, so safely be indulged, that we are more jealous of them than of almost any other. Our imagination therefore attaches the idea of shame to all violations of faith, in every circumstance and in every situation. They resemble, in this respect, the violations of chastity in the fair sex, a virtue of which, for the like reasons, we are excessively jealous; and our sentiments are not more delicate with regard to the one, than with regard to the other. Breach of chastity dishonours irretrievably. No circumstances, no solicitation can excuse it; no sorrow, no repentance atone for it. We are so nice in this respect that even a rape dishonours, and the innocence of the mind cannot, in our imagination, wash out the pollution of the body. It is the same case with the violation of faith, when it has been solemnly pledged, even to the most worthless of mankind. Fidelity is so necessary a virtue, that we apprehend it in general to be due even to those to whom nothing else is due, and whom we think it lawful to kill and destroy. It is to no purpose that the person who has been guilty of the breach of it, urges that he promised in order to save his life, and that he broke his promise because it was inconsistent with some other respectable duty to keep it. These circumstances may alleviate, but cannot entirely wipe out his dishonour. He appears to have been guilty of an action with which, in the imaginations of men, some degree of shame is inseparably connected. He has broke a promise which he had solemnly averred he would maintain; and his character, if not irretrievably stained and polluted, has at least a ridicule affixed to it, which it will be very difficult entirely to efface; and

no man, I imagine, who had gone through an adventure of this kind would be fond of telling the story.

This instance may serve to show wherein consists the difference between casuistry and jurisprudence, even when both of them consider the obligations of the general rules of justice.

But though this difference be real and essential, though those two sciences propose quite different ends, the sameness of the subject has made such a similarity between them, that the greater part of authors whose professed design was to treat of jurisprudence, have determined the different questions they examine, sometimes according to the principles of that science, and sometimes according to those of casuistry, without distinguishing, and, perhaps, without being themselves aware when they did the one, and when the other.

The doctrine of the casuists, however, is by no means confined to the consideration of what a conscientious regard to the general rules of justice would demand of us. It embraces many other parts of Christian and moral duty. What seems principally to have given occasion to the cultivation of this species of science was the custom of auricular confession, introduced by the Roman Catholic superstition, in times of barbarism and ignorance. By that institution, the most secret actions, and even the thoughts of every person, which could be suspected of receding in the smallest degree from the rules of Christian purity, were to be revealed to the confessor. The confessor informed his penitents whether, and in what respect they had violated their duty, and what penance it behoved them to undergo, before he could absolve them in the name of the offended Deity.

The consciousness, or even the suspicion of having done wrong, is a load upon every mind, and is accompanied with anxiety and terror in all those who are not hardened by long habits of iniquity. Men, in this, as in all other distresses, are naturally eager to disburthen themselves of the oppression which they feel upon their thoughts, by unbosoming the agony of their mind to some person whose secrecy and discretion they can confide in. The shame, which they suffer from this acknowledgment, is fully compensated by that deviation of their uneasiness which the sympathy of their confident seldom fails to occasion. It relieves them to find that they are not altogether unworthy of regard, and that however their past conduct may be censured, their present disposition is at least approved of, and is perhaps sufficient to compensate the other, at least to maintain them in some degree of esteem with their friend. A numerous and artful clergy had, in those times of superstition, insinuated

themselves into the confidence of almost every private family. They possessed all the little learning which the times could afford, and their manners, though in many respects rude and disorderly, were polished and regular compared with those of the age they lived in. They were regarded, therefore, not only as the great directors of all religious, but of all moral duties. Their familiarity gave reputation to whoever was so happy as to possess it, and every mark of their disapprobation stamped the deepest ignominy upon all who had the misfortune to fall under it. Being considered as the great judges of right and wrong, they were naturally consulted about all scruples that occurred, and it was reputable for any person to have it known that he made those holy men the confidents of all such secrets, and took no important or delicate step in his conduct without their advice and approbation. It was not difficult for the clergy, therefore, to get it established as a general rule, that they should be entrusted with what it had already become fashionable to entrust them, and with what they generally would have been entrusted, though no such rule had been established. To qualify themselves for confessors became thus a necessary part of the study of churchmen and divines, and they were thence led to collect what are called cases of conscience, nice and delicate situations in which it is hard to determine whereabouts the propriety of conduct may lie. Such works, they imagined, might be of use both to the directors of consciences and to those who were to be directed; and hence the origin of books of casuistry.

The moral duties which fell under the consideration of the casuists were chiefly those which can, in some measure at least, be circumscribed within general rules, and of which the violation is naturally attended with some degree of remorse and some dread of suffering punishment. The design of that institution which gave occasion to their works, was to appease those terrors of conscience which attend upon the infringement of such duties. But it is not every virtue of which the defect is accompanied with any very severe compunctions of this kind, and no man applies to his confessor for absolution, because he did not perform the most generous, the most friendly, or the most magnanimous action which, in his circumstances, it was possible to perform. In failures of this kind, the rule that is violated is commonly not very determinate, and is generally of such a nature too, that though the observance of it might entitle to honour and reward, the violation seems to expose to no positive blame, censure, or punishment. The exercise of such virtues the casuists seem to have regarded as a sort of works of supererogation, which could

not be very strictly exacted, and which it was therefore unnecessary for them to treat of.

The breaches of moral duty, therefore, which came before the tribunal of the confessor, and upon that account fell under the cognizance of the casuists, were chiefly of three different kinds.

First and principally, breaches of the rules of justice. The rules here are all express and positive, and the violation of them is naturally attended with the consciousness of deserving, and the dread of suffering punishment both from God and man.

Secondly, breaches of the rules of chastity. These in all grosser instances are real breaches of the rules of justice, and no person can be guilty of them without doing the most unpardonable injury to some other. In smaller instances, when they amount only to a violation of those exact decorums which ought to be observed in the conversation of the two sexes, they cannot indeed justly be considered as violations of the rules of justice. They are generally, however, violations of a pretty plain rule, and, at least in one of the sexes, tend to bring ignominy upon the person who has been guilty of them, and consequently to be attended in the scrupulous with some degree of shame and contrition of mind.

Thirdly, breaches of the rules of veracity. The violation of truth, it is to be observed, is not always a breach of justice, though it is so upon many occasions, and consequently cannot always expose to any external punishment. The vice of common lying, though a most miserable meanness, may frequently do hurt to nobody, and in this case no claim of vengeance or satisfaction can be due either to the persons imposed upon, or to others. But though the violation of truth is not always a breach of justice, it is always a breach of a very plain rule, and what naturally tends to cover with shame the person who has been guilty of it.

There seems to be in young children an instinctive disposition to believe whatever they are told. Nature seems to have judged it necessary for their preservation that they should, for some time at least, put implicit confidence in those to whom the care of their childhood, and of the earliest and most necessary parts of their education, is intrusted. Their credulity, accordingly, is excessive, and it requires long and much experience of the falsehood of mankind to reduce them to a reasonable degree of diffidence and distrust. In grown-up people the degrees of credulity are, no doubt, very different. The wisest and most experienced are generally the least credulous. But the man scarce lives who is not more credulous than he ought to be, and who does not, upon many occasions, give credit to tales, which not only turn out to be perfectly

false, but which a very moderate degree of reflection and attention might have taught him could not well be true. The natural disposition is always to believe. It is acquired wisdom and experience only that teach incredulity, and they very seldom teach it enough. The wisest and most cautious of us all frequently gives credit to stories which he himself is afterwards both ashamed and astonished that he could possibly think of believing.

The man whom we believe is necessarily, in the things concerning which we believe him, our leader and director, and we look up to him with a certain degree of esteem and respect. But as from admiring other people we come to wish to be admired ourselves; so from being led and directed by other people we learn to wish to become ourselves leaders and directors. And as we cannot always be satisfied merely with being admired, unless we can at the same time persuade ourselves that we are in some degree really worthy of admiration; so we cannot always be satisfied merely with being believed, unless we are at the same time conscious that we are really worthy of belief. As the desire of praise and that of praise-worthiness, though very much a-kin, are yet distinct and separate desires; so the desire of being believed and that of being worthy of belief, though very much a-kin too, are equally distinct and separate desires.

The desire of being believed, the desire of persuading, of leading and directing other people, seems to be one of the strongest of all our natural desires. It is, perhaps, the instinct upon which is founded the faculty of speech, the characteristical faculty of human nature. No other animal possesses this faculty, and we cannot discover in any other animal any desire to lead and direct the judgment and conduct of its fellows. Great ambition, the desire of real superiority, of leading and directing, seems to be altogether peculiar to man, and speech is the great instrument of ambition, of real superiority, of leading and directing the judgments and conduct of other people.

It is always mortifying not to be believed, and it is doubly so when we suspect that it is because we are supposed to be unworthy of belief and capable of seriously and wilfully deceiving. To tell a man that he lies, is of all affronts the most mortal. But whoever seriously and wilfully deceives is necessarily conscious to himself that he merits this affront, that he does not deserve to be believed, and that he forfeits all title to that sort of credit from which alone he can derive any sort of ease, comfort, or satisfaction in the society of his equals. The man who had the misfortune to imagine that nobody believed a single word he said, would

feel himself the outcast of human society, would dread the very thought of going into it, or of presenting himself before it, and could scarce fail, I think, to die of despair. It is probable, however, that no man ever had just reason to entertain this humiliating opinion of himself. The most notorious liar, I am disposed to believe, tells the fair truth at least twenty times for once that he seriously and deliberately lies; and, as in the most cautious the disposition to believe is apt to prevail over that to doubt and distrust; so in those who are the most regardless of truth, the natural disposition to tell it prevails upon most occasions over that to deceive, or in any respect to alter or disguise it.

We are mortified when we happen to deceive other people, though unintentionally, and from having been ourselves deceived. Though this involuntary falsehood may frequently be no mark of any want of veracity, of any want of the most perfect love of truth, it is always in some degree a mark of want of judgment, of want of memory, of improper credulity, of some degree of precipitancy and rashness. It always diminishes our authority to persuade, and always brings some degree of suspicion upon our fitness to lead and direct. The man who sometimes misleads from mistake, however, is widely different from him who is capable of wilfully deceiving. The former may safely be trusted upon many occasions; the latter very seldom upon any.

Frankness and openness conciliate confidence. We trust the man who seems willing to trust us. We see clearly, we think, the road by which he means to conduct us, and we abandon ourselves with pleasure to his guidance and direction. Reserve and concealment, on the contrary, call forth diffidence. We are afraid to follow the man who is going we do not know where. The great pleasure of conversation and society, besides, arises from a certain correspondence of sentiments and opinions, from a certain harmony of minds, which like so many musical instruments coincide and keep time with one another. But this most delightful harmony cannot be obtained unless there is a free communication of sentiments and opinions. We all desire, upon this account, to feel how each other is affected, to penetrate into each other’s bosoms, and to observe the sentiments and affections which really subsist there. The man who indulges us in this natural passion, who invites us into his heart, who, as it were, sets open the gates of his breast to us, seems to exercise a species of hospitality more delightful than any other. No man, who is in ordinary good temper, can fail of pleasing, if he has the courage to utter his real sentiments as he feels them, and because he feels them. It is this unreserved sincerity which renders even the prattle of a

child agreeable. How weak and imperfect soever the views of the open-hearted, we take pleasure to enter into them, and endeavour, as much as we can, to bring down our own understanding to the level of their capacities, and to regard every subject in the particular light in which they appear to have considered it. This passion to discover the real sentiments of others is naturally so strong, that it often degenerates into a troublesome and impertinent curiosity to pry into those secrets of our neighbours which they have very justifiable reasons for concealing; and, upon many occasions, it requires prudence and a strong sense of propriety to govern this, as well as all the other passions of human nature, and to reduce it to that pitch which any impartial spectator can approve of. To disappoint this curiosity, however, when it is kept within proper bounds, and aims at nothing which there can be any just reason for concealing, is equally disagreeable in its turn. The man who eludes our most innocent questions, who gives no satisfaction to our most inoffensive inquiries, who plainly wraps himself up in impenetrable obscurity, seems, as it were, to build a wall about his breast. We run forward to get within it, with all the eagerness of harmless curiosity; and feel ourselves all at once pushed back with the rudest and most offensive violence.

The man of reserve and concealment, though seldom a very amiable character, is not disrespected or despised. He seems to feel coldly towards us, and we feel as coldly towards him. He is not much praised or beloved, but he is as little hated or blamed. He very seldom, however, has occasion to repent of his caution, and is generally disposed rather to value himself upon the prudence of his reserve. Though his conduct, therefore, may have been very faulty, and sometimes even hurtful, he can very seldom be disposed to lay his case before the casuists, or to fancy that he has any occasion for their acquittal or approbation.

It is not always so with the man, who, from false information, from inadvertency, from precipitancy and rashness, has involuntarily deceived. Though it should be in a matter of little consequence, in telling a piece of common news, for example, if he is a real lover of truth, he is ashamed of his own carelessness, and never fails to embrace the first opportunity of making the fullest acknowledgments. If it is in a matter of some consequence, his contrition is still greater; and if any unlucky or fatal consequence has followed from his misinformation, he can scarce ever forgive himself. Though not guilty, he feels himself to be in the highest degree, what the ancients called, piacular, and is anxious and eager to make every sort of atonement in his power. Such a person might

frequently be disposed to lay his case before the casuists, who have in general been very favourable to him, and though they have sometimes justly condemned him for rashness, they have universally acquitted him of the ignominy of falsehood.

But the man who had the most frequent occasion to consult them, was the man of equivocation and mental reservation, the man who seriously and deliberately meant to deceive, but who, at the same time, wished to flatter himself that he had really told the truth. With him they have dealt variously. When they approved very much of the motives of his deceit, they have sometimes acquitted him, though, to do them justice, they have in general and much more frequently condemned him.

The chief subjects of the works of the casuists, therefore, were the conscientious regard that is due to the rules of justice; how far we ought to respect the life and property of our neighbour; the duty of restitution; the laws of chastity and modesty, and wherein consisted what, in their language, are called the sins of concupiscence; the rules of veracity, and the obligation of oaths, promises, and contracts of all kinds.

It may be said in general of the works of the casuists that they attempted, to no purpose, to direct by precise rules what it belongs to feeling and sentiment only to judge of. How is it possible to ascertain by rules the exact point at which, in every case, a delicate sense of justice begins to run into a frivolous and weak scrupulosity of conscience? When it is that secrecy and reserve begin to grow into dissimulation? How far an agreeable irony may be carried, and at what precise point it begins to degenerate into a detest. able lie? What is the highest pitch of freedom and ease of behaviour which can be regarded as graceful and becoming, and when it is that it first begins to run into a negligent and thoughtless licentiousness? With regard to all such matters, what would hold good in any one case would scarce do so exactly in any other, and what constitutes the propriety and happiness of behaviour varies in every case with the smallest variety of situation. Books of casuistry, therefore, are generally as useless as they are commonly tiresome. They could be of little use to one who should consult them upon occasion, even supposing their decisions to be just; because, notwithstanding the multitude of cases collected in them, yet upon account of the still greater variety of possible circumstances, it is a chance, if among all those cases there be found one exactly parallel to that under consideration. One, who is really anxious to do his duty, must be very weak, if he can imagine that he has much occasion for them; and with regard to one who is negligent of it, the style of those writings is not such as is likely to awaken him to more attention.

None of them tend to animate us to what is generous and noble. None of them tend to soften us to what is gentle and humane. Many of them, on the contrary, tend rather to teach us to chicane with our own consciences, and by their vain subtilties serve to authorise innumerable evasive refinements with regard to the most essential articles of our duty. That frivolous accuracy which they attempted to introduce into subjects which do not admit of it, almost necessarily betrayed them into those dangerous errors, and at the same time rendered their works dry and disagreeable, abounding in abtruse and metaphysical distinctions, but incapable of exciting in the heart any of those emotions which it is the principal use of books of morality to excite.

The two useful parts of moral philosophy, therefore, are Ethics and Jurisprudence: casuistry ought to be rejected altogether; and the ancient moralists appear to have judged much better, who, in treating of the same subjects, did not affect any such nice exactness, but contented themselves with describing, in a general manner, what is the sentiment upon which justice, modesty, and veracity are founded, and what is the ordinary way of acting to which those virtues would commonly prompt us.

Something, indeed, not unlike the doctrine of the casuists, seems to have been attempted by several philosophers. There is something of this kind in the third book of Cicero’s Offices, where he endeavours like a casuist to give rules for our conduct in many nice cases, in which it is difficult to determine whereabouts the point of propriety may lie. It appears too, from many passages in the same book, that several other philosophers had attempted something of the same kind before him. Neither he nor they, however, appear to have aimed at giving a complete system of this sort, but only meant to show how situations may occur, in which it is doubtful, whether the highest propriety of conduct consists in observing or in receding from what, in ordinary cases, are the rules of duty.

Every system of positive law may be regarded as a more or less imperfect attempt towards a system of natural jurisprudence, or towards an enumeration of the particular rules of justice. As the violation of justice is what men will never submit to from one another, the public magistrate is under a necessity of employing the power of the commonwealth to enforce the practice of this virtue. Without this precaution, civil society would become a scene of bloodshed and disorder, every man revenging himself at his own hand whenever he fancied he was injured. To prevent the confusion which would attend

upon every man’s doing justice to himself, the magistrate, in all governments that have acquired any considerable authority, undertakes to do justice to all, and promises to hear and to redress every complaint of injury. In all well-governed states too, not only judges are appointed for determining the controversies of individuals, but rules are prescribed for regulating the decisions of those judges; and these rules are, in general, intended to coincide with those of natural justice. It does not, indeed, always happen that they do so in every instance. Sometimes what is called the constitution of the state, that is, the interest of the government; sometimes the interest of particular orders of men who tyrannize the government, warp the positive laws of the country from what natural justice would prescribe. In some countries, the rudeness and barbarism of the people hinder the natural sentiments of justice from arriving at that accuracy and precision which, in more civilized nations, they naturally attain to. Their laws are, like their manners, gross and rude and undistinguishing. In other countries the unfortunate constitution of their courts of judicature hinders any regular system of jurisprudence from ever establishing itself among them, though the improved manners of the people may be such as would admit of the most accurate. In no country do the decisions of positive law coincide exactly, in every case, with the rules which the natural sense of justice would dictate. Systems of positive law, therefore, though they deserve the greatest authority, as the records of the sentiments of mankind in different ages and nations, yet can never be regarded as accurate systems of the rules of natural justice.

It might have been expected that the reasonings of lawyers, upon the different imperfections and improvements of the laws of different countries, should have given occasion to an inquiry into what were the natural rules of justice independent of all positive institution. It might have been expected that these reasonings should have led them to aim at establishing a system of what might properly be called natural jurisprudence, or a theory of the general principles which ought to run through and be the foundation of the laws of all nations. But though the reasonings of lawyers did produce something of this kind, and though no man has treated systematically of the laws of any particular country, without intermixing in his work many observations of this sort; it was very late in the world before any such general system was thought of, or before the philosophy of law was treated of by itself, and without regard to the particular institutions of any one nation. In none of the ancient moralists, do we find any attempt towards a particular enumeration of the rules of justice. Cicero in his Offices, and Aristotle in his Ethics, treat of

justice in the same general manner in which they treat of all the other virtues. In the laws of Cicero and Plato, where we might naturally have expected some attempts towards an enumeration of those rules of natural equity, which ought to be enforced by the positive laws of every country, there is, however, nothing of this kind. Their laws are laws of police, not of justice. Grotius seems to have been the first who attempted to give the world any thing like a system of those principles which ought to ruin through, and be the foundation of the laws of all nations: and his treatise of the laws of war and peace, with all its imperfections, is perhaps at this day the most complete work that has yet been given upon this subject. I shall in another discourse endeavour to give an account of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in what concerns justice, but in what concerns police, revenue, and arms, and whatever else is the object of law. I shall not, therefore, at present enter into any further detail concerning the history of jurisprudence.

THE ORIGINS OF LANGUAGES

CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE FIRST FORMATION OF LANGUAGES, AND THE DIFFERENT GENIUS OF ORIGINAL AND COMPOUNDED LANGUAGES.

The assignation of particular names, to denote particular objects, that is, the institution of nouns substantive, would, probably, be one of the first steps towards the formation of language. Two savages, who had never been taught to speak, but had been bred up remote from the societies of men, would naturally begin to form that language by which they would endeavour to make their mutual wants intelligible to each other, by uttering certain sounds, whenever they meant to denote certain objects. Those objects only which were most familiar to them, and which they had most frequent occasion to mention, would have particular names assigned to them. The particular cave whose covering sheltered them from the weather, the particular tree whose fruit relieved their hunger, the particular fountain whose water allayed their thirst, would first be denominated by the words cave, tree, fountain, or by whatever other appellations they might think proper, in that primitive jargon, to mark them. Afterwards, when the more enlarged experience of these savages had led them to observe, and their necessary occasions obliged them to make mention of other caves, and other trees, and other fountains, they would naturally bestow, upon each of those new objects, the same name by which they had been accustomed to express the similar object they were first acquainted with. The new objects had none of them any name of its own, but each of them exactly resembled another object, which had such an appellation. It was impossible that those savages could behold the new objects, without recollecting the old ones; and the name of the old ones, to which the new bore so close a resemblance. When they had occasion, therefore, to mention, or to point out to each other, any of the new objects, they would naturally utter the name of the correspondent old one, of which the idea could not fail, at that instant, to present itself to their memory in the strongest and liveliest manner. And thus those words, which were originally the proper names of individuals, would each of them insensibly become the common name of a multitude. A child that is just learning to speak, calls every person who comes to

the house its papa, or its mamma; and thus bestows upon the whole species those names which it had been taught to apply to two individuals. I have known a clown, who did not know the proper name of the river which ran by his own door. It was the river, he said, and he never heard any other name for it. His experience, it seems, had not led him to observe any other river. The general word river, therefore, was, it is evident, in his acceptance of it, a proper name signifying an individual object. If this person had been carried to another river, would he not readily have called it a river? Could we suppose any person living on the banks of the Thames so ignorant as not to know the general word river, but to be acquainted only with the particular word Thames, if he was brought to any other river, would he not readily call it a Thames? This, in reality, is no more than what they, who are well acquainted with the general word, are very apt to do. An Englishman, describing any great river which he may have seen in some foreign country, naturally says, that it is another Thames. The Spaniards, when they first arrived upon the coast of Mexico, and observed the wealth, populousness, and habitations of that fine country, so much superior to the savage nations which they had been visiting for some time before, cried out that it was another Spain. Hence it was called New Spain; and this name has stuck to that unfortunate country ever since. We say, in the same manner, of a hero, that he is an Alexander; of an orator, that he is a Cicero, of a philosopher, that he is a Newton. This way of speaking, which the grammarians call an antonomasia, and which is still extremely common, though now not at all necessary, demonstrates how much all mankind are naturally disposed to give to one object the name of any other, which nearly resembles it, and thus to denominate a multitude, by what originally was intended to express an individual.

It is this application of the name of an individual to a great multitude of objects, whose resemblance naturally recalls the idea of that individual, and of the name which expresses it, that seems originally to have given occasion to the formation of those classes and assortments, which, in the schools, are called genera and species, and of which the ingenious and eloquent M. Rousseau, of Geneva,* finds himself so much at a loss to account for the origin. What constitutes a species is merely a number of objects, bearing a certain degree of resemblance to one another, and, on that account, denominated by a single appellation, which may be applied to express any one of them.

When the greater part of objects had thus been arranged under their proper classes and assortments, distinguished by such general names, it

was impossible that the greater part of that almost infinite number of individuals, comprehended under each particular assortment or species, could have any peculiar or proper names of their own, distinct from the general name of the species. When there was occasion, therefore, to mention any particular object, it often became necessary to distinguish it from the other objects comprehended under the same general name, either, first, by its peculiar qualities; or, secondly, by the peculiar relation which it stood in to some other things. Hence the necessary origin of two other sets of words, of which the one should express quality; the other, relation.

Nouns adjective are the words which express quality considered as qualifying, or, as the schoolmen say, in concrete with, some particular subject. Thus the word green expresses a certain quality considered as qualifying, or as in concrete with, the particular subject to which it may be applied. Words of this kind, it is evident, may serve to distinguish particular objects from others comprehended under the same general appellation. The words green tree, for example, might serve to distinguish a particular tree from others that were withered or blasted.

Prepositions are the words which express relation considered, in the same manner, in concrete with the correlative object. Thus the prepositions, of, to, for, with, by, above, below, &c. denote some relation subsisting between the objects expressed by the words between which the prepositions are placed; and they denote that this relation is considered in concrete with the correlative object. Words of this kind serve to distinguish particular objects from others of the same species, when those particular objects cannot be so properly marked out by any peculiar qualities of their own. When we say, the green tree of the meadow, for example, we distinguish a particular tree, not only by the quality which belongs to it, but by the relation which it stands in to another object.

As neither quality nor relation can exist in abstract, it is natural to suppose that the words which denote them considered in concrete, the way in which we always see them subsist, would be of much earlier invention than those which express them considered in abstract, the way in which we never see them subsist. The words green and blue would, in all probability, be sooner invented than the words greenness and blueness; the words above and below, than the words superiority and inferiority. To invent words of the latter kind requires a much greater effort of abstraction than to invent those of the former. It is probable, therefore, that such abstract terms would be of much later institution.

Accordingly, their etymologies generally shew that they are so, they being generally derived from others that are concrete.

But though the invention of nouns adjective be much more natural than that of the abstract nouns substantive derived from them, it would still, however, require a considerable degree of abstraction and generalization. Those, for example, who first invented the words green, blue, red, and the other names of colours, must have observed and compared together a great number of objects, must have remarked their resemblances and dissimilitudes in respect of the quality of colour, and must have arranged them, in their own minds, into different classes and assortments, according to those resemblances and dissimilitudes. An adjective is by nature a general, and, in some measure, an abstract word, and necessarily presupposes the idea of a certain species or assortment of things, to all of which it is equally applicable. The word green could not, as we were supposing might be the case of the word cave, have been originally the name of an individual, and afterwards have become, by what grammarians call an antonomasia, the name of a species. The word green denoting, not the name of a substance, but the peculiar quality of a substance, must, from the very first, have been a general word, and considered as equally applicable to any other substance possessed of the same quality. The man who first distinguished a particular object by the epithet of green, must have observed other objects that were not green, from which he meant to separate it by this appellation. The institution of this name, therefore, supposes comparison. It likewise supposes some degree of abstraction. The person who first invented this appellation must have distinguished the quality from the object to which it belonged, and must have conceived the object as capable of subsisting without the quality. The invention, therefore, even of the simplest nouns adjective must have required more metaphysics than we are apt to be aware of. The different mental operations, of arrangement or classing, of comparison, and of abstraction, must all have been employed, before even the names of the different colours, the least metaphysical of all nouns adjective, could be instituted. From all which I infer, that when languages were beginning to be formed, nouns adjective would by no means be the words of the earliest invention.

There is another expedient for denoting the different qualities of different substances, which, as it requires no abstraction, nor any conceived separation of the quality from the subject, seems more natural than the invention of nouns adjective, and which, upon this account, could hardly fail, in the first formation of language, to be thought of

before them. This expedient is to make some variation upon the noun substantive itself, according to the different qualities which it is endowed with. Thus, in many languages, the qualities both of sex and the want of sex are expressed by different terminations in the nouns substantive, which denote objects so qualified. In Latin, for example, lupus, lupa; equus, equa; juvencus, juvenca; Julius, Julia; Lucretius, Lucretia, &c., denote the qualities of male and female in the animals and persons to whom such appellations belong, without needing the addition of any adjective for this purpose. On the other hand, the words forum, pratum, plaustrum, denote, by their peculiar termination, the total absence of sex in the different substances which they stand for. Both sex and the want of all sex being naturally considered as qualities modifying and inseparable from the particular substances to which they belong, it was natural to express them rather by a modification in the noun substantive than by any general and abstract word expressive of this particular species of quality. The expression bears, it is evident, in this way, a much more exact analogy to the idea or object which it denotes than in the other. The quality appears in nature as a modification of the substance, and as it is thus expressed in language by a modification of the noun substantive which denotes that substance, the quality and the subject are in this case blended together, if I may say so, in the expression, in the same manner as they appear to be in the object and in the idea. Hence the origin of the masculine, feminine, and neutral genders, in all the ancient languages. By means of these, the most important of all distinctions, that of substances into animated and inanimated, and that of animals into male and female, seem to have been sufficiently marked without the assistance of adjectives, or of any general names denoting this most extensive species of qualifications.

There are no more than these three genders in any of the languages with which I am acquainted; that is to say, the formation of nouns substantive can, by itself, and without the accompaniment of adjectives, express no other qualities but those three above mentioned — the qualities of male, of female, of neither male nor female. I should not, however, be surprised if, in other languages with which I am unacquainted, the different formations of nouns substantive should be capable of expressing many other different qualities. The different diminutives of the Italian, and of some other languages, do in reality sometimes express a great variety of different modifications in the substances denoted by those nouns which undergo such variations.

It was impossible, however, that nouns substantive could, without losing altogether their original form, undergo so great a number of variations as would be sufficient to express that almost infinite variety of qualities by which it might, upon different occasions, be necessary to specify and distinguish them. Though the different formation of nouns substantive, therefore, might for some time forestall the necessity of inventing nouns adjective, it was impossible that this necessity could be forestalled altogether. When nouns adjective came to be invented, it was natural that they should be formed with some similarity to the substantives to which they were to serve as epithets or qualifications. Men would naturally give them the same terminations with the substantives to which they were first applied, and from that love of similarity of sound, from that delight in the returns of the same syllables, which is the foundation of analogy in all languages, they would be apt to vary the termination of the same adjective according as they had occasion to apply it to a masculine, to a feminine, or to a neutral substantive. They would say, magnus lupus, magna lupa, magnum pratum, when they meant to express a great he-wolf, a great she-wolf, a great meadow.

This variation in the termination of the noun adjective according to the gender of the substantive, which takes place in all the ancient languages, seems to have been introduced chiefly for the sake of a certain similarity of sound, of a certain species of rhyme, which is naturally so very agreeable to the human ear. Gender, it is to be observed, cannot properly belong to a noun adjective, the signification of which is always precisely the same, to whatever species of substantives it is applied. When we say, a great man, a great woman, the word great has precisely the same meaning in both cases, and the difference of the sex in the subjects to which it may be applied makes no sort of difference in its signification. Magnus, magna, magnum, in the same manner, are words which express precisely the same quality, and the change of the termination is accompanied with no sort of variation in the meaning. Sex and gender are qualities which belong to substances, but cannot belong to the qualities of substances. In general, no quality, when considered in concrete, or as qualifying some particular subject, can itself be conceived as the subject of any other quality; though, when considered in abstract, it may. No adjective, therefore, can qualify any other adjective. A great good man, means a man who is both great and good. Both the adjectives qualify the substantive; they do not qualify one another. On the other hand, when we say, the great goodness of the man, the word goodness

denoting a quality considered in abstract, which may itself be the subject of other qualities, is, upon that account, capable of being qualified by the word great.

If the original invention of nouns adjective would be attended with so much difficulty, that of prepositions would be accompanied with yet more. Every preposition, as I have already observed, denotes some relation considered in concrete with the correlative object. The preposition above, for example, denotes the relation of superiority, not in abstract, as it is expressed by the word superiority, but in concrete with some correlative object. In this phrase, for example, the tree above the cave, the word above expresses a certain relation between the tree and the cave, and it expresses this relation in concrete with the correlative object, the cave. A preposition always requires, in order to complete the sense, some other word to come after it; as may be observed in this particular instance. Now, I say, the original invention of such words would require a yet greater effort of abstraction and generalization than that of nouns adjective. First of all, a relation is in itself a more metaphysical object than a quality. Nobody can be at a loss to explain what is meant by a quality; but few people will find themselves able to express, very distinctly, what is understood by a relation. Qualities are almost always the objects of our external senses; relations never are. No wonder, therefore, that the one set of objects should be so much more comprehensible than the other. Secondly, though prepositions always express the relation which they stand for, in concrete with the correlative object, they could not have originally been formed without a considerable effort of abstraction. A preposition denotes a relation, and nothing but a relation. But before men could institute a word which signified a relation, and nothing but a relation, they must have been able, in some measure, to consider this relation abstractedly from the related objects; since the idea of those objects does not, in any respect, enter into the signification of the preposition. The invention of such a word, therefore, must have required a considerable degree of abstraction. Thirdly, a preposition is, from its nature, a general word, which, from its very first institution, must have been considered as equally applicable to denote any other similar relation. The man who first invented the word above, must not only have distinguished, in some measure, the relation of superiority from the objects which were so related, but he must also have distinguished this relation from other relations, such as, from the relation of inferiority denoted by the word below, from the relation of juxtaposition, expressed by the word beside, and the like. He must have

conceived this word, therefore, as expressive of a particular sort or species of relation distinct from every other, which could not be done without a considerable effort of comparison and generalization.

Whatever were the difficulties, therefore, which embarrassed the first invention of nouns adjective, the same, and many more, must have embarrassed that of prepositions. If mankind, therefore, in the first formation of languages, seem to have for some time evaded the necessity of nouns adjective, by varying the termination of the names of substances, according as these varied in some of their most important qualities, they would much more find themselves under the necessity of evading, by some similar contrivance, the yet more difficult invention of prepositions. The different cases in the ancient languages is a contrivance of precisely the same kind. The genitive and dative cases, in Greek and Latin, evidently supply the place of the prepositions; and by a variation in the noun substantive, which stands for the correlative term, express the relation which subsists between what is denoted by that noun substantive, and what is expressed by some other word in the sentence. In these expressions, for example, fructus arboris, the fruit of the tree; sacer Herculi, sacred to Hercules; the variations made in the correlative words, arbor and Hercules, express the same relations which are expressed in English by the prepositions of and to.

To express a relation in this manner, did not require any effort of abstraction. It was not here expressed by a peculiar word denoting relation, and nothing but relation, but by a variation upon the correlative term. It was expressed here, as it appears in nature, not as something separated and detached, but as thoroughly mixed and blended with the correlative object.

To express relation in this manner, did not require any effort of generalization. The words aboris and Herculi, while they involve in their signification the same relation expressed by the English prepositions of and to, are not, like those prepositions, general words, which can be applied, to express the same relation between whatever other objects it might be observed to subsist.

To express relation in this manner did not require any effort of comparison. The words arboris and Herculi are not general words intended to denote a particular species of relations, which the inventors of those expressions meant, in consequence of some sort of comparison, to separate and distinguish from every other sort of relation. The example, indeed, of this contrivance would soon probably be followed, and whoever had occasion to express a similar relation between any

other objects, would be very apt to do it by making a similar variation on the name of the correlative object. This, I say, would probably, or rather certainly happen; but it would happen without any intention or foresight in those who first set the example, and who never meant to establish any general rule. The general rule would establish itself insensibly, and by slow degrees, in consequence of that love of analogy and similarity of sound which is the foundation of by far the greater part of the rules of grammar.

To express relation, therefore, by a variation in the name of the correlative object, requiring neither abstraction nor generalization, nor comparison of any kind, would, at first, be much more natural and easy, than to express it by those general words called prepositions, of which the first invention must have demanded some degree of all those operations.

The number of cases is different in different languages. There are five in the Greek, six in the Latin, and there are said to be ten in the Armenian language. It must have naturally happened that there should be a greater or a smaller number of cases, according as in the terminations of nouns substantive the first formers of any language happened to have established a greater or a smaller number of variations, in order to express the different relations they had occasion to take notice of, before the invention of those more general and abstract prepositions which could supply their place.

It is, perhaps, worth while to observe, that those prepositions which, in modern languages, hold the place of the ancient cases, are, of all others, the most general, and abstract, and metaphysical; and, of consequence, would probably be the last invented. Ask any man of common acuteness, what relation is expressed by the preposition above, and he will readily answer, that of superiority. By the preposition below, and he will as quickly reply, that of inferiority. But ask him, what relation is expressed by the preposition of, and, if he has not before-hand employed his thoughts a good deal upon these subjects, you may safely allow him a week to consider of his answer. The prepositions above and below do not denote any of the relations expressed by the cases in the ancient languages. But the preposition of denotes the same relation which is in them expressed by the genitive case, and which it is easy to observe, is of a very metaphysical nature. The preposition of denotes relation in general, considered in concrete with the correlative object. It marks that the noun substantive which goes before it, is somehow or other related to that which comes after it, but without in any respect

ascertaining, as is done by the preposition above, what is the peculiar nature of that relation. We often apply it, therefore, to express the most opposite relations, because the most opposite relations agree so far, that each of them comprehends in it the general idea or nature of a relation. We say, the father of the son, and the son of the father; the fir-trees of the forest, and the forest of the fir-trees. The relation in which the father stands to the son, is, it is evident, a quite opposite relation to that in which the son stands to the father; that in which the parts stand to the whole, is quite opposite to that in which the whole stands to the parts. The word of, however, serves very well to denote all those relations, because in itself it denotes no particular relation, but only relation in general; and so far as any particular relation is collected from such expressions, it is inferred by the mind, not from the preposition itself, but from the nature and arrangement of the substantives, between which the preposition is placed.

What I have said concerning the preposition of, may, in some measure, be applied to the prepositions to, for, with, by, and to whatever other prepositions are made use of in modern languages, to supply the place of the ancient cases. They all of them express very abstract and metaphysical relations, which any man who takes the trouble to try it will find it extremely difficult to express by nouns substantive, in the same manner as we may express the relation denoted by the preposition above, by the noun substantive superiority. They all of them, however, express some specific relation, and are, consequently, none of them so abstract as the preposition of, which may be regarded as by far the most metaphysical of all prepositions. The prepositions, therefore, which are capable of supplying the place of the ancient cases, being more abstract than the other prepositions, would naturally be of more difficult invention. The relations, at the same time, which those prepositions express, are, of all others, those which we have most frequent occasion to mention. The prepositions above, below, near, within, without, against, &c. are much more rarely made use of in modern languages than the prepositions of, to, for, with, from, by. A preposition of the former kind will not occur twice in a page; we can scarce compose a single sentence without the assistance of one or two of the latter. If these latter prepositions, therefore, which supply the place of the cases, would be of such difficult invention, on account of their abstractedness, some expedient to supply their place must have been of indispensable necessity, on account of the frequent occasion which men have to take

notice of the relations which they denote. But there is no expedient so obvious, as that of varying the termination of one of the principal words.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to observe that there are some of the cases in the ancient languages, which, for particular reasons, cannot be represented by any prepositions. These are the nominative, accusative, and vocative cases. In those modern languages which do not admit of any such variety in the terminations of their nouns substantive, the correspondent relations are expressed by the place of the words, and by the order and construction of the sentence.

As men have frequently occasion to make mention of multitudes as well as of single objects, it became necessary that they should have some method of expressing number. Number may be expressed either by a particular word, expressing number in general, such as the words many, more, &c. or by some variation upon the words which express the things numbered. It is this last expedient which mankind would probably have recourse to in the infancy of language. Number, considered in general, without relation to any particular set of objects numbered, is one of the most abstract and metaphysical ideas which the mind of man is capable of forming; and, consequently, is not an idea which would readily occur to rude mortals who were just beginning to form a language. They would naturally, therefore, distinguish when they talked of a single, and when they talked of a multitude of objects, not by any metaphysical adjectives, such as the English a, an, many, but by a variation upon the termination of the word which signified the objects numbered. Hence the origin of the singular and plural numbers in all the ancient languages; and the same distinction has likewise bean retained in all the modern languages, at least in the greater part of words.

All primitive and uncompounded languages seem to have a dual as well as a plural number. This is the case of the Greek, and, I am told, of the Hebrew; of the Gothic, and of many other languages. In the rude beginnings of society, one, two, and more, might possibly be all the numeral distinctions which mankind would have any occasion to take notice of. These they would find it more natural to express, by a variation upon every particular noun substantive, than by such general and abstract words as one, two, three, four, &c. These words, though custom has rendered them familiar to us, express, perhaps, the most subtile and refined abstractions which the mind of man is capable of forming. Let any one consider within himself, for example, what he means by the word three, which signifies neither three shillings, nor three pence, nor three men, nor three horses, but three in general; and he will easily

satisfy himself that a word, which denotes so very metaphysical an abstraction, could not be either a very obvious or a very early invention. I have read of some savage nations, whose language was capable of expressing no more than the three first numeral distinctions. But whether it expressed those distinctions by three general words, or by variations upon the nouns substantive, denoting the things numbered, I do not remember to have met with any thing which could determine.

As all the same relations which subsist between single may likewise subsist between numerous objects, it is evident there would be occasion for the same number of cases in the dual and in the plural, as in the singular number. Hence the intricacy and complexness of the declensions in all the ancient languages. In the Greek there are five cases in each of the three numbers, consequently fifteen in all.

As nouns adjective, in the ancient languages, varied their terminations according to the gender of the substantive to which they were applied, so did they likewise, according to the case and the number. Every noun adjective in the Greek language, therefore, having three genders, and three numbers, and five cases in each number, may be considered as having five-and-forty different variations. The first formers of language seem to have varied the termination of the adjective, according to the case and the number of the substantive, for the same reason which made them vary it according to the gender; the love of analogy, and of a certain regularity of sound. In the signification of adjectives, there is neither case nor number, and the meaning of such words is always precisely the same, notwithstanding all the variety of termination under which they appear. Magnus vir, magni viri, magnorum virorum, a great man, of a great man, of great men; in all these expressions the words magnus, magni, magnorum, as well as the word great, have precisely one and the same signification, though the substantives to which they are applied have not. The difference of termination in the noun adjective is accompanied with no sort of difference in the meaning. An adjective denotes the qualification of a noun substantive. But the different relations in which that noun substantive may occasionally stand, can make no sort of difference upon its qualification.

If the declensions of the ancient languages are so very complex, their conjugations are infinitely more so. And the complexness of the one is founded upon the same principle with that of the other, the difficulty of forming, in the beginnings of language, abstract and general terms.

Verbs must necessarily have been coëval with the very first attempts towards the formation of language. No affirmation can be expressed without the assistance of some verb. We never speak, but in order to express our opinion that something either is, or is not. But the word denoting this event, or this matter of fact, which is the subject of our affirmation, must always be a verb.

Impersonal verbs, which express in one word a complete event, which preserve in the expression that perfect simplicity and unity which there always is in the object and in the idea, and which suppose no abstraction or metaphysical division of the event into its several constitutent members of subject and attribute, would, in all probability, be the species of verbs first invented. The verbs pluit, it rains; ningit, it snows; tonat, it thunders; lucet, it is day; turbatur, there is a confusion, &c. each of them express a complete affirmation, the whole of an event, with that perfect simplicity and unity with which the mind conceives it in nature. On the contrary, the phrases, Alexander ambulat, Alexander walks; Petrus sedet, Peter sits, divide the event, as it were, in two parts, the person or subject, and the attribute, or matter of fact, affirmed of that subject. But in nature, the idea or conception of Alexander walking, is as perfectly and completely one simple conception, as that of Alexander not walking. The division of this event, therefore, into two parts, is altogether artificial, and is the effect of the imperfection of language, which, upon this, as upon many other occasions, supplies, by a number of words, the want of one, which could express at once the whole matter of fact that was meant to be affirmed. Every body must observe how much more simplicity there is in the natural expression, pluit, than in the more artificial expressions, imber decidit, the rain falls; or tempestas est pluvia, the weather is rainy. In these two last expressions, the simple event, or matter of fact, is artificially split and divided, in the one, into two; in the other, into three parts. In each of them it is expressed by a sort of grammatical circumlocution, of which the significancy is founded upon a certain metaphysical analysis of the component parts of the idea expressed by the word pluit. The first verbs, therefore, perhaps even the first words, made use of in the beginnings of language, would, in all probability, be such impersonal verbs. It is observed accordingly, I am told by the Hebrew grammarians, that the radical words of their language, from which all the others are derived, are all of them verbs, and impersonal verbs.

It is easy to conceive how, in the progress of language, those impersonal verbs should become personal. Let us suppose, for example,

that the word venit, it comes, was originally an impersonal verb, and that it denoted, not the coming of something in general, as at present, but the coming of a particular object, such as the lion. The first savage inventors of language, we shall suppose, when they observed the approach of this terrible animal, were accustomed to cry out to one another, venit, that is, the lion comes; and that this word thus expressed a complete event, without the assistance of any other. Afterwards, when, on the further progress of language, they had begun to give names to particular substances, whenever they observed the approach of any other terrible object, they would naturally join the name of that object to the word venit, and cry out, venit ursus, venit lupus. By degrees the word venit would thus come to signify the coming of any terrible object, and not merely the coming of the lion. It would now, therefore, express, not the coming of a particular object, but the coming of an object of a particular kind. Having become more general in its signification, it could no longer represent any particular distinct event by itself, and without the assistance of a noun substantive, which might serve to ascertain and determine its signification. It would now, therefore, have become a personal, instead of an impersonal verb. We may easily conceive how, in the further progress of society, it might still grow more general in its signification, and come to signify, as at present, the approach of any thing whatever, whether good, bad, or indifferent.

It is probably in some such manner as this that almost all verbs have become personal, and that mankind have learned, by degrees, to split and divide almost every event into a great number of metaphysical parts, expressed by the different parts of speech, variously combined in the different members of every phrase and sentence.* The same sort of progress seems to have been made in the art of speaking as in the art of writing. When mankind first began to attempt to express their ideas by writing, every character represented a whole word. But the number of words being almost infinite, the memory found itself quite loaded and oppressed by the multitude of characters which it was obliged to retain. Necessity taught them, therefore to divide words into their elements, and to invent characters which should represent, not the words themselves, but the elements of which they are composed. In consequence of this invention, every particular word came to be represented, not by one character, but by a multitude of characters; and the expression of it in writing became much more intricate and complex than before. But though particular words were thus represented by a greater number of characters, the whole language was expressed by a much smaller, and

about four-and-twenty letters were found capable of supplying the place of that immense multitude of characters which were requisite before. In the same manner, in the beginnings of language, men seem to have attempted to express every particular event, which they had occasion to take notice of, by a particular word, which expressed at once the whole of that event. But as the number of words must, in this case, have become really infinite, in consequence of the really infinite variety of events, men found themselves partly compelled by necessity, and partly conducted by nature, to divide every event into what may be called its metaphysical elements, and to institute words, which should denote not so much the events, as the elements of which they were composed. The expression of every particular event became, in this manner, more intricate and complex, but the whole system of the language became more coherent, more connected, more easily retained and comprehended.

When verbs, from being originally impersonal, had thus, by the division of the event into its metaphysical elements, become personal, it is natural to suppose that they would first be made use of in the third person singular. No verb is ever used impersonally in our language, nor, so far as I know, in any other modern tongue. But in the ancient languages, whenever any verb is used impersonally, it is always in the third person singular. The termination of those verbs, which are still always impersonal, is constantly the same with that of the third person singular of personal verbs. The consideration of these circumstances, joined to the naturalness of the thing itself, may serve to convince us that verbs first became personal in what is now called the third person singular.

But as the event, or matter of fact which is expressed by a verb, may be affirmed either of the person who speaks, or of the person who is spoken to, as well as of some third person or object, it became necessary to fall upon some method of expressing these two peculiar relations of the event. In the English language this is commonly done by prefixing what are called the personal pronouns to the general word which expresses the event affirmed. I came, you came, he or it came; in these phrases the event of having come is, in the first, affirmed of the speaker; in the second, of the person spoken to; in the third, of some other person or object. The first formers of language, it may be imagined, might have done the same thing, and prefixing in the same manner the two first personal pronouns to the same termination of the verb which expressed the third person singular, might have said ego venit, tu venit, as well as

ille or illud venit. And I make no doubt but they would have done so, if, at the time when they had first occasion to express these relations of the verb, there had been any such words as either ego or tu in their language. But in this early period of the language which we are now endeavouring to describe, it is extremely improbable that any such words would be known. Though custom has now rendered them familiar to us, they, both of them, express ideas extremely metaphysical and abstract. The word I, for example, is a word of a very particular species. Whatever speaks may denote itself by this personal pronoun. The word I, therefore, is a general word, capable of being predicated, as the logicians say, of an infinite variety of objects. It differs, however, from all other general words in this respect, that the objects of which it may be predicated, do not form any particular species of objects, distinguished from all others. The word I, does not, like the word man, denote a particular class of objects, separated from all others by peculiar qualities of their own. It is far from being the name of a species, but, on the contrary, whenever it is made use of, it always denotes a precise individual, the particular person who then speaks. It may be said to be, at once, both what the logicians call a singular, and what they call a common term, and to join in its signification the seemingly opposite qualities of the most precise individuality, and the most extensive generalization. This word, therefore, expressing so very abstract and metaphysical an idea, would not easily or readily occur to the first formers of language. What are called the personal pronouns, it may be observed, are among the last words of which children learn to make use. A child, speaking of itself, says, Billy walks, Billy sits, instead of I walk, I sit. As in the beginnings of language, therefore, mankind seem to have evaded the invention of at least the more abstract prepositions, and to have expressed the same relations which these now stand for, by varying the termination of the correlative term, so they likewise would naturally attempt to evade the necessity of inventing those more abstract pronouns, by varying the termination of the verb according as the event which it expressed was intended to be affirmed of the first, second, or third person. This seems, accordingly, to be the universal practice of all the ancient languages. In Latin, veni, venisti, venit, sufficiently denote, without any other addition, the different events expressed by the English phrases, I came, you came, he or it came. The verb would, for the same reason, vary its termination, according as the event was intended to be affirmed of the first, second, or third persons plural; and what is expressed by the English phrases, we came, ye came, they came, would be denoted by the Latin words,

venimus, venistis, venerunt. Those primitive languages, too, which, upon account of the difficulty of inventing numeral names, had introduced a dual as well as a plural number into the declension of their nouns substantive, would probably, from analogy, do the same thing in the conjugations of their verbs. And thus, in all those original languages, we might expect to find at least six, if not eight or nine variations, in the termination of every verb, according as the event which it denoted was meant to be affirmed of the first, second, or third persons singular, dual, or plural. These variations again being repeated, along with others, through all its different tenses, through all its different modes, and through all its different voices, must necessarily have rendered their conjugations still more intricate and complex than their declensions.

Language would probably have continued upon this footing in all countries, nor would ever have grown more simple in its declensions and conjugations, had it not become more complex in its composition, in consequence of the mixture of several languages with one another, occasioned by the mixture of different nations. As long as any language was spoken by those only who learned it in their infancy, the intricacy of its declensions and conjugations could occasion no great embarrassment. The far greater part of those who had occasion to speak it, had acquired it at so very early a period of their lives, so insensibly, and by such slow degrees, that they were scarce ever sensible of the difficulty. But when two nations came to be mixed with one another, either by conquest or migration, the case would be very different. Each nation, in order to make itself intelligible to those with whom it was under the necessity of conversing, would be obliged to learn the language of the other. The greater part of individuals too, learning the new language, not by art, or by remounting to its rudiments and first principles, but by rote, and by what they commonly heard in conversation, would be extremely perplexed by the intricacy of its declensions and conjugations. They would endeavour, therefore, to supply their ignorance of these, by whatever shift the language could afford them. Their ignorance of the declensions they would naturally supply by the use of prepositions; and a Lombard, who was attempting to speak Latin, and wanted to express that such a person was a citizen of Rome, or a benefactor to Rome, if he happened not to be acquainted with the genitive and dative cases of the word Roma, would naturally express himself by prefixing the prepositions ad and de to the nominative, and, instead of Romæ, would say, ad Roma, and de Roma. Al Roma and di Roma, accordingly, is the manner in which the present Italians, the descendants of the ancient

Lombards and Romans, express this and all other similar relations. And in this manner prepositions seem to have been introduced in the room of the ancient declensions. The same alteration has, I am informed, been produced upon the Greek language, since the taking of Constantinople by the Turks. The words are, in a great measure, the same as before; but the grammar is entirely lost, prepositions having come in the place of the old declensions. This change is undoubtedly a simplification of the language, in point of rudiments and principle. It introduces, instead of a great variety of declensions, one universal declension, which is the same in every word, of whatever gender, number, or termination.

A similar expedient enables men, in the situation above mentioned, to get rid of almost the whole intricacy of their conjugations. There is in every language a verb, known by the name of the substantive verb; in Latin, sum; in English, I am. This verb denotes not the existence of any particular event, but existence in general. It is, upon this account, the most abstract and metapyhsical of all verbs; and, consequently, could by no means be a word of early invention. When it came to be invented, however, as it had all the tenses and modes of any other verb, by being joined with the passive participle, it was capable of supplying the place of the whole passive voice, and of rendering this part of their conjugations as simple and uniform as the use of prepositions had rendered their declensions. A Lombard who wanted to say, I am loved, but could not recollect the word amor, naturally endeavoured to supply his ignorance by saying, ego sum amatus. Io sono amato, is at this day the Italian expression, which corresponds to the English phrase above mentioned.

There is another verb, which, in the same manner, runs through all languages, and which is distinguished by the name of the possessive verb; in Latin, habeo; in English, I have. This verb likewise denotes an event of an extremely abstract and metaphysical nature, and, consequently, cannot be supposed to have been a word of the earliest invention. When it came to be invented, however, by being applied to the passive participle, it was capable of supplying a great part of the active voice, as the substantive verb had supplied the whole of the passive. A Lombard who wanted to say, I had loved, but could not recollect the word amaveram, would endeavour to supply the place of it by saying either ego habebam amatum, or ego habui amatum. Io aveva amato, or Io ebbi amato, are the correspondent Italian expressions at this day. And thus, upon the intermixture of different nations with one another, the

conjugations, by means of different auxiliary verbs, were made to approach towards the simplicity and uniformity of the declensions.

In general, it may be laid down for a maxim, that the more simple any language is in its composition, the more complex it must be in its declensions and conjugations; and, on the contrary, the more simple it is in its declensions and conjugations, the more complex it must be in its composition.

The Greek seems to be, in a great measure, a simple, uncompounded language, formed from the primitive jargon of those wandering savages, the ancient Hellenians and Pelasgians, from whom the Greek nation is said to have been descended. All the words in the Greek language are derived from about three hundred primitives, a plain evidence that the Greeks formed their language almost entirely among themselves, and that when they had occasion for a new word, they were not accustomed, as we are, to borrow it from some foreign language, but to form it either by composition or derivation from some other word or words in their own. The declensions and conjugations, therefore, of the Greek, are much more complex than those of any other European language with which I am acquainted.

The Latin is a composition of the Greek and of the ancient Tuscan languages. Its declensions and conjugations, accordingly, are much less complex than those of the Greek; it has dropt the dual number in both. Its verbs have no optative mood distinguished by any peculiar termination. They have but one future. They have no aorist distinct from the preterite-perfect; they have no middle voice; and even many of their tenses in the passive voice are eked out, in the same manner as in the modern languages, by the help of the substantive verb joined to the passive participle. In both the voices, the number of infinitives and participles is much smaller in the Latin than in the Greek.

The French and Italian languages are each of them compounded, the one of the Latin, and the language of the ancient Franks, the other of the same Latin, and the language of the ancient Lombards. As they are both of them, therefore, more complex in their composition than the Latin, so are they likewise more simple in their declensions and conjugations. With regard to their declensions, they have both of them lost their cases altogether; and with regard to their conjugations, they have both of them lost the whole of the passive and some part of the active voices of their verbs. The want of the passive voice they supply entirely by the substantive verb joined to the passive participle; and they make out part

of the active in the same manner by the help of the possessive verb and the same passive participle.

The English is compounded of the French and the ancient Saxon languages. The French was introduced into Britain by the Norman conquest, and continued, till the time of Edward III., to be the sole language of the law, as well as the principal language of the court. The English, which came to be spoken afterwards, and which continues to be spoken now, is a mixture of the ancient Saxon and this Norman French. As the English language, therefore, is more complex in its composition than either the French or the Italian, so is it likewise more simple in its declensions and conjugations. Those two languages retain at least a part of the distinction of genders, and their adjectives vary their termination according as they are applied to a masculine or to a feminine substantive. But there is no such distinction in the English language, whose adjectives admit of no variety of termination. The French and Italian languages have both of them the remains of a conjugation; and all those tenses of the active voice which cannot be expressed by the possessive verb joined to the passive participle, as well as many of those which can, are in those languages marked by varying the termination of the principal verb. But almost all those other tenses are in the English eked out by other auxiliary verbs, so that there is in this language scarce even the remains of a conjugation. I love, I loved, loving, are all the varieties of termination which the greater part of English verbs admit of. All the different modifications of meaning, which cannot be expressed by any of those three terminations, must be made out by different auxiliary verbs joined to some one or other of them. Two auxiliary verbs supply all the deficiencies of the French and Italian conjugations; it requires more than half a dozen to supply those of the English, which, besides the substantive and possessive verbs, makes use of do, did; will, would; shall, should; can, could; may, might.

It is in this manner that language becomes more simple in its rudiments and principles, just in proportion as it grows more complex in its composition, and the same thing has happened in it which commonly happens with regard to mechanical engines. All machines are generally, when first invented, extremely complex in their principles, and there is often a particular principle of motion for every particular movement which it is intended they should perform. Succeeding improvers observe, that one principle may be so applied as to produce several of those movements; and thus the machine becomes gradually more and more simple, and produces its effects with fewer wheels and fewer principles

of motion. In language, in the same manner, every case of every noun, and every tense of every verb, was originally expressed by a particular distinct word, which served for this purpose and for no other. But succeeding observation discovered, that one set of words was capable of supplying the place of all that infinite number, and that four or five prepositions, and half a dozen auxiliary verbs, were capable of answering the end of all the declensions and of all the conjugations in the ancient languages.

But this simplification of languages, though it arises, perhaps, from similar causes, has, by no means, similar effects with the correspondent simplification of machines. The simplification of machines renders them more and more perfect, but this simplification of the rudiments of languages renders them more and more imperfect, and less proper for many of the purposes of language; and this for the following reasons.

First of all: Languages are by this simplification rendered more prolix, several words having become necessary to express what could have been expressed by a single word before. Thus the words Dei and Deo, in the Latin, sufficiently shew, without any addition, what relation the object signified is understood to stand in to the objects expressed by the other words in the sentence. But to express the same relation in English, and in all other modern languages, we must make use of, at least, two words, and say, of God, to God. So far as the declensions are concerned, therefore, the modern languages are much more prolix than the ancient. The difference is still greater with regard to the conjugations. What a Roman expressed by the single word amavissem, an Englishman is obliged to express by four different words, I should have loved. It is unnecessary to take any pains to shew how much this prolixness must enervate the eloquence of all modern languages. How much the beauty of any expression depends upon its conciseness, is well known to those who have any experience in composition.

Secondly, This simplification of the principles of languages renders them less agreeable to the ear. The variety of termination in the Greek and Latin, occasioned by their declensions and conjugations, gives a sweetness to their language altogether unknown to ours, and a variety unknown to any other modern language. In point of sweetness, the Italian, perhaps, may surpass the Latin, and almost equal the Greek; but in point of variety, it is greatly inferior to both.

Thirdly, This simplification not only renders the sounds of our language less agreeable to the ear, but it also restrains us from disposing such sounds as we have, in the manner that might be most agreeable. It

ties down many words to a particular situation, though they might often be placed in another with much more beauty. In the Greek and Latin, though the adjective and substantive were separated from one another, the correspondence of their terminations still shewed their mutual reference, and the separation did not necessarily occasion any sort of confusion. Thus, in the first line of Virgil,

Tityre tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi;

we easily see that tu refers to recubans, and patulæ to fagi; though the related words are separated from one another by the intervention of several others; because the terminations, shewing the correspondence of their cases, determine their mutual reference. But if we were to translate this line literally into English, and say, Tityrus, thou of spreading reclining under the shade beech, Œdipus himself could not make sense of it; because there is here no difference of termination, to determine which substantive each adjective belongs to. It is the same case with regard to verbs. In Latin the verb may often be placed, without any inconvenience or ambiguity, in any part of the sentence. But in English its place is almost always precisely determined. It must follow the subjective and precede the objective member of the phrase in almost all cases. Thus in Latin, whether you say, Joannem verberavit Robertus, or Robertus verberavit Joannem, the meaning is precisely the same, and the termination fixes John to be the sufferer in both cases. But in English John beat Robert, and Robert beat John, have by no means the same signification. The place, therefore, of the three principal members of the phrase is in the English, and for the same reason in the French and Italian languages, almost always precisely determined; whereas in the ancient languages a greater latitude is allowed, and the place of those members is often, in a great measure, indifferent. We must have recourse to Horace, in order to interpret some parts of Milton's literal translation;

Who now enjoys thee credulous all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
Hopes thee; of flattering gales
Unmindful —

are verses which it is impossible to interpret by any rules of our language. There are no rules in our language by which any man could discover, that, in the first line, credulous referred to who, and not to thee; or that all gold referred to any thing; or, that in the fourth line, unmindful referred to who in the second, and not to thee in the third; or, on the

contrary, that, in the second line, always vacant, always amiable, referred to thee in the third, and not to who in the same line with it. In the Latin, indeed, all this is abundantly plain.

Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aureâ,
Qui semper vacuam, semper amabilem
Sperat te; nescius auræ fallacis;

because the terminations in the Latin determine the reference of each adjective to its proper substantive, which it is impossible for any thing in the English to do. How much this power of transposing the order of their words must have facilitated the composition of the ancients, both in verse and prose, can hardly be imagined. That it must greatly have facilitated their versification, it is needless to observe; and in prose, whatever beauty depends upon the arrangement and construction of the several members of the period, must to them have been acquirable with much more ease, and to much greater perfection, than it can be to those whose expression is constantly confined by the prolixness, constraint, and monotony of modern languages.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS



1852 Nelson and Sons Edition

Smith's magnum opus, *The Wealth of Nations* was first published in 1776 and offers one of the world's first collected descriptions of how a nation builds wealth. Regarded today as a fundamental work in classical economics, the text reflects upon the economics at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, exploring such broad topics as the division of labour, productivity and free markets. Published during the Scottish Enlightenment and the Scottish Agricultural Revolution, the book influenced a number of authors and economists, as well as governments and organisations, including Alexander Hamilton in his *Report on Manufactures*, in which he argued against many of Smith's policies.

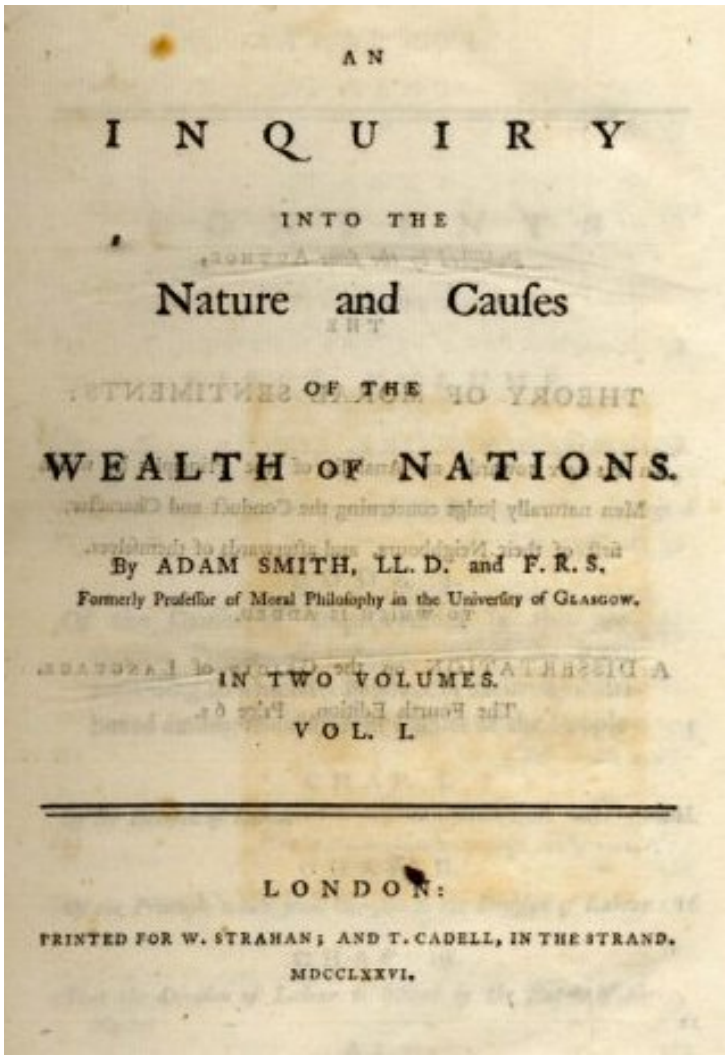
The product of seventeen years of notes and observation of conversation among economists of the time, *The Wealth of Nations* took Smith ten years to produce. The resulting treatise seeks to offer a practical application for reformed economic theory to replace the mercantilist and physiocratic economic theories that were becoming less relevant in the time of industrial progress and innovation. The book provides the foundation for new economists, politicians, mathematicians, biologists and thinkers of all fields to build upon. Irrespective of historical influence, *The Wealth of Nations* represented a clear shift in the field of economics, comparable to Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica* for physics, Antoine Lavoisier's *Traité Élémentaire de Chimie* for chemistry, or Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* for biology.

There is disagreement between classical and neoclassical economists concerning the central message of the treatise. Neoclassical economists emphasise Smith's invisible hand, a concept mentioned in the middle of his work – Book IV, Chapter II – and classical economists believe that Smith stated his programme for promoting the "wealth of nations" in the first sentences, which attributes the growth of wealth and prosperity to the division of labour. Smith uses the term "the invisible hand" in "History of Astronomy" referring to "the invisible hand of Jupiter," and once in each of his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *The*

Wealth of Nations (1776). This last statement about “an invisible hand” has been interpreted in numerous ways. The term is believed to describe the unintended social benefits of individual actions. The phrase was employed with respect to income distribution (1759) and production (1776). The exact phrase is used just three times in Smith’s writings, but has come to capture his notion that individuals’ efforts to pursue their own interest may frequently benefit society more than if their actions were directly intending to benefit society.

The first edition of the book sold out in six months and it is believed *The Wealth of Nations* shaped government policy soon after it was published. In 1777 the Prime Minister, Lord North, in the first budget after the book was published, used the idea for two new taxes from the treatise: one on man-servants and the other on property sold at auction. The budget of 1778 introduced the inhabited house duty and the malt tax, both recommended by Smith. In 1779 Smith was consulted by politicians Henry Dundas and Lord Carlisle on the subject of giving Ireland free trade.

The Wealth of Nations was a precursor to the modern academic discipline of economics. Smith expounded how rational self-interest and competition can lead to economic prosperity. Controversial in his own day, Smith’s general approach and writing style were often satirised by Tory writers in the moralising tradition of Hogarth and Swift. In 2005, *The Wealth of Nations* was named among the 100 Best Scottish Books of all time. Former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, it is said, used to carry a copy of the book in her handbag.



AN

INQUIRY

INTO THE

Nature and Cauſes

OF THE

WEALTH OF NATIONS.

By ADAM SMITH, LL. D. and F. R. S.

Formerly Profeſſor of Moral Philoſophy in the Univerſity of GLASGOW.

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NOTES



David Hume (1711-1776), the Scottish philosopher, historian, economist and essayist, who is best known today for his highly influential system of radical philosophical empiricism, skepticism and naturalism.

SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF DR. ADAM SMITH

Adam Smith, the celebrated author of ‘An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,’ was born in the town of Kirkaldy, on the 5th of June 1723. His father, at an early period of life, practised as a writer to the signet in Edinburgh, and officiated as private secretary to the Earl of Loudon, during the time his Lordship was principal secretary of state in Scotland, and keeper of the great seal; but afterwards settled at Kirkaldy, where, for some time before his death, he held the office of comptroller of the customs. He died a few months before the birth of his son.

The constitution of young Smith, during infancy, was so sickly as to require all the care and solicitude of his surviving parent, whose only child he was. The duty which thus devolved on his mother, it is allowed, she discharged in the most ample manner; and, indeed, carried her indulgence so far as to have drawn on herself, it has been said, some degree of blame. But it certainly does not appear that any bad consequences resulted, on this occasion, from unbounded parental fondness; nor can it be said, that any permanent disadvantage was felt by the retirement, and even seclusion, which long-continued weakness rendered necessary. To the inability of young Smith to engage in the active sports of his early companions, we ought, perhaps, to trace the foundation of those habits, and love of retirement, which distinguished him, in a peculiar manner, during a long life[1*].

We are informed that Smith received the rudiments of education at the grammar-school of Kirkaldy; and, at that time, attracted some notice by his passion for books, and by the extraordinary powers of his memory. He was also observed, even at this early period of life, to have contracted those habits of absence in company, and of talking to himself, for which he was afterwards so remarkable.

In 1737, he was sent to the university of Glasgow, where, it is said, he evinced an uncommon partiality for the study of mathematics and natural philosophy. Being designed for the English church, he left that place in about three years, and entered, in 1740, an exhibitioner on Snell’s foundation, at Baliol college, Oxford. But to this celebrated seminary he acknowledged very slender obligations. He had, however, attained a solid foundation of knowledge, and also the precious habits of attention,

and the most industrious application. Here he diligently pursued his favourite speculations in private, interrupted only by the regular calls of scholastic discipline. He cultivated, with the greatest assiduity and success, the study of the languages, both ancient and modern; and formed an intimate acquaintance with the works of the poets of his own country, as well as with those of Greece and Rome, France and Italy. Of the turns and delicacies of the English tongue, it has been observed, he then gained such a critical knowledge, as was scarcely to be expected from his northern education. With the view of improving his style, he employed himself in frequent translations, particularly from the French; a practice which he used to recommend to all who cultivate the art of writing. His modest deportment, and his secret studies, however, provoked, it has been said, the jealousy or the suspicion of his superiors. It has been mentioned, that the heads of the college having thought proper to visit his chamber, found him engaged in perusing Hume's Treatise of Human Nature, then recently published. This the reverend inquisitors seized, while they severely reprimanded the young philosopher.

After a residence of seven years at Oxford, he returned, against the wishes of his friends, to Kirkaldy, the place of his nativity, where he lived for some time with his mother, without determining on any fixed plan of life; Mr. Smith having thus chosen to forego every prospect of church preferment, rather than do violence to his conscience by preaching a particular system of tenets.

In 1748, being then in the twenty-fifth year of his age, he took up his residence in the capital of Scotland, when he first entered into public life, by delivering lectures, under the patronage of Lord Kames, on rhetoric and the belles lettres, which he continued for two years. These lectures were never published; but the substance of them appears to have been afterwards communicated to Dr. Blair, as he acknowledges, in his Lectures, to have been indebted to Dr. Smith for a manuscript treatise, from which he had taken several ideas in the eighteenth lecture, on the general characters of style, particularly the plain and the simple; and also the characters of those English authors belonging to the several classes in that and the following lecture.

In 1751, he was chosen professor of logic in the university of Glasgow. Of the manner in which he discharged the duties of this important situation, it would be difficult now to present a more satisfactory account than that which has been given by one of his own pupils 'In the professorship of logic,' it is observed, 'Mr. Smith soon saw

the necessity of departing widely from the plan that had been followed by his predecessors, and of directing the attention of his pupils to studies of a more interesting and useful nature than the logic and metaphysics of the schools. Accordingly, after exhibiting a general view of the powers of the mind, and explaining so much of the ancient logic as was requisite to gratify curiosity, with respect to an artificial mode of reasoning, which had once occupied the universal attention of the learned, he dedicated all the rest of his time to the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles lettres.'

During the following year, he was nominated professor of moral philosophy in the same university. By this appointment he was peculiarly gratified, and the duties of it he was well fitted to discharge, as it embraced the study of his favourite science, political economy, many of the doctrines of which, even then, had been familiarised to his mind. After entering on the duties of his new situation, he appears to have turned his attention to the division of the science of morals, which he was induced to divide into four parts. The *first* contained Natural Theology, in which he considered the proofs of the being and attributes of God, and those principles of the human mind upon which religion is founded. The *second* comprehended Ethics, strictly so called. In the *third*, he treated, at more length, of that branch of morality which relates to Justice, and which, being susceptible of precise and accurate rules, is capable of a more systematic demonstration. In the *fourth*, he examined these political regulations which are founded upon Expediency, and which are calculated to increase the riches, the power, and the prosperity of a state.

His lectures on these subjects were always distinguished by a luminous division of the subject, and by fulness and variety of illustration; and as they were delivered in a plain unaffected manner, they were well calculated to afford pleasure as well as instruction. They, accordingly, excited a degree of interest, and gave rise to a spirit of inquiry in the great commercial city of Glasgow, from which the most favourable consequences resulted. His reputation extended so widely, that, on his account alone, a considerable number of students, from different parts of the country, were attracted to the university of that city; and the science which he taught became so popular, that even the trifling peculiarities in his pronunciation and manner of speaking, were often objects of imitation.

During the time Mr. Smith was thus successfully engaged in his academical labours, he was gradually laying the foundation of a more

extensive reputation. In the year 1759, he published his ‘Theory of Moral Sentiments, or An Essay towards an Analysis of the Principles by which Men naturally judge concerning the Conduct and Character, first of their Neighbours, and afterwards of Themselves.’ This work was founded on the second division of his lectures, and was divided into six parts: — The propriety of action: Merit and demerit, or the objects of reward and punishment: The foundation of our judgments concerning our own sentiments and conduct, and of the sense of duty: The effect of utility upon the sentiment of approbation: The influence of custom and fashion upon the sentiments of moral approbation and disapprobation: And, lastly, The character of virtue. To these were added, a brief view of the different systems of ancient and modern philosophy, which is universally acknowledged to be the most candid and luminous that has yet appeared.

This Essay soon attracted a great share of the public attention, by the ingenuity of the reasonings, and the perspicuity with which they were displayed. The principle on which it is founded may be said to be, That the primary objects of our moral perceptions are the actions of other men; and that our moral judgments, with respect to our own conduct, are only applications to ourselves of decisions which we have already passed on the conduct of others. With this doctrine the author thinks all the most celebrated theories of morality coincide in part, and from some partial view of it he apprehends they are all derived. To the same work was subjoined a short treatise on the first formation of language, and considerations on the different genius of those which were original and compounded.

The Theory of Moral Sentiments, immediately on its publication, procured a splendid reputation to the author, and led to a change in his situation in life, that was to him no less pleasing in itself, than gratifying from the means by which it was brought about. But the following lively letter to him, at that time, from his friend Mr. Hume, dated London, 12th April, 1759, will best show the manner in which this work was received, and the influence which it had in deciding on the future life of its author: —

‘I give you thanks for the agreeable present of your Theory. Wedderburn and I made presents of our copies to such of our acquaintances as we thought good judges, and proper to spread the reputation of the book. I sent one to the Duke of Argyll, to Lord Lyttleton, Horace Walpole, Soame Jenyns, and Burke, an Irish gentleman, who wrote lately a very pretty treatise on the sublime, Millar desired my permission to send one, in your name, to Dr. Warburton. I

have delayed writing to you till I could tell you something of the success of the book, and could prognosticate, with some probability, whether it should be finally damned to oblivion, or should be registered in the temple of immortality. Though it has been published only a few weeks, I think there appear already such strong symptoms, that I can almost venture to foretel its fate. It is, in short, this —— But I have been interrupted in my letter, by a foolish, impertinent visit of one who has lately come from Scotland. He tells me, that the university of Glasgow intend to declare Rouet's office vacant, upon his going abroad with Lord Hope. I question not but you will have our friend Fergusson in your eye, in case another project for procuring him a place in the university of Edinburgh should fail. Fergusson has very much polished and improved his treatise on Refinement, and with some amendments, it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and a singular genius. The Epigoniad, I hope, will do; but it is somewhat up-hill work. As I doubt not but you consult the reviewers sometimes at present, you will see in the Critical Review a letter upon that poem, and I desire you to employ your conjectures in finding out the author. Let me see a sample of your skill in knowing hands, by your guessing at the person. I am afraid of Lord Kames's Law Tracts. A man might as well think of making a fine sauce by a mixture of wormwood and aloes, as an agreeable composition by joining metaphysics and Scotch law. However, the book, I believe, has merit, though few people will take the pains of diving into it. But to return to your book and its success in this town, I must tell you —— A plague of interruptions! I ordered myself to be denied; and yet here is one that has broke in upon me again. He is a man of letters, and we have had a good deal of literary conversation. You told me that you was curious of literary anecdotes, and therefore I shall inform you of a few that have come to my knowledge. I believe I have mentioned to you already Helvetius's book *De l'Esprit*. It is worth your reading, not for its philosophy, which I do not highly value, but for its agreeable composition. I had a letter from him a few days ago, wherein he tells me that my name was much oftener in the manuscript, but that the censor of books at Paris obliged him to strike it out. Voltaire has lately published a small work, called *Candide, ou l'Optimisme* I shall give a detail of it —— But what is all this to my book? say you. —— My dear Mr. Smith, have patience; compose yourself to tranquillity; show yourself a philosopher in practice as well as profession; think on the emptiness, and rashness, and futility of the common judgments of men; how little they

are regulated by reason in any subject, much more in philosophical subjects, which so far exceed the comprehension of the vulgar.

—— Non si quid turbida Roma
Elevat, accedas; examenve improbum in illa
Castiges trutina; nec te quæsiveris extra.

A wise man’s kingdom is his own breast, or if he ever looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few, who are free from prejudices, and capable of examining his work. Nothing, indeed, can be a stronger presumption of falsehood than the approbation of the multitude; and Phocion, you know, always suspected himself of some blunder when he was attended with the applauses of the populace.

‘Supposing, therefore, that you have duly prepared yourself for the worst, by all these reflections, I proceed to tell you the melancholy news, — that your book has been very unfortunate; for the public seem disposed to applaud it extremely. It was looked for by the foolish people with some impatience and the mob of literati are beginning already to be very loud in its praises. Three bishops called yesterday at Millar’s shop, in order to buy copies, and to ask questions about the author. The bishop of Peterborough said he had passed the evening in a company where he heard it extolled above all books in the world. The Duke of Argyll is more decisive than he uses to be in its favour I suppose he either considers it as an exotic, or thinks the author will be serviceable to him in the Glasgow elections. Lord Lyttleton says, that Robertson, and Smith, and Bower, are the glories of English literature. Oswald protests, he does not know whether he has reaped more instruction or entertainment from it. But you may easily judge what reliance can be put on his judgment, who has been engaged all his life in public business, and who never sees any faults in his friends. Millar exults, and brags that two thirds of the edition are already sold, and that he is now sure of success. You see what a son of the earth that is, to value books only by the profit they bring him. In that view, I believe, it may prove a very good book.

‘Charles Townsend, who passes for the cleverest fellow in England, is so taken with the performance, that he said to Oswald, he would put the Duke or Buccleugh under the author’s care, and would make it worth his while to accept of that charge. As soon as I heard this, I called on him twice with a view of talking with him about the matter, and of convincing him of the propriety of sending that young nobleman to Glasgow; for I could not hope, that he could offer you any terms which

would tempt you to renounce your professorship. But I missed him. Mr. Townsend passes for being a little uncertain in his resolutions; so, perhaps, you need not build much on this sally.

‘In recompense for so many mortifying things, which nothing but truth could have extorted from me, and which I could easily have multiplied to a greater number, I doubt not but you are so good a christian as to return good for evil, and to flatter my vanity, by telling me, that all the godly in Scotland abuse me for my account of John Knox and the reformation.’

Mr. Smith having completed, and given to the world his system of ethics, that subject afterwards occupied but a small part of his lectures. His attention was now chiefly directed to the illustration of those other branches of science which he taught; and, accordingly, he seems to have taken up the resolution, even at that early period, of publishing an investigation into the principles of what he considered to be the only other branch of Moral Philosophy, — Jurisprudence, the subject of which formed the third division of his lectures. At the conclusion of the Theory of Moral Sentiments, after treating of the importance of a system of Natural Jurisprudence, and remarking that Grotius was the first, and perhaps the only writer, who had given any thing like a system of those principles which ought to run through, and be the foundation of the law of nations, Mr. Smith promised, in another discourse, to give an account of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in what concerns justice, but in what concerns police, revenue, and arms, and whatever else is the object of law.

Four years after the publication of this work, and after a residence of thirteen years in Glasgow, Mr. Smith, in 1763, was induced to relinquish his professorship, by an invitation from the Hon. Mr. Townsend, who had married the Duchess of Buccleugh, to accompany the young Duke, her son, in his travels. Being indebted for this invitation to his own talents alone, it must have appeared peculiarly flattering to him. Such an appointment was, besides, the more acceptable, as it afforded him a better opportunity of becoming acquainted with the internal policy of other states, and of completing that system of political economy, the principles of which he had previously delivered in his lectures, and which it was then the leading object of his studies to perfect.

Mr. Smith did not, however, resign his professorship till the day after his arrival in Paris, in February 1764. He then addressed the following

letter to the Right Honourable Thomas Millar, lord advocate of Scotland, and then rector of the college of Glasgow: —

‘My Lord, — I take this first opportunity after my arrival in this place, which was not till yesterday, to resign my office into the hands of your lordship, of the dean of faculty, of the principal of the college, and of all my other most respectable and worthy colleagues. Into your and their hands, therefore, I do resign my office of professor of moral philosophy in the university of Glasgow, and in the college thereof, with all the emoluments, privileges, and advantages, which belong to it. I reserve, however, my right to the salary for the current half-year, which commenced at the 10th of October, for one part of my salary, and at Martinmas last for another; and I desire that this salary may be paid to the gentleman who does that part of my duty which I was obliged to leave undone, in the manner agreed on between my very worthy colleagues before we parted. I never was more anxious for the good of the college than at this moment; and I sincerely wish, that whoever is my successor, he may not only do credit to the office by his abilities, but be a comfort to the very excellent men with whom he is likely to spend his life, by the probity of his heart and the goodness of his temper.’

His lordship having transmitted the above to the professors, a meeting was held; on which occasion the following honourable testimony of the sense they entertained of the worth of their former colleague was entered in their minutes: —

‘The meeting accept of Dr. Smith’s resignation in terms of the above letter; and the office of professor of moral philosophy in this university is therefore hereby declared to be vacant. The university at the same time, cannot help expressing their sincere regret at the removal of Dr. Smith, whose distinguished probity and amiable qualities procured him the esteem and affection of his colleagues; whose uncommon genius, great abilities, and extensive learning, did so much honour to this society. His elegant and ingenious Theory of Moral Sentiments having recommended him to the esteem of men of taste and literature throughout Europe, his happy talents in illustrating abstracted subjects, and faithful assiduity in communicating useful knowledge, distinguished him as a professor, and at once afforded the greatest pleasure, and the most important instruction, to the youth under his care.’

In the first visit that Mr. Smith and his noble pupil made to Paris, they only remained ten or twelve days; after which, they proceeded to Thoulouse, where, during a residence of eighteen months, Mr. Smith had an opportunity of extending his information concerning the internal

policy of France, by the intimacy in which he lived with some of the members of the parliament. After visiting several other places in the south of France, and residing two months at Geneva, they returned about Christmas to Paris. Here Mr. Smith ranked among his friends many of the highest literary characters, among whom were several of the most distinguished of those political philosophers who were denominated Economists.

Before Mr. Smith left Paris, he received a flattering letter from the unfortunate Duke of Rochefoucault, with a copy of a new edition of the Maxims of his grandfather. Notwithstanding the unfavourable manner in which the opinions of the author of that work were mentioned in the Theory of Moral Sentiments, the Duke informed Mr. Smith, on this occasion, that he had been prevented only from finishing a translation, which he had begun, of his estimable system of morals, into French, by the knowledge of having been anticipated in the design. He also observed, that some apology might be made for his ancestor, when it was considered, that he formed his opinions of mankind in two of the worst situations of life, — a court and a camp. The last communication Mr. Smith had with this nobleman was in 1789, when he gave him to understand, that he would no longer rank the name of Rochefoncault with that of the author of the Fable of the Bees; and, accordingly, in the first edition that was afterwards published of the Theory of Moral Sentiments, this promised alteration was made.

The next ten years of his life, after his arrival from the continent, Mr. Smith passed with his mother at Kirkaldy, though he occasionally, during that time, visited London and Edinburgh. Mr. Hume, who considered a town as the proper scene for a man of letters, made many attempts to prevail on him to leave his retirement.

At length, in the beginning of the year 1776, Mr. Smith accounted to the world for his long retreat, by the publication of his ‘Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.’ This work chiefly comprehended the subject of the fourth and last division of his lectures, namely, those political regulations that have their origin in expediency. For about twenty years of his life, his attention had been chiefly devoted to the study of subjects connected with the science of political economy. His long residence in the mercantile city of Glasgow afforded him opportunities of deriving information, in many particulars, from the best sources; his travels on the continent contributed to extend his knowledge, and correct many of those misapprehensions of life and manners which the best descriptions of them are found to convey; and the intimacy in

which he lived with some of the leaders of the sect of economists, and other writers on the subject of political economy, could not fail to assist him in methodizing his speculations, and of adding to the soundness of his conclusions. — After his arrival in this country, he wanted nothing more than leisure, to arrange his materials, and prepare them for publication: and for this purpose he passed in retirement the subsequent ten years.

The great aim of Mr. Smith's Inquiry, the fruit of so much research, and the work of so many years, is, as Professor Stewart observes, to direct the policy of nations with respect to one most important class of its laws, — those which form its system of political economy: 'and he has unquestionably,' the same eloquent writer adds, 'had the merit of presenting to the world the most comprehensive and perfect work that has yet appeared on the general principles of any branch of legislation.'

'A great and leading object of Mr. Smith's speculations,' as Mr. Stewart also observes, 'is to demonstrate, that the most effectual plan for advancing a people to greatness, is to maintain that order of things which nature has pointed out, by allowing every man, as long as he observes the rules of justice, to pursue his own interest in his own way, and to bring both his industry and his capital into the freest competition with these of his fellow citizens.'

Several authors, in this country, had before written on commercial affairs, but Mr. Smith was the first who reduced to a regular form and order the information that was to be obtained on that subject, and deduced from it the policy which an enlightened commercial nation ought to adopt. The successful manner in which he has treated this unlimited freedom of trade, as well as some others, and his able exposure of the errors of the commercial system, have rendered the science of which he treats highly interesting to the great body of the people; and a spirit of inquiry, on every branch of political economy, has, in consequence, been excited, which promises now, more than ever, to be attended with the most beneficial effects. This intricate science, the most important to the interests of mankind though long neglected, Dr. Smith has had the merit of advancing so far, as to lay a foundation, on which, it may safely be said, investigation may for a long time proceed.

It has frequently been alleged, that Dr. Smith was indebted for a large portion of the reasonings in his Inquiry to the French economists, and that the coincidence between some branches of his doctrine and theirs, particularly those which relate to freedom of trade and the powers of labour, is more than casual. But Professor Stewart has ably vindicated

him from this charge, and established his right to the general principles of his doctrine, which, he thinks, were altogether original, and the result of his own reflections. That he, however, derived some advantage from his intimacy with Turgot, and those great men who were at the head of the sect of economists, and, perhaps, adopted some of their illustrations, it would be as unnecessary to deny, as it would he far from discreditable to his talents to acknowledge.

There is also a similar, or perhaps a greater coincidence between many parts of his doctrine and the opinions of Sir James Stewart, as detailed in his ‘Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy.’ This congruity of opinion is chiefly apparent in their respective conclusions concerning the effects of competition, — the principles of exchangeable value, — the relation between the interest of money and the profit of stock, — the functions of coin, — the rise and progress of credit, — and the sources and limits of taxation. As this author had published his Inquiry many years before Dr. Smith’s work appeared, and had, besides, lived in great intimacy with him, there was some reason to believe, what has been often asserted, that he possessed a just claim to some of the doctrines contained in that work, though Dr. Smith never once mentioned his name in any part of his work. But the present Sir James Stewart, who has recently published a full edition of the writings of his father, relinquishes, on his part, all such pretensions. With the partiality of a friend, in ranking his father with Dr. Smith, he gives it as his opinion, however, that both had, with original powers of equal strength, drawn their knowledge from the same source, the French economists.

Dr. Mandeville has also, of late, got the credit of being the author of those Principles of Political Economy, which have interested the world for the last fifty years, and to him alone, it is said, not only the English, but also the French writers, are indebted for their doctrines in that science. In the work of this eccentric writer, there seems, indeed, a similarity of opinion on some of the more obvious sources of wealth, particularly in the division of labour, which Dr. Smith investigates so fully; and in the erroneous doctrine of productive and non-productive labour; and also, perhaps, on some other points: but it would be difficult to show, that he ought, on this account, to be considered the author of all, or even the chief part of what has been written on the subject. On this, as well as on all questions of a similar nature, a great diversity of opinions will subsist. But it may be a matter of curiosity to those who are unacquainted with his work, the Fable of the Bees, not only to trace the connection of that author’s sentiments with what is advanced by

subsequent writers on this important subject, but also to learn his peculiar notions of morality, that attracted, at one time, so much attention. These last, Dr. Smith says, though described by a lively and humorous, yet coarse and rustic eloquence, which throws an air of truth and probability on them, are, almost in every respect, erroneous.

Soon after the publication of the Wealth of Nations, Mr. Smith received the following congratulatory letter from Mr. Hume, six months before his death, dated Edinburgh, 1st April 1776.

'*Euge! Belle!* Dear Mr. Smith — I am much pleased with your performance, and the perusal of it has taken me from a state of great anxiety. It was a work of so much expectation, by yourself, by your friends, and by the public, that I trembled for its appearance; but am now much relieved; not but that the reading of it necessarily requires so much attention, and the public is disposed to give so little, that I shall still doubt for some time of its being at first very popular. But it has depth, and solidity, and acuteness, and is so much illustrated by curious facts, that it must at last take the public attention. It is probably much improved by your last abode in London. If you were here at my fireside, I should dispute some of your principles. But these, and a hundred other points, are fit, only to be discussed in conversation. I hope it will be soon, for I am in a very bad state of health, and cannot afford a long delay.'

The publication of this great work drew praise to its author, indeed, from many different quarters. — Dr. Barnard, in a political epistle, addressed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, where the characteristic qualities of some eminent literary men of that time are brought forward, spoke of Smith as one who would teach him how to think. Gibbon made honourable mention of him in his Roman history; and Mr. Fox contributed, in no small degree, to extend his reputation, by observing in the House of Commons, that 'the way, as my learned friend Dr. Adam Smith says, for a nation, as well as an individual, to be rich, is for both to live within their income.'

The opinion which Dr. Johnson delivered, at that time, on its being alleged by Sir John Pringle, that a person who, like Dr. Smith, was not practically acquainted with trade, could not be qualified to write on that subject, may also be mentioned here, though somewhat erroneous, as far as it respects the received doctrines of Political Economy:— 'He is mistaken,' said Johnson. 'A man who has never been engaged in trade himself, may undoubtedly write well on trade; and there is nothing which requires more to be illustrated by philosophy than trade does. As to mere wealth, that is to say, money, it is clear that one nation, or one individual,

cannot increase its store but by making another poorer; but trade procures what is more valuable, the reciprocation of the peculiar advantages of different countries. A merchant seldom thinks of any but his own trade. To write a good book upon it, a man must have extensive views. It is not necessary to have practised, to write well upon a subject.’[2*]

On the Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations, it only remains farther to be observed, that its success has been every way commensurate to its merits. It has, however, been often regretted, that the author did not live to favour the world with his reasonings on those important events which have taken place since 1784, when he put the last hand to his invaluable work. That another, with competent talents, and a mind disposed to the task, should soon appear, to treat of these occurrences, and give a satisfactory view of the progress of the science from that time to the present, is not to be expected. But as the honour to be gained from a successful execution of such an undertaking is very considerable, it is not to be wondered at that an attempt of this kind should be made. Accordingly, Mr Playfair of London has had the boldness to follow Smith, by endeavouring to supply, in part, this desideratum, by adding supplementary chapters and notes to the Treatise on the Wealth of Nations.

But it is greatly to be feared, that there are few persons who have read this improved edition, as it is called, of Dr. Smith’s Inquiry, but will still look forward to the accomplishment of the wishes they must previously have formed, for a continuation, and probably an illustration, of the discussions contained in that work. Leaving, therefore, the supplementary chapters and elucidations of Mr Playfair, it must be observed, that Dr. Smith has, on this occasion, been equally unfortunate in a biographer. The detail of his peaceful life is almost lost among dissertations on the wickedness of atheism and the horrors of a revolution. But these dissertations, strangely misplaced as they appear to be, would certainly not alone have been sufficient to attract observation here, whatever latitude the author might have allowed to himself on such subjects. When he goes on, however, to apologise for Dr. Smith’s acquaintance with some individuals among the economists, and to connect the whole of that sect with those philosophers to whom he ascribes the evils which have so long afflicted France, his opinions become still more insupportable. It will, perhaps, be said, and with some reason, that, in this instance, at least, the writer has followed those alarmists, who, on any men of learning belonging to that country being

mentioned, immediately ally them to the revolutionists without regard to difference of opinion, or distance of time.

The reputation, however, of the economists is too well established to be affected, either by the clamours of the ignorant, or the mad intemperance of political alarmists. The doctrine of the great men who formed the school of the economists, was, that the produce of the land is the sole or principal source of the revenue and wealth of every country; and this doctrine, with the manner of deriving from it the greatest possible advantage, it is almost universally acknowledged, engaged entirely their attention. Dr. Smith, who lived in great intimacy with many of the founders of that sect, does ample justice, on every occasion, to the purity of their views; and indeed they, as well as himself, it has always been said, by the impartial and well informed, were ever animated by a zeal for the best interests of society.

M. Quesnai, the first of that sect, and the author of the Economical Table, a work of the greatest profoundness and originality, was, in particular, represented by Mr. Smith as a man of the greatest modesty and simplicity; and his system he pronounced, with all its imperfections, to be the nearest approximation to the truth, of any that had then been published on the principles of political science. His veneration for this worthy man was even so great, that had he lived, it was his intention to have inscribed to him the Inquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations.

Nor will the memory of those illustrious men be soon forgotten, notwithstanding the calumnies with which it has been charged. It may safely be predicted, in the words of a highly respectable periodical publication, that ‘Those prospects of political improvements which flattered the benevolent anticipations of the economists, will soon be recognised as sound conclusions of science; and it will at length be acknowledged that Turgot, Mirabeau, and Quesnai, were the friends of mankind, and that their genius and their labours were devoted to the refinement of social happiness and the consolidation of the political fabric.’[3*]

The life of Mr. Smith, after the publication of his Inquiry, might be said to draw towards a close. The following particulars of the last years, are mostly extracted from Professor Stewart’s Life of this incomparable writer.

After residing some time in London, he was appointed one of the commissioners of customs in Scotland, in 1778, when he removed to Edinburgh. He was accompanied by his mother, who, though in extreme

old age, possessed a considerable share of good health; and his cousin, Miss Douglass, who had long resided with him at Glasgow, undertook to superintend his domestic economy.

The Duke of Buccleugh had continued to allow Mr. Smith L.300 a-year, and the accession which he now received to his income enabled him to live, not only with comfort and independence, but to indulge the benevolence of his heart, in making numerous private benefactions.

During the remaining period of his life, he appears to have done little more than to discharge, with peculiar exactness, the duties of his office, which, though they required no great exertion, were sufficient to divert his attention from his studies. He very early felt the infirmities of old age, but his health and strength were not greatly affected till he was left alone, by the death of his mother, in 1784, and of his cousin four years after. They had been the objects of his affection for more than sixty years; and in their society he had enjoyed, from his infancy, all that he ever knew of the endearments of a family. In return for the anxious and watchful solicitude of his mother during infancy, he had the singular good fortune of being able to show his gratitude to her during a very long life; and it was often observed, that the nearest avenue to his heart was through his mother.

He now gradually declined till the period of his death, which happened in 1790. His last illness, which arose from a chronic obstruction in the bowels, was lingering and painful; but he had every consolation to soothe it which he could desire, from the tenderest sympathy of his friends, and from the completest resignation of his own mind.

His friends had been in use to sup with him every Sunday. The last time he received them, which was a few days before his death, there was a pretty numerous meeting; but not being able to sit up as usual, he retired to bed before supper. On going away, he took leave of the company, by saying, ‘I believe we must adjourn this meeting to some other place.’

In a letter addressed, in the year 1787, to the principal of the university of Glasgow, in consequence of his being elected rector of that learned body, a pleasing memorial remains of the satisfaction with which he always recollected that period of his literary career, which had been more peculiarly consecrated to his academical studies. On that occasion he writes: —

‘No preferment could have given me so much real satisfaction. No man can owe greater obligations to a society than I do to the university

of Glasgow. They educated me; they sent me to Oxford. Soon after my return to Scotland, they elected me one of their own members, and afterwards preferred me to another office, to which the abilities and virtues of the never-to-be-forgotten Dr. Hutcheson had given a superior degree of illustration. The period of thirteen years, which I spent as a member of that society, I remember as by far the most useful, and therefore, as by far the happiest and most honourable period of my life; and now, after three-and-twenty years absence, to be remembered in so very agreeable a manner by my old friends and protectors, gives me a heart-felt joy which I cannot easily express to you.'

Not long before the death of Smith, finding his end approach rapidly, he gave orders to destroy all his manuscripts, excepting some detached essays, which he entrusted to the care of his executors. With the exception of these essays, all his papers were committed to the flames. What were the particular contents of these papers was not known, even to his most intimate friends. The additions to the Theory of Moral Sentiments, most of which were composed under severe illness, had fortunately been sent to the press in the beginning of the preceding winter; and the author lived to see the publication of this new edition.[4*]

Some time before his last illness, when he had occasion to go to London, he enjoined his friends, to whom he had entrusted the disposal of his manuscripts, to destroy, in the event of his death, all the volumes of his lectures, doing with the rest what they pleased. When he had become weak, and saw the last period of his life approach, he spoke to his friends again upon the same subject. They entreated him to make his mind easy, as he might depend upon their fulfilling his desire. Though he then seemed to be satisfied, he, some days afterwards, begged that the volume might be immediately destroyed; which was accordingly done.

Mr. Riddell, an intimate friend of Mr. Smith, mentions, that on one of these occasions he regretted he had done so little; 'but I meant,' he added, 'to have done more; and there are materials in my papers of which I could make a great deal. — But that is now out of the question.'

That the idea of destroying such unfinished works as might be in his possession at the time of his death, was not the effect of any sudden or hasty resolution, appears from the following letter to Mr. Hume, written in 1773, at the time when he was preparing for a journey to London, with the prospect of a pretty long absence from Scotland.

'My dear friend, — As I have left the care of all my literary papers to you, I must tell you, that except those which I carry along with me, there are none worth the publication, but a fragment of a great work, which

contains a history of the astronomical systems that were successively in fashion down to the time of Descartes. Whether that might not be published as a fragment of an intended juvenile work, I leave entirely to your judgment, though I begin to suspect myself, that there is more refinement than solidity in some parts of it. This little work you will find in a thin folio paper book in my back-room. All the other loose papers which you will find in that desk, or within the glass folding-doors of a bureau, which stands in my bed-room, together with about eighteen thin paper folio books, which you will likewise find within the same glass folding doors, I desire may be destroyed without any examination. Unless I die very suddenly, I shall take care that the papers I carry with me shall he carefully sent to you.’

But he himself long survived his friend Mr. Hume. The persons entrusted with his remaining papers were Dr. Black and Dr. Hutton, his executors, with whom he had long lived in habits of the closest friendship. These gentlemen afterwards collected into a volume, such of the writings of Dr. Smith as were fitted for publication: and they appeared in 1795, under the title of *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*. These essays had been composed early in life, and were designed to illustrate the principles of the human mind, by a theoretical deduction of the progress of the sciences and the liberal arts. The most considerable piece in this volume is, on the principles which lead and direct philosophical inquiries, illustrated by the history of astronomy, ancient physics, and ancient logic and metaphysics. The others, with the exception of an essay on the external senses, relate to the imitative and liberal arts. The contents of this volume, Mr. Smith’s executors observe, appear to be parts of a plan he once had formed for giving a connected history of the liberal sciences and elegant arts; but which he had been obliged to abandon, as being far too extensive; and these parts lay beside him neglected till after his death. In them, however, will be found that happy connection, that full and accurate expression, and the same copiousness and facility of illustration, which are conspicuous in the rest of his writings.

As a writer, the character of Mr. Smith is so well known, that any observation on his merits, must appear almost unnecessary. His literary fame is circumscribed by no ordinary limits. To the voice of his own country, is added the testimony of Europe, and, indeed, of the civilized world. And had even only one volume of his inestimable writings appeared, his name would have been carried down to posterity in the first rank of those illustrious characters that adorn the last century.

In the words of Professor Stewart, it may be said, that, — of the intellectual gifts and attainments by which he was so eminently distinguished; — of the originality and comprehensiveness of his views; the extent, the variety, and the correctness of his information; the inexhaustible fertility of his invention; and the ornaments which his rich and beautiful imagination had borrowed from classical culture; — he has left behind him lasting monuments.

One observation more may he added to what is now said on his writings, that, whatever be the nature of his subject, he seldom misses an opportunity of indulging his curiosity, in tracing, from the principles of human nature, or from the circumstances of society, the origin of the opinions and the institutions which he describes.

With regard to the private character of this amiable and enlightened philosopher, it fortunately happens, that the most certain of all testimonies to his private worth may be found in the confidence, respect, and attachment which followed him through all the various relations of life. There were many peculiarities, indeed, both in his manners and in his intellectual habits; but to those who knew him, these peculiarities, so far from detracting from the respect which his abilities commanded, added an irresistible charm to his conversation, and strongly displayed the artless simplicity of his heart. The comprehensive speculations with which he had always been occupied, and the variety of materials which his own invention continually supplied to his thoughts, rendered him habitually inattentive to familiar objects, and to common occurrences. On this account, he was remarkable, throughout the whole of life, for speaking to himself when alone, and for being so absent in company, as, on some occasions, to exceed almost what the fancy of a Bruyere could imagine. In company, he was apt to be engrossed by his studies; and appeared, at times, by the motion of his lips, as well as by his looks and gestures, to be in the fervour of composition. It was observed, that he rarely started a topic himself, or even fell in easily with the common dialogue of conversation. When he did speak, however, he was somewhat apt to convey his ideas in the form of a lecture; but this never proceeded from a wish to engross the discourse, or to gratify his vanity. His own inclination disposed him so strongly to enjoy, in silence, the gaiety of those around him, that his friends were often led to concert little schemes, in order to bring on the subjects most likely to interest him.

SHORT VIEW OF THE DOCTRINE OF SMITH, COMPARED WITH THAT OF THE FRENCH ECONOMISTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF M. GARNIER.

The ancient philosophers were little accustomed to employ themselves in the observation of those laws which regulate the distribution of riches among the different orders of society in a nation, or in the search after the sources of the increase of its wealth. In fact, political economy is a science of very modern origin; for although, towards the end of the seventeenth century, several writers, both of France and England, had begun to discuss the comparative advantages of agriculture and commerce, yet it was not till the middle of the eighteenth, that any thing like a complete system appeared upon the growth and distribution of national wealth. At this period, the philosophical Quesnai directed his attention to this very abstract subject, and became the founder of a celebrated school, which may boast among its adherents many distinguished men of talents and extensive knowledge.

All philosophical sects owe their first origin and foundation to the discovery of some great truth; and it is the madness inspiring their members, to deduce every thing from this new discovery, that contributes most to their downfal. Thus it was with the economists. They saw that the original source of all wealth was the soil, and that the labour of its cultivation produced not only the means of subsisting the labourer, but also a neat surplus, which went to the increase of the existing stock: while, on the other hand, the labour applied to the productions of the earth, the labour of manufactures and commerce, can only add to the material a value exactly equal to that expended during the execution of the work; by which means, in the end, this species of labour operates no real change on the total sum of national riches. They perceived that the landed proprietors are the first receivers of the whole wealth of the community; and that, whatever is consumed by those who are not possessed of land, must come, directly or indirectly, from the former; and hence, that these receive wages from the proprietors, and that the circulation of national wealth, is, in fact, only a succession of exchanges between these two classes of men, the proprietors furnishing their wealth, and the non-proprietors giving as an equivalent their labour and

industry. They perceived that a tax, being a portion of the national wealth applied to public use, in every instance, however levied, bears finally upon the landed proprietors, inasmuch as they are the distributors of that wealth, either by retrenching their luxuries, or by loading them with an additional expense; and that, therefore, every tax which is not levied directly on the rude produce of the earth, falls in the end on the landed proprietors, with a surplus produce, from which the amount of the revenue receives no addition.

These assertions are almost all incontestible, and capable of a rigorous demonstration; and those who have attempted to shew their falsity, have, in general, opposed them only with idle sophistry. Why, then, has this doctrine met with so little success, and why does every day diminish its reputation? because it agrees in no one point with the moral condition, either of societies or of individuals; because it is continually contradicted by experience, and by the infallible instinct of self-interest; because it does not possess that indispensible sanction of all truths, utility. In fact, of what consequence is it, that the labour of agriculture produces not only what covers its own expenses, but new beings which would never have existed without it, and that it has this advantage over the labour of manufactures and commerce? Does it by any means follow from this, that the former kind of labour is more profitable to the community than the latter? The real essence of all wealth, and that which determines its value, is the necessity under which the consumer lies to purchase it; for, in truth, there is no such thing as wealth properly so called, nor absolute value; but the words wealth and value are really nothing more than the co-relatives of consumption and demand. Even the necessaries of life, in a country which is inhabited, but incapable of commercial intercourse, will not form wealth; and to whatever degree of civilization that country may have reached, still the same principle will hold without alteration. If the sum of national wealth shall in any case have exceeded the sum of demands, then a part of the former sum will cease to bear the name of wealth, and will again be without value. In vain, then, will agriculture multiply her produce; for the instant that it exceeds the bounds of actual consumption, a part will lose its value; and self-interest, that prime director of all labour and industry, seeing herself thus deceived in her expectations, will not fail to turn her activity and efforts to another quarter.

In almost every instance, it is an idle refinement to distinguish between the labour of those employed in agriculture, and of those employed in manufactures and commerce; for wealth is necessarily the

result of both descriptions of labour, and consumption can no more take place independently of the one, than it can independently of the other. It is by their simultaneous concurrence that any thing becomes consumable, and, of course, that it comes to constitute wealth. How then are we entitled to compare their respective products, since it is impossible to distinguish these in the joint product, and thus appreciate the separate value of each? The value of growing wheat results as much from the industry of the reaper who gathers it in, of the thrasher who separates it from the chaff and straw, of the miller and baker who convert it successively into flour and bread, as it does from that of the ploughman and of the sower. Without the labour of the weaver, the raw material of flax would lose all its value, and be regarded as no way superior to the most useless weed that grows. What then can we gain by any attempts to determine which of these two species of labour conduces most to the advancement of national wealth; or, are they not as idle, as if we busied ourselves in inquiring, whether the right or the left foot is the most useful in walking?

It is true, indeed, that in every species of manufacture, the workman adds to the value of the raw material a value exactly equal to that which was expended during the process of manufacture; and what is the conclusion we are to draw this? It is merely, that a certain exchange has taken place and that the food consumed by the manufacturer is now represented by the increase of value resulting from his manual labour. Thus wool, when converted into cloth, has gained a value precisely equal to that expended by the manufacturer during the conversion. But, if it is shown that, without this exchange, the wool would have remained without value, while, on the other hand, the food of the manufacturer would have been without a consumer; it will then appear, that this exchange has, in fact, done what is equivalent to creating these two values, and that it has proved to the society an operation infinitely more useful, than if an equal quantity of labour had been spent in the increase of that rude produce, which already existed in overabundance. The first description of labour has been truly productive; while the last would have been altogether unproductive, since it would not have created any value.

‘The soil,’ say the economists, ‘is the source of all wealth.’ But, to prevent this assertion from leading us into erroneous conclusions, it will be necessary to explain it. The materials of all wealth originate primarily in the bosom of the earth; but it is only by the aid of labour that they can ever truly constitute wealth. The earth furnishes the means of wealth; but

wealth itself cannot possibly have any existence, unless through that industry and labour which modifies, divides, connects, and combines the various productions of the soil, so as to render them fit for consumption. Commerce, indeed, regards those rude productions as real wealth; but it is only from the consideration, that the proprietor has it always in his power to convert them, at will, into consumable goods, by submitting them to the necessary operations of manufacture. They possess, as yet, merely the virtual value of a promissory-note, which passes current, because the bearer is assured that he can, at pleasure, convert it into cash. Many gold mines, which are well known, are not worked, because their whole produce would not cover the incidental expenses; but the gold which they contain is, in reality, the same with that of our coin; and yet no one would be foolish enough to call it wealth, for there is no probability it will ever be extracted from the mine, or purified; and, of course, it possesses no value. The wild fowl becomes wealth the moment it is in the possession of the sportsman; while those of the very same species, that have escaped his attempts, remain without any title to the term.

It is further, without question, true, that all who do not possess property in land must draw their subsistence from wages received, directly or indirectly, from the proprietors, unless they violate all rights, and become robbers. In this respect, every service is alike; the most honourable and the most disgraceful receives each its wages. It is certain, too, that if the circumstances determining the rate of the various kinds of wages remain the same, that is if the offers of service, and the demand, preserve the same proportion to each other, after as well as before the imposition of a tax; then, of course, the wages will continue at the same rate, and thus the tax, however imposed, will uniformly, in the end, fall on that class in the community who furnish the wages; so that they must suffer, either an addition to their former expenses, or a retrenchment of those luxuries they enjoyed. And according as the tax is less directly levied, the greater will be the burden they are subjected to; for besides indemnifying all the other classes who have advanced the tax-money, a further expense must be incurred, in the additional number of persons now necessary to collect it. The natural conclusion we must draw from the theory is, that a tax, directly levied on the neat revenue of the land proprietors, is that which agrees best with reason and justice, and that which bears lightest on the contributors.

If, however, this theory should be found to throw entirely out of consideration a multitude of circumstances, which possess a powerful

influence over the facility of collecting a tax, as well an over its consequences; and if the general result of this influence be of far more importance than the single advantage of a less burden; then the theory, inasmuch as it neglects a part of those particulars which have their weight in the practice, is contradicted by this last. And this is exactly what happens in the question respecting the comparative advantages and inconveniencies of the two modes of levying taxes.

The habit which men have acquired, of viewing money as the representation of every thing which contributes to the support or comfort of life, makes them naturally very unwilling to part with what portion of it they possess, unless it be to procure some necessary or enjoyment. We spend money with pleasure, but it requires an effort to pay a debt, and particularly so when the value received in exchange is not very obvious to the generality, as in the case of a tax. But by levying the tax on some object of consumption, by thus confounding it with the price of the latter, and by making the payment of the duty and of the price of enjoyment become one and the same act, we render the consumer desirous to pay the impost. It is amid the profusion of entertainments, that the duties on wine, salt, &c. are paid; the public treasury thus finding a source of gain in the excitements to expense produced by the extravagance and gaiety of feasts.

Another advantage of the same nature, possessed by the indirect mode of taxation, is its extreme divisibility into minute parts, and the facility which it affords to the individual, of paying it off day by day, or even minute by minute. Thus the mechanic, who sups on a portion of his day’s wages, will sometimes in one quarter of an hour, pay part of four or five different duties.

In the plan of direct taxation, the impost appears without any disguise; it comes upon us unexpectedly, from the imprudence so common to the bulk of mankind, and never fails to carry with it constraint and discouragement.

All these considerations are overlooked by the friends of direct taxation; and yet their importance must be well known to all who have ever attended to the art of governing men.

But, perhaps, this is not all. An indirect tax, by increasing from time to time the price of the objects of general consumption, when the members of the community have contracted the habit of this consumption, renders these objects a little more costly, and thus gives birth to that increase of labour and industry which is now required to obtain them. But if this tax be so proportioned as not to discourage the

consumption, will it not then operate as a universal stimulus upon the active and industrious part of the community? Will it not incite that part to redoubled efforts, by which it may still enjoy those luxuries which, by habit, have become almost necessaries, and, of course, produce a further developement of the productive powers of labour, and of the resources of industry? Are we not, in such a case, to conclude, that after the imposition of a tax, there will exist not only the quantity of labour and industry which was formerly requisite to procure the necessaries and habitual enjoyments of the active class of mankind, but also such an addition to this, as will suffice for the payment of the tax? And will not this tax, or increase of produce required for the tax — as it is spent by the government that receives it — will it not serve to support a new class of consumers, requiring a variety of commodities which the impost enables them to pay? If these conjectures are well founded, it will follow, that indirect taxation, far from having any hurtful influence on wealth and population, must, when wisely regulated, tend to increase and strengthen these two great foundations of national prosperity and power. And it will tend to do this, inasmuch as it bears immediately on the body of the people, and operates on the working and industrious class, which forms the active part of the community; while, on the other hand, direct taxation operates solely on the idle class of landed proprietors — which furnishes us with the characteristic difference existing between these two modes of taxation.[5*] These hints, which seem to afford an explanation of that most extraordinary phenomenon in political economy, viz. the rapid and prodigious increase of wealth in those nations which are most loaded with indirect taxes, deserve to be discussed at greater length than our limits will allow. Enough, however, has been said to shew, that no rigorous and purely mathematical calculation will ever enable us to appreciate the real influence of taxes upon the prosperity of a nation. Thus, some of the truths perceived by the economists are of little use in practice; while others are found to be contradicted in their application, by those accessory circumstances which were overlooked in the calculations of the theory.

While this sect of philosophers filled all Europe with their speculations, an observer of more depth and ability directed his researches to the same subject, and laboured to establish, on a true and lasting foundation, the doctrines of political economy.

Dr. Smith succeeded in discovering a great truth, — the most fruitful in consequences, the most useful in practice, the origin of all the principles of the science, and one which unveiled to him all the mysteries

of the growth and distribution of wealth. This great man perceived, that the universal agent in the creation of wealth is labour; and was thence led to analyse the powers of this agent, and to search after the causes to which they owe their origin and increase.

The great difference between the doctrine of Smith and of the economists, lies in the point from which they set out, in the reduction of their consequences. The latter go back to the soil as the primary source of all wealth; while the former regards labour as the universal agent which, in every case, produces it. It will appear, at first sight, how very superior the school of the Scotch professor is to that of the French philosophers, with regard to the practical utility, as well as to the application of its precepts. Labour is a power of which man is the machine; and, of course, the increase of this power can only be limited by the indefinite bounds of human intelligence and industry; and it possesses, like these faculties, a susceptibility of being directed by design, and perfected by the aid of study. The earth, on the contrary, if we set aside the influence which labour has over the nature and quantity of its productions, is totally out of our power, in every respect which can render it more or less useful — in its extent, in its situation, and in its physical properties.

Thus the science of political economy, considered according to the view of the French economists, must be classed with the natural sciences, which are purely speculative, and can have no other end than the knowledge of the laws which regulate the object of their researches; while, viewed according to the doctrine of Smith, political economy becomes connected with the other moral sciences, which tend to ameliorate the condition of their object, and to carry it to the highest perfection of which it is susceptible.

A few words will suffice to explain the grounds of the doctrine of Smith. The power by which a nation creates its wealth is its labour; and the quantity of wealth created will increase in direct proportion as the power increases. But the increase of this last may take place in two ways — in energy, and in extent. Labour increases in energy, when the same quantity of labour furnishes a more abundant product; and the two great means of effecting the increase, or of perfecting the productive powers of labour, are the division of labour, and the invention of such machines as shorten and facilitate the manual operations of industry. Labour increases in extent, when the number of those engaged in it augments in proportion to the increasing number of the consumers, which can take place only in

consequence of an increase of capitals, and of those branches of business in which they are employed.

Now, to accomplish the increase of labour in both these ways, and to conduct it gradually to the utmost pitch of energy and extent to which it can reach in any nation, considering the situation, the nature, and the peculiarities of its territories, what are the exertions to be made by its government? The subdivision of labour, and the invention and perfecting of machines. These two great means of augmenting the energy of labour, advance in proportion to the extent of the market, or, in other words, in proportion to the number of exchanges which can be made, and to the ease and readiness with which these can take place. Let the government, then, direct all its attention to the enlargement of the market, by forming safe and convenient roads, by the circulation of sterling coin, and by securing the faithful fulfilment of contracts; all of which are indispensible measures, at the same time that, when put in practice, they will never fail to attain the desired end. And the nearer a government approaches to perfection in each of these three points, the more certainly will it produce every possible increase of the national market. The first of the three means is, without doubt, the most essential, as no other expedient whatever can possibly supply its place.

The gradual accumulation of capitals is a necessary consequence of the increased productive powers of labour, and it becomes also a cause of still farther increase in these powers; but, in proportion as this accumulation becomes greater and greater, it serves to increase the extent of labour, inasmuch as it multiplies the number of labourers, or the sum of national industry. This increase, however, of the number of hands in the nation employed, will always be regulated by the nature of the business to which the capitals are dedicated.

Under this second head of the increase of the products of labour, the exertions of government are much more easy. In fact, it has only to refrain from doing harm. It is only required of it, that it shall protect the natural liberty of industry; that it shall leave open every channel into which, by its own tendencies, industry may be carried; that government shall abandon it to its own direction, and shall not attempt to point its efforts one way more than another; for private interest, that infallible instinct which guides the exertions of all industry, is infinitely better suited than any legislator to judge of the direction which it will with most advantage follow. Let government, then, renounce alike the system of prohibitions and of bounties; let it no longer attempt to impede the efforts of industry by regulations, or to accelerate her progress by

rewards; let it leave in the most perfect freedom the exertions of labour and the employment of capital; let its protecting influence extend only to the removal of such obstacles as avarice or ignorance have raised up to the unlimited liberty of industry and commerce; — then capitals will naturally develope themselves, by their own movement, in those directions which are at once most agreeable to the private interest of the capitalist, and most favourable to the increase of the national wealth.

METHOD OF FACILITATING THE STUDY OF DR. SMITH'S WORK.

Such are the results of the doctrine of Smith, and the fruits we are to reap from his immortal work. The proofs of the principle upon which his opinions are grounded, and the natural and easy manner in which his deductions flow from it, give it an air of simplicity and truth, which render it no less admirable than convincing. This simplicity, however, to be fully perceived, requires much study and consideration; for it cannot be denied that the 'Wealth of Nations' exhibits a striking instance of that defect for which English authors have so often been blamed, viz. a want of method, and a neglect, in their scientific works, of those divisions and arrangements which serve to assist the memory of the reader, and to guide his understanding. The author seems to have seized the pen at the moment when he was most elevated with the importance of his subject, and with the extent of his discoveries. He begins, by displaying before the eyes of his reader the innumerable wonders effected by the division of labour; and with this magnificent and impressive picture, he opens his course of instructions. He then goes back, to consider those circumstances which give rise to or limit this division; and is led by his subject to the definition of values — to the laws which regulate them, to the analysis of their several elements, and to the relations subsisting between those of different natures and origin; all of which are preliminary ideas, which ought naturally to have been explained to the reader before exhibiting to him the complicated instrument of the multiplication of wealth, or unveiling the prodigies of the most powerful of its resources.

On the other hand, he has often introduced long digressions, which interrupt the thread of his discussion, and, in many cases, completely destroy the connection of its several parts. Of this description is the digression

On the variations in the value of the precious metals during the four last centuries, with a critical examination of the opinions that their value is decreasing — book 1, chap. xi.

Upon banks of circulation and paper money — book 2, chap. ii.

Upon banks of deposit, and particularly that of Amsterdam — book 4, chap. iii.

Upon the advantage of seignorage in the coining of money — book 4, chap. vi.

Upon the commerce of grain, and the laws regarding this trade — book 4, chap. v.

These different treatises, although they are unquestionably the best that have ever been written on the subjects to which they relate, are, however, so introduced, as to distract the reader's attention — to make him lose sight of the principal object of the work — and to lessen the general effect of it as a whole.

To remedy, as far as I am able, these inconveniencies, and to facilitate to beginners the study of the doctrine of Smith, I have thought proper to point out the order which appears to me most agreeable to the natural progress of ideas, and, on this account, best calculated for the purpose of instruction.

I would begin by remarking, that the whole doctrine of Smith, upon the origin, multiplication, and distribution of wealth, is contained in his two first books; and that the three others may be read separately, as so many detached treatises, which, no doubt, confirm and develope his opinions, but do not by any means add to them.

The third book is an historical and political discussion on the progress which wealth would make in a country where labour and industry were left free; and upon the different causes which have tended, in all the countries of Europe, to reverse this progress.

In the fourth book, the author has endeavoured to combat the various systems of political economy which were popular previous to his time; and, in a particular manner, that which is denominated the mercantile system, which has exercised so strong an influence over the financial regulations of the European governments, and particularly over those of England.

In the fifth and last book, he considers the expenses of government; the most equitable and convenient modes of providing for these expenses; and lastly, public debts, and the influence they have over national prosperity.

The three last books may be read and studied in the same order and arrangement in which they were written, without any difficulty, by one who is completely master of the general doctrine contained in the two first.

I regard, then, the two first books, as a complete work, which I would divide into three parts.

The 1st relates to values in particular. It contains their definition; the laws which regulate them; the analysis of the elements which constitute a value, or enter into its composition; and the relations which values of different origin bear to each other.

The 2d part treats of the general mass of national wealth, which is here divided into separate classes, according to its destination or employment.

The 3d and last part explains the manner in which the growth and distribution of national wealth takes place.

PART FIRST. — OF VALUES IN PARTICULAR.

The essential quality which constitutes wealth, and without which it would not be entitled to the name, is its *exchangeable value*.

Exchangeable value differs from the value of utility — book 1, end of chap. iv.

The relation existing between two exchangeable values, when expressed by a value generally agreed upon, is denominated *price*.

The value generally agreed on among civilized nations, is that of metals. Motives to this preference. Origin of money — book 1, chap. iv. Relation between money and the metal in the state of bullion — book 1, chap. v.

The price in money, or *nominal* price of a thing, differs from its *real* price, which is its valuation by the quantity of labour expended upon it, or which it represents — ibid.

Laws, according to which the price of wealth is naturally fixed; and those accidental circumstances which occasion the actual to differ from the natural price, and which gave rise to a distinction between the *natural* and the *market price* — book 1, chap. vii.

The price of a thing, in most cases, consists of three distinct elements — the wages of the labour, the profit of the master who directs the labour, and the rent of the ground that furnishes the materials on which it is erected. There are, however, some descriptions of merchandize in which the rent forms no part of the price; and others, in which the profit forms no part of it; but none, in which it is not formed principally by the wages — book 1, chap. vi.

Of *wages*. Laws, according to which the natural rate of wages is fixed; accidental circumstances which cause them to vary, during a short period, from that natural rate — book 1, chap. viii.

Of the *profit* of capitals. Laws, by which the natural right of profit is fixed; accidental circumstances which, for a long while, increase or diminish it beyond that rate — book 1, chap. ix.

Labour and capitals tend naturally to diffuse themselves through every species of employment; and, as certain employments are, by their nature, accompanied with inconveniencies and difficulties which do not occur in others, while these, on the contrary, offer some real or imaginary advantages which are peculiar to themselves; wages and profits should rise and fall in proportion to these advantages and disadvantages; thus forming a complete equilibrium between the various kinds of employment. The arbitrary and oppressive policy of Europe, in many instances, opposes the establishment of this equilibrium, which is conformable to the order of nature — book 1, chap. x.

Of the *rent* of the ground. The nature of rent: the manner in which it enters into the price of wealth; and according to what principles it in some cases forms an integral part of that price, while in others it does not — book 1, chap. xi.

Division of the rude produce of the earth into two great classes:

1. That produce which is always necessarily disposed of in such a way as to bring a rent to the landed proprietor.

2. That which, according to circumstances, may be disposed of so as to bring, or so as not to bring, a rent.

The produce of the first description is derived from the ground appropriated to furnishing subsistence for man, or for those animals which he uses as food. The value of the produce of the ground cultivated for the support of man, determines the value of the produce of all other ground proper for this species of culture. This general rule allows of some exceptions. Causes of these exceptions.

The produce of the second class consists of the materials of clothing, lodging, fuel, and the ornaments of dress and furniture. The value of this species of produce depends on that of the first description. Some circumstances render it possible that the produce of the second kind may be disposed of in such a way as to furnish a rent to the landed proprietor. Principles which regulate the proportion of the price of these products, which is formed by the rent — book 1, chap. xi.

Relation between the respective values of the produce of the first class, and those of the produce of the second. Variations which may take place in this relation, and the causes of such variations — ibid.

Relation existing between the values of the two descriptions of rude produce above mentioned, and the values of the produce of manufacture.

Variations which may occur in this relation — ibid.

Certain kinds of rude produce, procured from very different sources, are, however, intended for the same kind of consumption; and hence it happens, the value of one determines and limits that of another — ibid.

The relations between values of different natures vary according to the state of society. This state is *improving*, *declining*, or *stationary*; that is to say, society is either increasing in wealth, or falling into poverty, or remaining in the same unchanged state of opulence.

Of the effects of these different states of society,

Upon the price of wages — book 1, chap. viii.

Upon the rate of profit — book 1, chap. ix.

Upon the value of the rude produce of the earth, and on that of the produce of manufacture — book 1, chap. xi.

Difference, in this respect, between the various kinds of rude produce, viz. 1. Those which the industry of man cannot multiply: 2. Those which his industry can always multiply in proportion to the demand: 3. Those over which human exertions have only an uncertain or limited influence — ibid.

PART SECOND. — OF STOCK AND ITS EMPLOYMENT.

Wealth, accumulated in the possession of an individual, is of two descriptions, according to its destination or employment:

1. That reserved for immediate consumption.

2. That employed as capital, for the production of a revenue — book 2, chap. i.

Capital is also of two kinds:

1. Fixed capital, which produces a revenue and still remains in the same hands

2. Circulating capital, which yields no revenue unless it be employed in trade — book 2 chap. i.

The whole accumulated wealth of any community may be divided into three parts:

1. The fund appropriated to the immediate consumption of the proprietors of wealth.

2. The fixed capital of the community.

3. Its circulating capital.

The *fixed capital* of the society consists,

1. Of all machines and instruments of labour;

2. Of all buildings and edifices erected for the purposes of industry;

3. Of every kind of agricultural improvement which can tend to render the soil more productive;

4. Of the talents and skill which certain members of the community have acquired by time and expense.

The *circulating capital* of a community consists,

1. In the money in circulation;

2. In the stock of provisions in the hands both of the producers and of the merchants, and from the sale of which they expect to derive a profit;

3. In the materials of lodging, clothing, dress, and ornament, more or less manufactured, which are in the hands of those who are employed in rendering them fit for use and consumption;

4. In the goods more completely fit for consumption, and preserved in warehouses and shops, by merchants who propose to sell them with a profit — book 2, chap. i.

Of the relation existing between the employment of these two kinds of capital — ibid.

Of the mode in which the capital withdrawn from circulation is disposed of — ibid.

The sources which continually renew the circulating capital, as soon as it enters into the fixed capital, or the stock for immediate consumption, are,

1. Lands;

2. Mines and quarries;

3. Fisheries — ibid.

Of the purposes accomplished by circulating coin — book 2, chap. ii; and the expedients which may be resorted to, in order to attain these with less expense, and fewer of those inconveniencies to which money is subjected — ibid.

Of the stock lent at interest; and of those things which regulate the proportion that this kind of stock bears to the whole existing stock of the community. The quantity of stock which may be lent depends in no degree upon the quantity of money in circulation — book 2, chap. iv.

Of the principles which determine the rate of interest — ibid.

There exists a necessary relation between this and the price of land — ibid.

PART THIRD — OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE MULTIPLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH TAKES PLACE.

Wealth uniformly increases in proportion to the augmentation which the power producing it receives, whether that be in *energy* or in *extent* — book I. introduction.

Labour, in which this power increases in *energy*,

1. By the division of the parts of the same work;

2. By the invention of such machines as abridge and facilitate labour — book I, chap. i.

The division of labour adds to its energy,

1. By the skill which the workman in this way acquires;

2. By the saving of time — ibid.

The invention of machines is itself an effect of the division of labour — ibid.

The natural disposition of mankind to exchange with each other the different productions of their respective labours and talents, is the principle which has given birth to the division of labour — book I, chap. ii.

The division of labour must of course be limited by the extent of the market; therefore, whatever tends to widen the market, facilitates the progress of a nation towards opulence — book I, chap. iii.

Labour gains in *extent*,

1. In proportion to the accumulation of capital;

2. In proportion to the manner in which these are employed — book I, introduction.

The accumulation of capitals is hastened by the increase of the proportion existing between the productive and unproductive consumers — book 2, chap. iii.

The proportion between these two classes of consumers is determined by the proportion existing between that part of the annual produce destined to the replacement of capital, and that destined for the purpose of revenue — ibid.

The proportion between that part of the annual produce which goes to form capital, and that which goes to form revenue, is great in a rich country, and small in a poor one — ibid.

In a wealthy country, the rent of land, taken absolutely, is much greater than in a poor country; but, taken in relation to the capital employed, it is much less — book 2, chap. iii.

In a wealthy country, the whole profits of its capital are infinitely greater than in one that is poor; although a given quantity of capital will, in a country of the latter description, produce profits much greater than in an opulent one — ibid.

It is industry that furnishes the produce; but it is economy that places in the capital that part of it which would otherwise have become revenue — ibid.

The economy of individuals arises from a principle which is universally diffused, and one that is continually in action; the desire of ameliorating their condition. This principle supports the existence and increase of national wealth, in spite of the prodigality of some individuals; and even triumphs over the profusion and errors of governments — ibid.

Of the different modes of spending money, some are more favourable than others to the increase of national wealth — ibid.

Those branches of employment which require a capital, never fail to call forth more or less labour; and thus contribute, in a greater or less degree, to increase the extent of national labour.

Capital can be employed only in four ways:

1. In cultivating and improving the earth, or, in other words, multiplying its rude produce;

2. In supporting manufactures;

3. In buying by the gross, to sell in the same manner;

4. In buying by the gross, to sell by retail.

These four modes of employing capital are equally necessary to, and serve mutually to support, each other. The first supports, beyond all comparison, the greatest number of productive hands; the second occupies more than the two remaining; and the fourth the fewest of any.

Capital may be employed, according to the third mode, in three different ways; each contributing in a very different degree to the support and encouragement of national industry.

When capital is employed in exchanging one description of the produce of national industry for another, it then supports as great a portion of industry as can be done by any capital employed in commerce.

When it is employed in exchanging the produce of national for that of foreign industry, for the purposes of home consumption, half of it goes to the support of foreign industry; by which means, it is only of half that service to the industry of the nation which it would have been had it been employed another way.

Lastly, when it is employed in exchanging one description of the produce of foreign industry for another, or in what is termed the *carrying trade*, it then serves wholly for the support and encouragement of the industry of the two foreign nations, and adds only to the annual produce of the country the profits of the merchant — book 2, chap. v.

Self-interest, when left uncontrouled, will necessarily lead the proprietors of capitals to prefer that species of employment which is most favourable to national industry, because it is, at the same time, most profitable for themselves — ibid. For, when capitals have been employed in a way different from that suggested by the infallible instinct of self-interest, it has always been in consequence of the peculiar circumstances of the European governments, and of that influence which the vulgar prejudices of merchants have had over the system of administration which these governments have adopted.

The account of these circumstances, with the discussion of the errors of this system, form the matter of the third and fourth books.

Political Economy is, of all sciences, that which affords most room for prejudices, and in which they are most liable to become deeply rooted. The desire of improving our condition, that universal principle, which continually acts upon every member of the community, is ever directing the thoughts of each individual to the means of increasing his private fortune. But should this individual ever chance to raise his views to the management of the public money, he would naturally be led to reason from analogy, and apply to the general interest of his country those principles which reflection and experience have led him to regard as the best guides in the conduct of his own private affairs. Thus, from attending to the fact, that money constitutes a part of the productive stock in the fortune of an individual, and that his fortune increases in proportion to the increase of this article, there arises that erroneous opinion so generally received, that money is a constituent part of national wealth, and that a country becomes rich, in proportion as it receives money from those countries with which it has commercial connections.

Merchants who have been accustomed to retire each night to their desks, to count, with eagerness, the quantity of currency, or of good debts, which their day’s sale has produced, calculating their profits only by this result, and confident that such a calculation has never deceived them, are naturally led to think that the affairs of the nation must follow the same rule; and they have been strengthened in this opinion by that unshaken confidence which a long and never-failing experience, that has been the source of wealth and prosperity, inspires. Hence those extravagant opinions respecting the advantages and profits of foreign commerce, and the importance of money; hence those absurd calculations that have been made regarding what is termed the balance of trade, the thermometer of public prosperity; hence those systems of

regulations, and those oppressive monopolies, which are resorted to for the purpose of making one side of the balance preponderate; hence, too, those bloody and destructive wars, which have raged in both hemispheres, from the period in which the road to the Indies, and to the new world, became familiar to European nations.

When we observe, that the many bloody wars that have been waged in the different parts of the world for these two last centuries, and even the present war, in many points of view, have had, as their principal end, the maintenance of some monopoly, contrary even to the interest of the nation armed to protect it; we shall feel the full importance of those benefits which the illustrious author of the ‘Wealth of Nations’ has endeavoured to confer upon mankind, by victoriously combating such strong and baneful prejudices. But we cannot help deeply lamenting, to see how slowly, and with what difficulty, reason in all its strength, and truth in all its clearness, regain the possession of these territories which error and passion have so rapidly overrun.

The prejudices so successfully attacked by Dr. Smith, appear again and again, with undiminished assurance, in the tribunals of legislature, in the councils of administration, in the cabinets of ministry, and in the writings of politicians. They still talk of the importance of foreign and colonial commerce; they still attempt to determine the balance of trade; they renew all the reveries of political arithmetic, as if these questions had not been determined by Smith, in a way which renders them no longer capable of controversy.

It was in the midst of a country, the most deeply imbued with mercantile prejudices; the most completely subjected to its prohibitory policy, that Dr. Smith sapped the foundations of this absurd and tyrannical system; it was at the very moment when England, in alarm, saw, with terror, the possibility of a separation from her American colonies: it was then that he derided the universal fear, and proudly prophesied the success of the colonists, and their approaching independence; and that he confidently announced, what experience has since completely affirmed, the happy consequences which this separation and this independence, so much dreaded, would produce upon the prosperity, both of Great Britain and her colonies — book 4, chap. vii. part 3.

The wealth of communities is so intimately connected with their civil and political existence, that the author has been drawn by his subject into numerous other discussions, which seem more or less removed from it;

and in which we discover the same sagacity of observation, the same depth of research, and the same force of reasoning.

The advantages of a complete and permanent freedom in the corn trade have never been better shown; and they have been proved by Dr. Smith, to arise from that fruitful source of wealth, the division of labour — book 4, chap. v.

The national defence and public education, two objects of very high importance, have also been discussed at length by our author.

He proves, that, in conformity to that desire to better our condition, by which all men are directed, and upon which the author has founded his whole doctrine, the teacher, whose wages are a fixed salary, will have no other end than to spare himself every trouble, and dedicate as little attention as possible to his pupils; while he that is paid in proportion to his labour, will naturally endeavour, by every means in his power, to increase his success, at the same time that he confers a great advantage on his scholars and on society. He confirms his theoretical opinions by incontestible examples — book 5, chap. i. part 3.

The superiority of regular troops over national militia is proved in theory, by the division of labour; and in practice, by the most remarkable facts in history — book 5, chap. i, part 1.

INTRODUCTION AND PLAN OF THE WORK.

The annual labour of every nation is the fund which originally supplies it with all the necessaries and conveniencies of life which it annually consumes, and which consist always either in the immediate produce of that labour, or in what is purchased with that produce from other nations.

According, therefore, as this produce, or what is purchased with it, bears a greater or smaller proportion to the number of those who are to consume it, the nation will be better or worse supplied with all the necessaries and conveniencies for which it has occasion.

But this proportion must in every nation be regulated by two different circumstances: first, by the skill, dexterity, and judgment with which its labour is generally applied; and, secondly, by the proportion between the number of those who are employed in useful labour, and that of those who are not so employed. Whatever be the soil, climate, or extent of territory of any particular nation, the abundance or scantiness of its annual supply must, in that particular situation, depend upon those two circumstances.

The abundance or scantiness of this supply, too, seems to depend more upon the former of those two circumstances than upon the latter. Among the savage nations of hunters and fishers, every individual who is able to work is more or less employed in useful labour, and endeavours to provide, as well as he can, the necessaries and conveniencies of life, for himself, and such of his family or tribe as are either too old, or too young, or too infirm, to go a-hunting and fishing. Such nations, however, are so miserably poor, that, from mere want, they are frequently reduced, or at least think themselves reduced, to the necessity sometimes of directly destroying, and sometimes of abandoning their infants, their old people, and those afflicted with lingering diseases, to perish with hunger, or to be devoured by wild beasts. Among civilized and thriving nations, on the contrary, though a great number of people do not labour at all, many of whom consume the produce of ten times, frequently of a hundred times, more labour than the greater part of those who work; yet the produce of the whole labour of the society is so great, that all are often abundantly supplied; and a workman, even of the lowest and poorest order, if he is frugal and industrious, may enjoy a greater share of

the necessaries and conveniencies of life than it is possible for any savage to acquire.

The causes of this improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the order according to which its produce is naturally distributed among the different ranks and conditions of men in the society, make the subject of the first book of this Inquiry.

Whatever be the actual state of the skill, dexterity, and judgment, with which labour is applied in any nation, the abundance or scantiness of its annual supply must depend, during the continuance of that state, upon the proportion between the number of those who are annually employed in useful labour, and that of those who are not so employed. The number of useful and productive labourers, it will hereafter appear, is everywhere in proportion to the quantity of capital stock which is employed in setting them to work, and to the particular way in which it is so employed. The second book, therefore, treats of the nature of capital stock, of the manner in which it is gradually accumulated, and of the different quantities of labour which it puts into motion, according to the different ways in which it is employed.

Nations tolerably well advanced as to skill, dexterity, and judgment, in the application of labour, have followed very different plans in the general conduct or direction of it; and those plans have not all been equally favourable to the greatness of its produce. The policy of some nations has given extraordinary encouragement to the industry of the country; that of others to the industry of towns. Scarce any nation has dealt equally and impartially with every sort of industry. Since the downfall of the Roman empire, the policy of Europe has been more favourable to arts, manufactures, and commerce, the industry of towns, than to agriculture, the industry of the country. The circumstances which seem to have introduced and established this policy are explained in the third book.

Though those different plans were, perhaps, first introduced by the private interests and prejudices of particular orders of men, without any regard to, or foresight of, their consequences upon the general welfare of the society; yet they have given occasion to very different theories of political economy; of which some magnify the importance of that industry which is carried on in towns, others of that which is carried on in the country. Those theories have had a considerable influence, not only upon the opinions of men of learning, but upon the public conduct of princes and sovereign states. I have endeavoured, in the fourth book,

to explain as fully and distinctly as I can those different theories, and the principal effects which they have produced in different ages and nations.

To explain in what has consisted the revenue of the great body of the people, or what has been the nature of those funds, which, in different ages and nations, have supplied their annual consumption, is the object of these four first books. The fifth and last book treats of the revenue of the sovereign, or commonwealth. In this book I have endeavoured to shew, first, what are the necessary expenses of the sovereign, or commonwealth; which of those expenses ought to be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society, and which of them, by that of some particular part only, or of some particular members of it: secondly, what are the different methods in which the whole society may be made to contribute towards defraying the expenses incumbent on the whole society, and what are the principal advantages and inconveniencies of each of those methods; and, thirdly and lastly, what are the reasons and causes which have induced almost all modern governments to mortgage some part of this revenue, or to contract debts; and what have been the effects of those debts upon the real wealth, the annual produce of the land and labour of the society.

BOOK I. OF THE CAUSES OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTIVE POWERS OF LABOUR, AND OF THE ORDER ACCORDING TO WHICH ITS PRODUCE IS NATURALLY DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE DIFFERENT RANKS OF THE PEOPLE.

CHAP. I. OF THE DIVISION OF LABOUR.

The greatest improvements in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgment, with which it is anywhere directed, or applied, seem to have been the effects of the division of labour.

The effects of the division of labour, in the general business of society, will be more easily understood, by considering in what manner it operates in some particular manufactures. It is commonly supposed to be carried furthest in some very trifling ones; not perhaps that it really is carried further in them than in others of more importance: but in those trifling manufactures which are destined to supply the small wants of but a small number of people, the whole number of workmen must necessarily be small; and those employed in every different branch of the work can often be collected into the same workhouse, and placed at once under the view of the spectator. In those great manufactures, on the contrary, which are destined to supply the great wants of the great body of the people, every different branch of the work employs so great a number of workmen, that it is impossible to collect them all into the same workhouse. We can seldom see more, at one time, than those employed in one single branch. Though in such manufactures, therefore, the work may really be divided into a much greater number of parts, than in those of a more trifling nature, the division is not near so obvious, and has accordingly been much less observed.

To take an example, therefore, from a very trifling manufacture, but one in which the division of labour has been very often taken notice of, the trade of a pin-maker: a workman not educated to this business (which the division of labour has rendered a distinct trade), nor acquainted with the use of the machinery employed in it (to the invention of which the same division of labour has probably given occasion), could scarce, perhaps, with his utmost industry, make one pin in a day, and certainly could not make twenty. But in the way in which this business is now carried on, not only the whole work is a peculiar trade, but it is divided into a number of branches, of which the greater part are likewise peculiar trades. One man draws out the wire; another straights it; a third cuts it; a fourth points it; a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on is a peculiar business; to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself

to put them into the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations, which, in some manufactories, are all performed by distinct hands, though in others the same man will sometimes perform two or three of them. I have seen a small manufactory of this kind, where ten men only were employed, and where some of them consequently performed two or three distinct operations. But though they were very poor, and therefore but indifferently accommodated with the necessary machinery, they could, when they exerted themselves, make among them about twelve pounds of pins in a day. There are in a pound upwards of four thousand pins of a middling size. Those ten persons, therefore, could make among them upwards of forty-eight thousand pins in a day. Each person, therefore, making a tenth part of forty-eight thousand pins, might be considered as making four thousand eight hundred pins in a day. But if they had all wrought separately and independently, and without any of them having been educated to this peculiar business, they certainly could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not one pin in a day; that is, certainly, not the two hundred and fortieth, perhaps not the four thousand eight hundredth, part of what they are at present capable of performing, in consequence of a proper division and combination of their different operations.

In every other art and manufacture, the effects of the division of labour are similar to what they are in this very trifling one, though, in many of them, the labour can neither be so much subdivided, nor reduced to so great a simplicity of operation. The division of labour, however, so far as it can be introduced, occasions, in every art, a proportionable increase of the productive powers of labour. The separation of different trades and employments from one another, seems to have taken place in consequence of this advantage. This separation, too, is generally carried furthest in those countries which enjoy the highest degree of industry and improvement; what is the work of one man, in a rude state of society, being generally that of several in an improved one. In every improved society, the farmer is generally nothing but a farmer; the manufacturer, nothing but a manufacturer. The labour, too, which is necessary to produce any one complete manufacture, is almost always divided among a great number of hands. How many different trades are employed in each branch of the linen and woollen manufactures, from the growers of the flax and the wool, to the bleachers and smoothers of the linen, or to the dyers and dressers of the cloth! The nature of agriculture, indeed, does not admit of so many subdivisions of

labour, nor of so complete a separation of one business from another, as manufactures. It is impossible to separate so entirely the business of the grazier from that of the corn-farmer, as the trade of the carpenter is commonly separated from that of the smith. The spinner is almost always a distinct person from the weaver; but the ploughman, the harrower, the sower of the seed, and the reaper of the corn, are often the same. The occasions for those different sorts of labour returning with the different seasons of the year, it is impossible that one man should be constantly employed in any one of them. This impossibility of making so complete and entire a separation of all the different branches of labour employed in agriculture, is perhaps the reason why the improvement of the productive powers of labour, in this art, does not always keep pace with their improvement in manufactures. The most opulent nations, indeed, generally excel all their neighbours in agriculture as well as in manufactures; but they are commonly more distinguished by their superiority in the latter than in the former. Their lands are in general better cultivated, and having more labour and expense bestowed upon them, produce more in proportion to the extent and natural fertility of the ground. But this superiority of produce is seldom much more than in proportion to the superiority of labour and expense. In agriculture, the labour of the rich country is not always much more productive than that of the poor; or, at least, it is never so much more productive, as it commonly is in manufactures. The corn of the rich country, therefore, will not always, in the same degree of goodness, come cheaper to market than that of the poor. The corn of Poland, in the same degree of goodness, is as cheap as that of France, notwithstanding the superior opulence and improvement of the latter country. The corn of France is, in the corn-provinces, fully as good, and in most years nearly about the same price with the corn of England, though, in opulence and improvement, France in perhaps inferior to England. The corn-lands of England, however, are better cultivated than those of France, and the corn-lands of France are said to be much better cultivated than those of Poland. But though the poor country, notwithstanding the inferiority of its cultivation, can, in some measure, rival the rich in the cheapness and goodness of its corn, it can pretend to no such competition in its manufactures, at least if those manufactures suit the soil, climate, and situation, of the rich country. The silks of France are better and cheaper than those of England, because the silk manufacture, at least under the present high duties upon the importation of raw silk, does not so well suit the climate of England as that of France. But the hardware and the coarse

woollens of England are beyond all comparison superior to those of France, and much cheaper, too, in the same degree of goodness. In Poland there are said to be scarce any manufactures of any kind, a few of those coarser household manufactures excepted, without which no country can well subsist.

This great increase in the quantity of work, which, in consequence of the division of labour, the same number of people are capable of performing, is owing to three different circumstances; first, to the increase of dexterity in every particular workman; secondly, to the saving of the time which is commonly lost in passing from one species of work to another; and, lastly, to the invention of a great number of machines which facilitate and abridge labour, and enable one man to do the work of many.

First, the improvement of the dexterity of the workmen, necessarily increases the quantity of the work he can perform; and the division of labour, by reducing every man’s business to some one simple operation, and by making this operation the sole employment of his life, necessarily increases very much the dexterity of the workman. A common smith, who, though accustomed to handle the hammer, has never been used to make nails, if, upon some particular occasion, he is obliged to attempt it, will scarce, I am assured, be able to make above two or three hundred nails in a day, and those, too, very bad ones. A smith who has been accustomed to make nails, but whose sole or principal business has not been that of a nailer, can seldom, with his utmost diligence, make more than eight hundred or a thousand nails in a day. I have seen several boys, under twenty years of age, who had never exercised any other trade but that of making nails, and who, when they exerted themselves, could make, each of them, upwards of two thousand three hundred nails in a day. The making of a nail, however, is by no means one of the simplest operations. The same person blows the bellows, stirs or mends the fire as there is occasion, heats the iron, and forges every part of the nail: in forging the head, too, he in obliged to change his tools. The different operations into which the making of a pin, or of a metal button, is subdivided, are all of them much more simple, and the dexterity of the person, of whose life it has been the sole business to perform them, is usually much greater. The rapidity with which some of the operations of those manufactures are performed, exceeds what the human hand could, by those who had never seen them, be supposed capable of acquiring.

Secondly, The advantage which is gained by saving the time commonly lost in passing from one sort of work to another, is much

greater than we should at first view be apt to imagine it. It is impossible to pass very quickly from one kind of work to another, that is carried on in a different place, and with quite different tools. A country weaver, who cultivates a small farm, must loose a good deal of time in passing from his loom to the field, and from the field to his loom. When the two trades can be carried on in the same workhouse, the loss of time is, no doubt, much less. It is, even in this case, however, very considerable. A man commonly saunters a little in turning his hand from one sort of employment to another. When he first begins the new work, he is seldom very keen and hearty; his mind, as they say, does not go to it, and for some time he rather trifles than applies to good purpose. The habit of sauntering, and of indolent careless application, which is naturally, or rather necessarily, acquired by every country workman who is obliged to change his work and his tools every half hour, and to apply his hand in twenty different ways almost every day of his life, renders him almost always slothful and lazy, and incapable of any vigorous application, even on the most pressing occasions. Independent, therefore, of his deficiency in point of dexterity, this cause alone must always reduce considerably the quantity of work which he is capable of performing.

Thirdly, and lastly, everybody must be sensible how much labour is facilitated and abridged by the application of proper machinery. It is unnecessary to give any example. I shall only observe, therefore, that the invention of all those machines by which labour is to much facilitated and abridged, seems to have been originally owing to the division of labour. Men are much more likely to discover easier and readier methods of attaining any object, when the whole attention of their minds is directed towards that single object, than when it is dissipated among a great variety of things. But, in consequence of the division of labour, the whole of every man’s attention comes naturally to be directed towards some one very simple object. It is naturally to be expected, therefore, that some one or other of those who are employed in each particular branch of labour should soon find out easier and readier methods of performing their own particular work, wherever the nature of it admits of such improvement. A great part of the machines made use of in those manufactures in which labour is most subdivided, were originally the inventions of common workmen, who, being each of them employed in some very simple operation, naturally turned their thoughts towards finding out easier and readier methods of performing it. Whoever has been much accustomed to visit such manufactures, must frequently have been shewn very pretty machines, which were the inventions of such

workmen, in order to facilitate and quicken their own particular part of the work. In the first fire engines, a boy was constantly employed to open and shut alternately the communication between the boiler and the cylinder, according as the piston either ascended or descended. One of those boys, who loved to play with his companions, observed that, by tying a string from the handle of the valve which opened this communication to another part of the machine, the valve would open and shut without his assistance, and leave him at liberty to divert himself with his play-fellows. One of the greatest improvements that has been made upon this machine, since it was first invented, was in this manner the discovery of a boy who wanted to save his own labour.

All the improvements in machinery, however, have by no means been the inventions of those who had occasion to use the machines. Many improvements have been made by the ingenuity of the makers of the machines, when to make them became the business of a peculiar trade; and some by that of those who are called philosophers, or men of speculation, whose trade it is not to do any thing, but to observe every thing, and who, upon that account, are often capable of combining together the powers of the most distant and dissimilar objects. In the progress of society, philosophy or speculation becomes, like every other employment, the principal or sole trade and occupation of a particular class of citizens. Like every other employment, too, it is subdivided into a great number of different branches, each of which affords occupation to a peculiar tribe or class of philosophers; and this subdivision of employment in philosophy, as well as in every other business, improves dexterity, and saves time. Each individual becomes more expert in his own peculiar branch, more work is done upon the whole, and the quantity of science is considerably increased by it.

It is the great multiplication of the productions of all the different arts, in consequence of the division of labour, which occasions, in a well-governed society, that universal opulence which extends itself to the lowest ranks of the people. Every workman has a great quantity of his own work to dispose of beyond what he himself has occasion for; and every other workman being exactly in the same situation, he is enabled to exchange a great quantity of his own goods for a great quantity or, what comes to the same thing, for the price of a great quantity of theirs. He supplies them abundantly with what they have occasion for, and they accommodate him as amply with what he has occasion for, and a general plenty diffuses itself through all the different ranks of the society.

Observe the accommodation of the most common artificer or day-labourer in a civilized and thriving country, and you will perceive that the number of people, of whose industry a part, though but a small part, has been employed in procuring him this accommodation, exceeds all computation. The woollen coat, for example, which covers the day-labourer, as coarse and rough as it may appear, is the produce of the joint labour of a great multitude of workmen. The shepherd, the sorter of the wool, the wool-comber or carder, the dyer, the scribbler, the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, the dresser, with many others, must all join their different arts in order to complete even this homely production. How many merchants and carriers, besides, must have been employed in transporting the materials from some of those workmen to others who often live in a very distant part of the country? How much commerce and navigation in particular, how many ship-builders, sailors, sail-makers, rope-makers, must have been employed in order to bring together the different drugs made use of by the dyer, which often come from the remotest corners of the world? What a variety of labour, too, is necessary in order to produce the tools of the meanest of those workmen! To say nothing of such complicated machines as the ship of the sailor, the mill of the fuller, or even the loom of the weaver, let us consider only what a variety of labour is requisite in order to form that very simple machine, the shears with which the shepherd clips the wool. The miner, the builder of the furnace for smelting the ore, the feller of the timber, the burner of the charcoal to be made use of in the smelting-house, the brickmaker, the bricklayer, the workmen who attend the furnace, the millwright, the forger, the smith, must all of them join their different arts in order to produce them. Were we to examine, in the same manner, all the different parts of his dress and household furniture, the coarse linen shirt which he wears next his skin, the shoes which cover his feet, the bed which he lies on, and all the different parts which compose it, the kitchen-grate at which he prepares his victuals, the coals which he makes use of for that purpose, dug from the bowels of the earth, and brought to him, perhaps, by a long sea and a long land-carriage, all the other utensils of his kitchen, all the furniture of his table, the knives and forks, the earthen or pewter plates upon which he serves up and divides his victuals, the different hands employed in preparing his bread and his beer, the glass window which lets in the heat and the light, and keeps out the wind and the rain, with all the knowledge and art requisite for preparing that beautiful and happy invention, without which these northern parts of the world could scarce have afforded a very comfortable habitation, together

with the tools of all the different workmen employed in producing those different conveniencies; if we examine, I say, all these things, and consider what a variety of labour is employed about each of them, we shall be sensible that, without the assistance and co-operation of many thousands, the very meanest person in a civilized country could not be provided, even according to, what we very falsely imagine, the easy and simple manner in which he is commonly accommodated. Compared, indeed, with the more extravagant luxury of the great, his accommodation must no doubt appear extremely simple and easy; and yet it may be true, perhaps, that the accommodation of an European prince does not always so much exceed that of an industrious and frugal peasant, as the accommodation of the latter exceeds that of many an African king, the absolute masters of the lives and liberties of ten thousand naked savages.

CHAP. II. OF THE PRINCIPLE WHICH GIVES OCCASION TO THE DIVISION OF LABOUR.

This division of labour, from which so many advantages are derived, is not originally the effect of any human wisdom, which foresees and intends that general opulence to which it gives occasion. It is the necessary, though very slow and gradual, consequence of a certain propensity in human nature, which has in view no such extensive utility; the propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another.

Whether this propensity be one of these original principles in human nature, of which no further account can be given, or whether, as seems more probable, it be the necessary consequence of the faculties of reason and speech, it belongs not to our present subject to inquire. It is common to all men, and to be found in no other race of animals, which seem to know neither this nor any other species of contracts. Two greyhounds, in running down the same hare, have sometimes the appearance of acting in some sort of concert. Each turns her towards his companion, or endeavours to intercept her when his companion turns her towards himself. This, however, is not the effect of any contract, but of the accidental concurrence of their passions in the same object at that particular time. Nobody ever saw a dog make a fair and deliberate exchange of one bone for another with another dog. Nobody ever saw one animal, by its gestures and natural cries signify to another, this is mine, that yours; I am willing to give this for that. When an animal wants to obtain something either of a man, or of another animal, it has no other means of persuasion, but to gain the favour of those whose service it requires. A puppy fawns upon its dam, and a spaniel endeavours, by a thousand attractions, to engage the attention of its master who is at dinner, when it wants to be fed by him. Man sometimes uses the same arts with his brethren, and when he has no other means of engaging them to act according to his inclinations, endeavours by every servile and fawning attention to obtain their good will. He has not time, however, to do this upon every occasion. In civilized society he stands at all times in need of the co-operation and assistance of great multitudes, while his whole life is scarce sufficient to gain the friendship of a few persons. In almost every other race of animals, each individual, when it is grown up to maturity, is entirely independent, and in its natural state has occasion for the assistance of no other living creature. But man has almost

constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and shew them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. Whoever offers to another a bargain of any kind, proposes to do this. Give me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want, is the meaning of every such offer; and it is in this manner that we obtain from one another the far greater part of those good offices which we stand in need of. It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities, but of their advantages. Nobody but a beggar chooses to depend chiefly upon the benevolence of his fellow-citizens. Even a beggar does not depend upon it entirely. The charity of well-disposed people, indeed, supplies him with the whole fund of his subsistence. But though this principle ultimately provides him with all the necessaries of life which he has occasion for, it neither does nor can provide him with them as he has occasion for them. The greater part of his occasional wants are supplied in the same manner as those of other people, by treaty, by barter, and by purchase. With the money which one man gives him he purchases food. The old clothes which another bestows upon him he exchanges for other clothes which suit him better, or for lodging, or for food, or for money, with which he can buy either food, clothes, or lodging, as he has occasion.

As it is by treaty, by barter, and by purchase, that we obtain from one another the greater part of those mutual good offices which we stand in need of, so it is this same trucking disposition which originally gives occasion to the division of labour. In a tribe of hunters or shepherds, a particular person makes bows and arrows, for example, with more readiness and dexterity than any other. He frequently exchanges them for cattle or for venison, with his companions; and he finds at last that he can, in this manner, get more cattle and venison, than if he himself went to the field to catch them. From a regard to his own interest, therefore, the making of bows and arrows grows to be his chief business, and he becomes a sort of armourer. Another excels in making the frames and covers of their little huts or moveable houses. He is accustomed to be of use in this way to his neighbours, who reward him in the same manner with cattle and with venison, till at last he finds it his interest to dedicate himself entirely to this employment, and to become a sort of house-carpenter. In the same manner a third becomes a smith or a brazier; a

fourth, a tanner or dresser of hides or skins, the principal part of the clothing of savages. And thus the certainty of being able to exchange all that surplus part of the produce of his own labour, which is over and above his own consumption, for such parts of the produce of other men's labour as he may have occasion for, encourages every man to apply himself to a particular occupation, and to cultivate and bring to perfection whatever talent of genius he may possess for that particular species of business.

The difference of natural talents in different men, is, in reality, much less than we are aware of; and the very different genius which appears to distinguish men of different professions, when grown up to maturity, is not upon many occasions so much the cause, as the effect of the division of labour. The difference between the most dissimilar characters, between a philosopher and a common street porter, for example, seems to arise not so much from nature, as from habit, custom, and education. When they came into the world, and for the first six or eight years of their existence, they were, perhaps, very much alike, and neither their parents nor playfellows could perceive any remarkable difference. About that age, or soon after, they come to be employed in very different occupations. The difference of talents comes then to be taken notice of, and widens by degrees, till at last the vanity of the philosopher is willing to acknowledge scarce any resemblance. But without the disposition to truck, barter, and exchange, every man must have procured to himself every necessary and conveniency of life which he wanted. All must have had the same duties to perform, and the same work to do, and there could have been no such difference of employment as could alone give occasion to any great difference of talents.

As it is this disposition which forms that difference of talents, so remarkable among men of different professions, so it is this same disposition which renders that difference useful. Many tribes of animals, acknowledged to be all of the same species, derive from nature a much more remarkable distinction of genius, than what, antecedent to custom and education, appears to take place among men. By nature a philosopher is not in genius and disposition half so different from a street porter, as a mastiff is from a grey-hound, or a grey-hound from a spaniel, or this last from a shepherd's dog. Those different tribes of animals, however, though all of the same species, are of scarce any use to one another. The strength of the mastiff is not in the least supported either by the swiftness of the grey-hound, or by the sagacity of the spaniel, or by the docility of the shepherd's dog. The effects of those different geniuses

and talents, for want of the power or disposition to barter and exchange, cannot be brought into a common stock, and do not in the least contribute to the better accommodation and conveniency of the species. Each animal is still obliged to support and defend itself, separately and independently, and derives no sort of advantage from that variety of talents with which nature has distinguished its fellows. Among men, on the contrary, the most dissimilar geniuses are of use to one another; the different produces of their respective talents, by the general disposition to truck, barter, and exchange, being brought, as it were, into a common stock, where every man may purchase whatever part of the produce of other men’s talents he has occasion for.

CHAP. III. THAT THE DIVISION OF LABOUR IS LIMITED BY THE EXTENT OF THE MARKET.

As it is the power of exchanging that gives occasion to the division of labour, so the extent of this division must always be limited by the extent of that power, or, in other words, by the extent of the market. When the market is very small, no person can have any encouragement to dedicate himself entirely to one employment, for want of the power to exchange all that surplus part of the produce of his own labour, which is over and above his own consumption, for such parts of the produce of other men's labour as he has occasion for.

There are some sorts of industry, even of the lowest kind, which can be carried on nowhere but in a great town. A porter, for example, can find employment and subsistence in no other place. A village is by much too narrow a sphere for him; even an ordinary market-town is scarce large enough to afford him constant occupation. In the lone houses and very small villages which are scattered about in so desert a country as the highlands of Scotland, every farmer must be butcher, baker, and brewer, for his own family. In such situations we can scarce expect to find even a smith, a carpenter, or a mason, within less than twenty miles of another of the same trade. The scattered families that live at eight or ten miles distance from the nearest of them, must learn to perform themselves a great number of little pieces of work, for which, in more populous countries, they would call in the assistance of these workmen. Country workmen are almost everywhere obliged to apply themselves to all the different branches of industry that have so much affinity to one another as to be employed about the same sort of materials. A country carpenter deals in every sort of work that is made of wood; a country smith in every sort of work that is made of iron. The former is not only a carpenter, but a joiner, a cabinet-maker, and even a carver in wood, as well as a wheel-wright, a plough-wright, a cart and waggon-maker. The employments of the latter are still more various. It is impossible there should be such a trade as even that of a nailer in the remote and inland parts of the highlands of Scotland. Such a workman at the rate of a thousand nails a-day, and three hundred working days in the year, will make three hundred thousand nails in the year. But in such a situation it

would be impossible to dispose of one thousand, that is, of one day's work in the year.

As by means of water-carriage, a more extensive market is opened to every sort of industry than what land-carriage alone can afford it, so it is upon the sea-coast, and along the banks of navigable rivers, that industry of every kind naturally begins to subdivide and improve itself, and it is frequently not till a long time after that those improvements extend themselves to the inland parts of the country. A broad-wheeled waggon, attended by two men, and drawn by eight horses, in about six weeks time, carries and brings back between London and Edinburgh near four ton weight of goods. In about the same time a ship navigated by six or eight men, and sailing between the ports of London and Leith, frequently carries and brings back two hundred ton weight of goods. Six or eight men, therefore, by the help of water-carriage, can carry and bring back, in the same time, the same quantity of goods between London and Edinburgh as fifty broad-wheeled waggons, attended by a hundred men, and drawn by four hundred horses. Upon two hundred tons of goods, therefore, carried by the cheapest land-carriage from London to Edinburgh, there must be charged the maintenance of a hundred men for three weeks, and both the maintenance and what is nearly equal to maintenance the wear and tear of four hundred horses, as well as of fifty great waggons. Whereas, upon the same quantity of goods carried by water, there is to be charged only the maintenance of six or eight men, and the wear and tear of a ship of two hundred tons burthen, together with the value of the superior risk, or the difference of the insurance between land and water-carriage. Were there no other communication between those two places, therefore, but by land-carriage, as no goods could be transported from the one to other, except such whose price was very considerable in proportion to their weight, they could carry on but a small part of that commerce which at present subsists between them, and consequently could give but a small part of that encouragement which they at present mutually afford to each other's industry. There could be little or no commerce of any kind between the distant parts of the world. What goods could bear the expense of land-carriage between London and Calcutta? Or if there were any so precious as to be able to support this expense, with what safety could they be transported through the territories of so many barbarous nations? Those two cities, however, at present carry on a very considerable commerce with each other, and by mutually affording a market, give a good deal of encouragement to each other's industry.

Since such, therefore, are the advantages of water-carriage, it is natural that the first improvements of art and industry should be made where this conveniency opens the whole world for a market to the produce of every sort of labour, and that they should always be much later in extending themselves into the inland parts of the country. The inland parts of the country can for a long time have no other market for the greater part of their goods, but the country which lies round about them, and separates them from the sea-coast, and the great navigable rivers. The extent of the market, therefore, must for a long time be in proportion to the riches and populousness of that country, and consequently their improvement must always be posterior to the improvement of that country. In our North American colonies, the plantations have constantly followed either the sea-coast or the banks of the navigable rivers, and have scarce anywhere extended themselves to any considerable distance from both.

The nations that, according to the best authenticated history, appear to have been first civilized, were those that dwelt round the coast of the Mediterranean sea. That sea, by far the greatest inlet that is known in the world, having no tides, nor consequently any waves, except such as are caused by the wind only, was, by the smoothness of its surface, as well as by the multitude of its islands, and the proximity of its neighbouring shores, extremely favourable to the infant navigation of the world; when, from their ignorance of the compass, men were afraid to quit the view of the coast, and from the imperfection of the art of ship-building, to abandon themselves to the boisterous waves of the ocean. To pass beyond the pillars of Hercules, that is, to sail out of the straits of Gibraltar, was, in the ancient world, long considered as a most wonderful and dangerous exploit of navigation. It was late before even the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, the most skilful navigators and ship-builders of those old times, attempted it; and they were, for a long time, the only nations that did attempt it.

Of all the countries on the coast of the Mediterranean sea, Egypt seems to have been the first in which either agriculture or manufactures were cultivated and improved to any considerable degree. Upper Egypt extends itself nowhere above a few miles from the Nile; and in Lower Egypt, that great river breaks itself into many different canals, which, with the assistance of a little art, seem to have afforded a communication by water-carriage, not only between all the great towns, but between all the considerable villages, and even to many farm-houses in the country, nearly in the same manner as the Rhine and the Maese do in Holland at

present. The extent and easiness of this inland navigation was probably one of the principal causes of the early improvement of Egypt.

The improvements in agriculture and manufactures seem likewise to have been of very great antiquity in the provinces of Bengal in the East Indies, and in some of the eastern provinces of China, though the great extent of this antiquity is not authenticated by any histories of whose authority we, in this part of the world, are well assured. In Bengal, the Ganges, and several other great rivers, form a great number of navigable canals, in the same manner as the Nile does in Egypt. In the eastern provinces of China, too, several great rivers form, by their different branches, a multitude of canals, and, by communicating with one another, afford an inland navigation much more extensive than that either of the Nile or the Ganges, or, perhaps, than both of them put together. It is remarkable, that neither the ancient Egyptians, nor the Indians, nor the Chinese, encouraged foreign commerce, but seem all to have derived their great opulence from this inland navigation.

All the inland parts of Africa, and all that part of Asia which lies any considerable way north of the Euxine and Caspian seas, the ancient Scythia, the modern Tartary and Siberia, seem, in all ages of the world, to have been in the same barbarous and uncivilized state in which we find them at present. The sea of Tartary is the frozen ocean, which admits of no navigation; and though some of the greatest rivers in the world run through that country, they are at too great a distance from one another to carry commerce and communication through the greater part of it. There are in Africa none of those great inlets, such as the Baltic and Adriatic seas in Europe, the Mediterranean and Euxine seas in both Europe and Asia, and the gulfs of Arabia, Persia, India, Bengal, and Siam, in Asia, to carry maritime commerce into the interior parts of that great continent; and the great rivers of Africa are at too great a distance from one another to give occasion to any considerable inland navigation. The commerce, besides, which any nation can carry on by means of a river which does not break itself into any great number of branches or canals, and which runs into another territory before it reaches the sea, can never be very considerable, because it is always in the power of the nations who possess that other territory to obstruct the communication between the upper country and the sea. The navigation of the Danube is of very little use to the different states of Bavaria, Austria, and Hungary, in comparison of what it would be, if any of them possessed the whole of its course, till it falls into the Black sea.

CHAP. IV. OF THE ORIGIN AND USE OF MONEY.

When the division of labor has been once thoroughly established, it is but a very small part of a man’s wants which the produce of his own labour can supply. He supplies the far greater part of them by exchanging that surplus part of the produce of his own labour, which is over and above his own consumption, for such parts of the produce of other men’s labour as he has occasion for. Every man thus lives by exchanging, or becomes, in some measure, a merchant, and the society itself grows to be what is properly a commercial society.

But when the division of labour first began to take place, this power of exchanging must frequently have been very much clogged and embarrassed in in operations. One man, we shall suppose, has more of a certain commodity than he himself has occasion for, while another has less. The former, consequently, would be glad to dispose of, and the latter to purchase, a part of this superfluity. But if this latter should chance to have nothing that the former stands in need of, no exchange can be made between them. The butcher has more meat in his shop than he himself can consume, and the brewer and the baker would each of them be willing to purchase a part of it. But they have nothing to offer in exchange, except the different productions of their respective trades, and the butcher is already provided with all the bread and beer which he has immediate occasion for. No exchange can, in this case, be made between them. He cannot be their merchant, nor they his customers; and they are all of them thus mutually less serviceable to one another. In order to avoid the inconveniency of such situations, every prudent man in every period of society, after the first establishment of the division of labour, must naturally have endeavoured to manage his affairs in such a manner, as to have at all times by him, besides the peculiar produce of his own industry, a certain quantity of some one commodity or other, such as he imagined few people would be likely to refuse in exchange for the produce of their industry. Many different commodities, it is probable, were successively both thought of and employed for this purpose. In the rude ages of society, cattle are said to have been the common instrument of commerce; and, though they must have been a most inconvenient one, yet, in old times, we find things were frequently valued according to the number of cattle which had been given in exchange for them. The

armour of Diomede, says Homer, cost only nine oxen; but that of Glaucus cost a hundred oxen. Salt is said to be the common instrument of commerce and exchanges in Abyssinia; a species of shells in some parts of the coast of India; dried cod at Newfoundland; tobacco in Virginia; sugar in some of our West India colonies; hides or dressed leather in some other countries; and there is at this day a village in Scotland, where it is not uncommon, I am told, for a workman to carry nails instead of money to the baker's shop or the ale-house.

In all countries, however, men seem at last to have been determined by irresistible reasons to give the preference, for this employment, to metals above every other commodity. Metals can not only be kept with as little loss as any other commodity, scarce any thing being less perishable than they are, but they can likewise, without any loss, be divided into any number of parts, as by fusion those parts can easily be re-united again; a quality which no other equally durable commodities possess, and which, more than any other quality, renders them fit to be the instruments of commerce and circulation. The man who wanted to buy salt, for example, and had nothing but cattle to give in exchange for it, must have been obliged to buy salt to the value of a whole ox, or a whole sheep, at a time. He could seldom buy less than this, because what he was to give for it could seldom be divided without loss; and if he had a mind to buy more, he must, for the same reasons, have been obliged to buy double or triple the quantity, the value, to wit, of two or three oxen, or of two or three sheep. If, on the contrary, instead of sheep or oxen, he had metals to give in exchange for it, he could easily proportion the quantity of the metal to the precise quantity of the commodity which he had immediate occasion for.

Different metals have been made use of by different nations for this purpose. Iron was the common instrument of commerce among the ancient Spartans, copper among the ancient Romans, and gold and silver among all rich and commercial nations.

Those metals seem originally to have been made use of for this purpose in rude bars, without any stamp or coinage. Thus we are told by Pliny[6*], upon the authority of Timæus, an ancient historian, that, till the time of Servius Tullius, the Romans had no coined money, but made use of unstamped bars of copper, to purchase whatever they had occasion for. These rude bars, therefore, performed at this time the function of money.

The use of metals in this rude state was attended with two very considerable inconveniences; first, with the trouble of weighing, and secondly, with that of assaying them. In the precious metals, where a

small difference in the quantity makes a great difference in the value, even the business of weighing, with proper exactness, requires at least very accurate weights and scales. The weighing of gold, in particular, is an operation of some nicety. In the coarser metals, indeed, where a small error would be of little consequence, less accuracy would, no doubt, be necessary. Yet we should find it excessively troublesome if every time a poor man had occasion either to buy or sell a farthing's worth of goods, he was obliged to weigh the farthing. The operation of assaying is still more difficult, still more tedious; and, unless part of the metal is fairly melted in the crucible, with proper dissolvents, any conclusion that can be drawn from it is extremely uncertain. Before the institution of coined money, however, unless they went through this tedious and difficult operation, people must always have been liable to the grossest frauds and impositions; and instead of a pound weight of pure silver, or pure copper, might receive, in exchange for their goods, an adulterated composition of the coarsest and cheapest materials, which had, however, in their outward appearance, been made to resemble these metals. To prevent such abuses, to facilitate exchanges, and thereby to encourage all sorts of industry and commerce, it has been found necessary, in all countries that have made any considerable advances towards improvement, to affix a public stamp upon certain quantities of such particular metals, as were in those countries commonly made use of to purchase goods. Hence the origin of coined money, and of those public offices called mints; institutions exactly of the same nature with these of the aulnagers and stamp-masters of woollen and linen cloth. All of them are equally meant to ascertain, by means of a public stamp, the quantity and uniform goodness of those different commodities when brought to market.

The first public stamps of this kind that were affixed to the current metals, seem in many cases to have been intended to ascertain, what it was both most difficult and most important to ascertain, the goodness or fineness of the metal, and to have resembled the sterling mark which is at present affixed to plate and bars of silver, or the Spanish mark which is sometimes affixed to ingots of gold, and which, being struck only upon one side of the piece, and not covering the whole surface, ascertains the fineness, but not the weight of the metal. Abraham weighs to Ephron the four hundred shekels of silver which he had agreed to pay for the field of Machpelah. They are said, however, to be the current money of the merchant, and yet are received by weight, and not by tale, in the same manner as ingots of gold and bars of silver are at present. The revenues of the ancient Saxon kings of England are said to have been paid, not in

money, but in kind, that is, in victuals and provisions of all sorts. William the Conqueror introduced the custom of paying them in money. This money, however, was for a long time, received at the exchequer, by weight, and not by tale.

The inconveniency and difficulty of weighing those metals with exactness, gave occasion to the institution of coins, of which the stamp, covering entirely both sides of the piece, and sometimes the edges too, was supposed to ascertain not only the fineness, but the weight of the metal. Such coins, therefore, were received by tale, as at present, without the trouble of weighing.

The denominations of those coins seem originally to have expressed the weight or quantity of metal contained in them. In the time of Servius Tullius, who first coined money at Rome, the Roman as or pondo contained a Roman pound of good copper. It was divided, in the same manner as our Troyes pound, into twelve ounces, each of which contained a real ounce of good copper. The English pound sterling, in the time of Edward I. contained a pound, Tower weight, of silver of a known fineness. The Tower pound seems to have been something more than the Roman pound, and something less than the Troyes pound. This last was not introduced into the mint of England till the 18th of Henry the VIII. The French livre contained, in the time of Charlemagne, a pound, Troyes weight, of silver of a known fineness. The fair of Troyes in Champaign was at that time frequented by all the nations of Europe, and the weights and measures of so famous a market were generally know and esteemed. The Scots money pound contained, from the time of Alexander the First to that of Robert Bruce, a pound of silver of the same weight and fineness with the English pound sterling. English, French, and Scots pennies, too, contained all of them originally a real penny-weight of silver, the twentieth part of an ounce, and the two hundred-and-fortieth part of a pound. The shilling, too, seems originally to have been the denomination of a weight. *When wheat is at twelve shillings the quarter*, says an ancient statute of Henry III. *then wastel bread of a farthing shall weigh eleven shillings and fourpence*. The proportion, however, between the shilling, and either the penny on the one hand, or the pound on the other, seems not to have been so constant and uniform as that between the penny and the pound. During the first race of the kings of France, the French sou or shilling appears upon different occasions to have contained five, twelve, twenty, and forty pennies. Among the ancient Saxons, a shilling appears at one time to have contained only five pennies, and it is not improbable that it may have been as variable among

them as among their neighbours, the ancient Franks. From the time of Charlemagne among the French, and from that of William the Conqueror among the English, the proportion between the pound, the shilling, and the penny, seems to have been uniformly the same as at present, though the value of each has been very different; for in every country of the world, I believe, the avarice and injustice of princes and sovereign states, abusing the confidence of their subjects, have by degrees diminished the real quantity of metal, which had been originally contained in their coins. The Roman as, in the latter ages of the republic, was reduced to the twenty-fourth part of its original value, and, instead of weighing a pound, came to weigh only half an ounce. The English pound and penny contain at present about a third only; the Scots pound and penny about a thirty-sixth; and the French pound and penny about a sixty-sixth part of their original value. By means of those operations, the princes and sovereign states which performed them were enabled, in appearance, to pay their debts and fulfil their engagements with a smaller quantity of silver than would otherwise have been requisite. It was indeed in appearance only; for their creditors were really defrauded of a part of what was due to them. All other debtors in the state were allowed the same privilege, and might pay with the same nominal sum of the new and debased coin whatever they had borrowed in the old. Such operations, therefore, have always proved favourable to the debtor, and ruinous to the creditor, and have sometimes produced a greater and more universal revolution in the fortunes of private persons, than could have been occasioned by a very great public calamity.

It is in this manner that money has become, in all civilized nations, the universal instrument of commerce, by the intervention of which goods of all kinds are bought and sold, or exchanged for one another.

What are the rules which men naturally observe, in exchanging them either for money, or for one another, I shall now proceed to examine. These rules determine what may be called the relative or exchangeable value of goods.

The word VALUE, it is to be observed, has two different meanings, and sometimes expresses the utility of some particular object, and sometimes the power of purchasing other goods which the possession of that object conveys. The one may be called ‘value in use;’ the other, ‘value in exchange.’ The things which have the greatest value in use have frequently little or no value in exchange; and, on the contrary, those which have the greatest value in exchange have frequently little or no value in use. Nothing is more useful than water; but it will purchase

scarce any thing; scarce any thing can be had in exchange for it. A diamond, on the contrary, has scarce any value in use; but a very great quantity of other goods may frequently be had in exchange for it.

In order to investigate the principles which regulate the exchangeable value of commodities, I shall endeavour to shew,

First, what is the real measure of this exchangeable value; or wherein consists the real price of all commodities.

Secondly, what are the different parts of which this real price is composed or made up.

And, lastly, what are the different circumstances which sometimes raise some or all of these different parts of price above, and sometimes sink them below, their natural or ordinary rate; or, what are the causes which sometimes hinder the market price, that is, the actual price of commodities, from coinciding exactly with what may be called their natural price.

I shall endeavour to explain, as fully and distinctly as I can, those three subjects in the three following chapters, for which I must very earnestly entreat both the patience and attention of the reader: his patience, in order to examine a detail which may, perhaps, in some places, appear unnecessarily tedious; and his attention, in order to understand what may perhaps, after the fullest explication which I am capable of giving it, appear still in some degree obscure. I am always willing to run some hazard of being tedious, in order to be sure that I am perspicuous; and, after taking the utmost pains that I can to be perspicuous, some obscurity may still appear to remain upon a subject, in its own nature extremely abstracted.

CHAP. V. OF THE REAL AND NOMINAL PRICE OF COMMODITIES, OR OF THEIR PRICE IN LABOUR, AND THEIR PRICE IN MONEY.

Every man is rich or poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessaries, conveniencies, and amusements of human life. But after the division of labour has once thoroughly taken place, it is but a very small part of these with which a man's own labour can supply him. The far greater part of them he must derive from the labour of other people, and he must be rich or poor according to the quantity of that labour which he can command, or which he can afford to purchase. The value of any commodity, therefore, to the person who possesses it, and who means not to use or consume it himself, but to exchange it for other commodities, is equal to the quantity of labour which it enables him to purchase or command. Labour therefore, is the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities.

The real price of every thing, what every thing really costs to the man who wants to acquire it, is the toil and trouble of acquiring it. What every thing is really worth to the man who has acquired it and who wants to dispose of it, or exchange it for something else, is the toil and trouble which it can save to himself, and which it can impose upon other people. What is bought with money, or with goods, is purchased by labour, as much as what we acquire by the toil of our own body. That money, or those goods, indeed, save us this toil. They contain the value of a certain quantity of labour, which we exchange for what is supposed at the time to contain the value of an equal quantity. Labour was the first price, the original purchase-money that was paid for all things. It was not by gold or by silver, but by labour, that all the wealth of the world was originally purchased; and its value, to those who possess it, and who want to exchange it for some new productions, is precisely equal to the quantity of labour which it can enable them to purchase or command.

Wealth, as Mr Hobbes says, is power. But the person who either acquires, or succeeds to a great fortune, does not necessarily acquire or succeed to any political power, either civil or military. His fortune may, perhaps, afford him the means of acquiring both; but the mere possession of that fortune does not necessarily convey to him either. The power

which that possession immediately and directly conveys to him, is the power of purchasing a certain command over all the labour, or over all the produce of labour which is then in the market. His fortune is greater or less, precisely in proportion to the extent of this power, or to the quantity either of other men's labour, or, what is the same thing, of the produce of other men's labour, which it enables him to purchase or command. The exchangeable value of every thing must always be precisely equal to the extent of this power which it conveys to its owner.

But though labour be the real measure of the exchangeable value of all commodities, it is not that by which their value is commonly estimated. It is often difficult to ascertain the proportion between two different quantities of labour. The time spent in two different sorts of work will not always alone determine this proportion. The different degrees of hardship endured, and of ingenuity exercised, must likewise be taken into account. There may be more labour in an hour's hard work, than in two hours easy business; or in an hour's application to a trade which it cost ten years labour to learn, than in a month's industry, at an ordinary and obvious employment. But it is not easy to find any accurate measure either of hardship or ingenuity. In exchanging, indeed, the different productions of different sorts of labour for one another, some allowance is commonly made for both. It is adjusted, however, not by any accurate measure, but by the higgling and bargaining of the market, according to that sort of rough equality which, though not exact, is sufficient for carrying on the business of common life.

Every commodity, besides, is more frequently exchanged for, and thereby compared with, other commodities, than with labour. It is more natural, therefore, to estimate its exchangeable value by the quantity of some other commodity, than by that of the labour which it can produce. The greater part of people, too, understand better what is meant by a quantity of a particular commodity, than by a quantity of labour. The one is a plain palpable object; the other an abstract notion, which, though it can be made sufficiently intelligible, is not altogether so natural and obvious.

But when barter ceases, and money has become the common instrument of commerce, every particular commodity is more frequently exchanged for money than for any other commodity. The butcher seldom carries his beef or his mutton to the baker or the brewer, in order to exchange them for bread or for beer; but he carries them to the market, where he exchanges them for money, and afterwards exchanges that money for bread and for beer. The quantity of money which he gets for

them regulates, too, the quantity of bread and beer which he can afterwards purchase. It is more natural and obvious to him, therefore, to estimate their value by the quantity of money, the commodity for which he immediately exchanges them, than by that of bread and beer, the commodities for which he can exchange them only by the intervention of another commodity; and rather to say that his butcher's meat is worth threepence or fourpence a-pound, than that it is worth three or four pounds of bread, or three or four quarts of small beer. Hence it comes to pass, that the exchangeable value of every commodity is more frequently estimated by the quantity of money, than by the quantity either of labour or of any other commodity which can be had in exchange for it.

Gold and silver, however, like every other commodity, vary in their value; are sometimes cheaper and sometimes dearer, sometimes of easier and sometimes of more difficult purchase. The quantity of labour which any particular quantity of them can purchase or command, or the quantity of other goods which it will exchange for, depends always upon the fertility or barrenness of the mines which happen to be known about the time when such exchanges are made. The discovery of the abundant mines of America, reduced, in the sixteenth century, the value of gold and silver in Europe to about a third of what it had been before. As it cost less labour to bring those metals from the mine to the market, so, when they were brought thither, they could purchase or command less labour; and this revolution in their value, though perhaps the greatest, is by no means the only one of which history gives some account. But as a measure of quantity, such as the natural foot, fathom, or handful, which is continually varying in its own quantity, can never be an accurate measure of the quantity of other things; so a commodity which is itself continually varying in its own value, can never be an accurate measure of the value of other commodities. Equal quantities of labour, at all times and places, may be said to be of equal value to the labourer. In his ordinary state of health, strength, and spirits; in the ordinary degree of his skill and dexterity, he must always lay down the same portion of his ease, his liberty, and his happiness. The price which he pays must always be the same, whatever may be the quantity of goods which he receives in return for it. Of these, indeed, it may sometimes purchase a greater and sometimes a smaller quantity; but it is their value which varies, not that of the labour which purchases them. At all times and places, that is dear which it is difficult to come at, or which it costs much labour to acquire; and that cheap which is to be had easily, or with very little labour. Labour alone, therefore, never varying in its own value, is alone the

ultimate and real standard by which the value of all commodities can at all times and places be estimated and compared. It is their real price; money is their nominal price only.

But though equal quantities of labour are always of equal value to the labourer, yet to the person who employs him they appear sometimes to be of greater, and sometimes of smaller value. He purchases them sometimes with a greater, and sometimes with a smaller quantity of goods, and to him the price of labour seems to vary like that of all other things. It appears to him dear in the one case, and cheap in the other. In reality, however, it is the goods which are cheap in the one case, and dear in the other.

In this popular sense, therefore, labour, like commodities, may be said to have a real and a nominal price. Its real price may be said to consist in the quantity of the necessaries and conveniencies of life which are given for it; its nominal price, in the quantity of money. The labourer is rich or poor, is well or ill rewarded, in proportion to the real, not to the nominal price of his labour.

The distinction between the real and the nominal price of commodities and labour is not a matter of mere speculation, but may sometimes be of considerable use in practice. The same real price is always of the same value; but on account of the variations in the value of gold and silver, the same nominal price is sometimes of very different values. When a landed estate, therefore, is sold with a reservation of a perpetual rent, if it is intended that this rent should always be of the same value, it is of importance to the family in whose favour it is reserved, that it should not consist in a particular sum of money. Its value would in this case be liable to variations of two different kinds: first, to those which arise from the different quantities of gold and silver which are contained at different times in coin of the same denomination; and, secondly, to those which arise from the different values of equal quantities of gold and silver at different times.

Princes and sovereign states have frequently fancied that they had a temporary interest to diminish the quantity of pure metal contained in their coins; but they seldom have fancied that they had any to augment it. The quantity of metal contained in the coins, I believe of all nations, has accordingly been almost continually diminishing, and hardly ever augmenting. Such variations, therefore, tend almost always to diminish the value of a money rent.

The discovery of the mines of America diminished the value of gold and silver in Europe. This diminution, it is commonly supposed, though I

apprehend without any certain proof, is still going on gradually, and is likely to continue to do so for a long time. Upon this supposition, therefore, such variations are more likely to diminish than to augment the value of a money rent, even though it should be stipulated to be paid, not in such a quantity of coined money of such a denomination (in so many pounds sterling, for example), but in so many ounces, either of pure silver, or of silver of a certain standard.

The rents which have been reserved in corn, have preserved their value much better than those which have been reserved in money, even where the denomination of the coin has not been altered. By the 18th of Elizabeth, it was enacted, that a third of the rent of all college leases should be reserved in corn, to be paid either in kind, or according to the current prices at the nearest public market. The money arising from this corn rent, though originally but a third of the whole, is, in the present times, according to Dr. Blackstone, commonly near double of what arises from the other two-thirds. The old money rents of colleges must, according to this account, have sunk almost to a fourth part of their ancient value, or are worth little more than a fourth part of the corn which they were formerly worth. But since the reign of Philip and Mary, the denomination of the English coin has undergone little or no alteration, and the same number of pounds, shillings, and pence, have contained very nearly the same quantity of pure silver. This degradation, therefore, in the value of the money rents of colleges, has arisen altogether from the degradation in the price of silver.

When the degradation in the value of silver is combined with the diminution of the quantity of it contained in the coin of the same denomination, the loss is frequently still greater. In Scotland, where the denomination of the coin has undergone much greater alterations than it ever did in England, and in France, where it has undergone still greater than it ever did in Scotland, some ancient rents, originally of considerable value, have, in this manner, been reduced almost to nothing.

Equal quantities of labour will, at distant times, be purchased more nearly with equal quantities of corn, the subsistence of the labourer, than with equal quantities of gold and silver, or, perhaps, of any other commodity. Equal quantities of corn, therefore, will, at distant times, be more nearly of the same real value, or enable the possessor to purchase or command more nearly the same quantity of the labour of other people. They will do this, I say, more nearly than equal quantities of almost any other commodity; for even equal quantities of corn will not do it exactly. The subsistence of the labourer, or the real price of labour, as I shall

endeavour to shew hereafter, is very different upon different occasions; more liberal in a society advancing to opulence, than in one that is standing still, and in one that is standing still, than in one that is going backwards. Every other commodity, however, will, at any particular time, purchase a greater or smaller quantity of labour, in proportion to the quantity of subsistence which it can purchase at that time. A rent, therefore, reserved in corn, is liable only to the variations in the quantity of labour which a certain quantity of corn can purchase. But a rent reserved in any other commodity is liable, not only to the variations in the quantity of labour which any particular quantity of corn can purchase, but to the variations in the quantity of corn which can be purchased by any particular quantity of that commodity.

Though the real value of a corn rent, it is to be observed, however, varies much less from century to century than that of a money rent, it varies much more from year to year. The money price of labour, as I shall endeavour to shew hereafter, does not fluctuate from year to year with the money price of corn, but seems to be everywhere accommodated, not to the temporary or occasional, but to the average or ordinary price of that necessary of life. The average or ordinary price of corn, again is regulated, as I shall likewise endeavour to shew hereafter, by the value of silver, by the richness or barrenness of the mines which supply the market with that metal, or by the quantity of labour which must be employed, and consequently of corn which must be consumed, in order to bring any particular quantity of silver from the mine to the market. But the value of silver, though it sometimes varies greatly from century to century, seldom varies much from year to year, but frequently continues the same, or very nearly the same, for half a century or a century together. The ordinary or average money price of corn, therefore, may, during so long a period, continue the same, or very nearly the same, too, and along with it the money price of labour, provided, at least, the society continues, in other respects, in the same, or nearly in the same, condition. In the mean time, the temporary and occasional price of corn may frequently be double one year of what it had been the year before, or fluctuate, for example, from five-and-twenty to fifty shillings the quarter. But when corn is at the latter price, not only the nominal, but the real value of a corn rent, will be double of what it is when at the former, or will command double the quantity either of labour, or of the greater part of other commodities; the money price of labour, and along with it that of most other things, continuing the same during all these fluctuations.

Labour, therefore, it appears evidently, is the only universal, as well as the only accurate, measure of value, or the only standard by which we can compare the values of different commodities, at all times, and at all places. We cannot estimate, it is allowed, the real value of different commodities from century to century by the quantities of silver which were given for them. We cannot estimate it from year to year by the quantities of corn. By the quantities of labour, we can, with the greatest accuracy, estimate it, both from century to century, and from year to year. From century to century, corn is a better measure than silver, because, from century to century, equal quantities of corn will command the same quantity of labour more nearly than equal quantities of silver. From year to year, on the contrary, silver is a better measure than corn, because equal quantities of it will more nearly command the same quantity of labour.

But though, in establishing perpetual rents, or even in letting very long leases, it may be of use to distinguish between real and nominal price; it is of none in buying and selling, the more common and ordinary transactions of human life.

At the same time and place, the real and the nominal price of all commodities are exactly in proportion to one another. The more or less money you get for any commodity, in the London market, for example, the more or less labour it will at that time and place enable you to purchase or command. At the same time and place, therefore, money is the exact measure of the real exchangeable value of all commodities. It is so, however, at the same time and place only.

Though at distant places there is no regular proportion between the real and the money price of commodities, yet the merchant who carries goods from the one to the other, has nothing to consider but the money price, or the difference between the quantity of silver for which he buys them, and that for which he is likely to sell them. Half an ounce of silver at Canton in China may command a greater quantity both of labour and of the necessaries and conveniencies of life, than an ounce at London. A commodity, therefore, which sells for half an ounce of silver at Canton, may there be really dearer, of more real importance to the man who possesses it there, than a commodity which sells for an ounce at London is to the man who possesses it at London. If a London merchant, however, can buy at Canton, for half an ounce of silver, a commodity which he can afterwards sell at London for an ounce, he gains a hundred per cent. by the bargain, just as much as if an ounce of silver was at London exactly of the same value as at Canton. It is of no importance to

him that half an ounce of silver at Canton would have given him the command of more labour, and of a greater quantity of the necessaries and conveniencies of life than an ounce can do at London. An ounce at London will always give him the command of double the quantity of all these, which half an ounce could have done there, and this is precisely what he wants.

As it is the nominal or money price of goods, therefore, which finally determines the prudence or imprudence of all purchases and sales, and thereby regulates almost the whole business of common life in which price is concerned, we cannot wonder that it should have been so much more attended to than the real price.

In such a work as this, however, it may sometimes be of use to compare the different real values of a particular commodity at different times and places, or the different degrees of power over the labour of other people which it may, upon different occasions, have given to those who possessed it. We must in this case compare, not so much the different quantities of silver for which it was commonly sold, as the different quantities of labour which those different quantities of silver could have purchased. But the current prices of labour, at distant times and places, can scarce ever be known with any degree of exactness. Those of corn, though they have in few places been regularly recorded, are in general better known, and have been more frequently taken notice of by historians and other writers. We must generally, therefore, content ourselves with them, not as being always exactly in the same proportion as the current prices of labour, but as being the nearest approximation which can commonly be had to that proportion. I shall hereafter have occasion to make several comparisons of this kind.

In the progress of industry, commercial nations have found it convenient to coin several different metals into money; gold for larger payments, silver for purchases of moderate value, and copper, or some other coarse metal, for those of still smaller consideration. They have always, however, considered one of those metals as more peculiarly the measure of value than any of the other two; and this preference seems generally to have been given to the metal which they happen first to make use of as the instrument of commerce. Having once begun to use it as their standard, which they must have done when they had no other money, they have generally continued to do so even when the necessity was not the same.

The Romans are said to have had nothing but copper money till within five years before the first Punic war[7*], when they first began to

coin silver. Copper, therefore, appears to have continued always the measure of value in that republic. At Rome all accounts appear to have been kept, and the value of all estates to have been computed, either in *asses* or in *sestertii*. The *as* was always the denomination of a copper coin. The word *sestertius* signifies two *asses* and a half. Though the *sestertius*, therefore, was originally a silver coin, its value was estimated in copper. At Rome, one who owed a great deal of money was said to have a great deal of other people's copper.

The northern nations who established themselves upon the ruins of the Roman empire, seem to have had silver money from the first beginning of their settlements, and not to have known either gold or copper coins for several ages thereafter. There were silver coins in England in the time of the Saxons; but there was little gold coined till the time of Edward III. nor any copper till that of James I. of Great Britain. In England, therefore, and for the same reason, I believe, in all other modern nations of Europe, all accounts are kept, and the value of all goods and of all estates is generally computed, in silver: and when we mean to express the amount of a person's fortune, we seldom mention the number of guineas, but the number of pounds sterling which we suppose would be given for it.

Originally, in all countries, I believe, a legal tender of payment could be made only in the coin of that metal which was peculiarly considered as the standard or measure of value. In England, gold was not considered as a legal tender for a long time after it was coined into money. The proportion between the values of gold and silver money was not fixed by any public law or proclamation, but was left to be settled by the market. If a debtor offered payment in gold, the creditor might either reject such payment altogether, or accept of it at such a valuation of the gold as he and his debtor could agree upon. Copper is not at present a legal tender, except in the change of the smaller silver coins. In this state of things, the distinction between the metal which was the standard, and that which was not the standard, was something more than a nominal distinction.

In process of time, and as people became gradually more familiar with the use of the different metals in coin, and consequently better acquainted with the proportion between their respective values, it has, in most countries, I believe, been found convenient to ascertain this proportion, and to declare by a public law, that a guinea, for example, of such a weight and fineness, should exchange for one-and-twenty shillings, or be a legal tender for a debt of that amount. In this state of things, and during the continuance of any one regulated proportion of

this kind, the distinction between the metal, which is the standard, and that which is not the standard, becomes little more than a nominal distinction.

In consequence of any change, however, in this regulated proportion, this distinction becomes, or at least seems to become, something more than nominal again. If the regulated value of a guinea, for example, was either reduced to twenty, or raised to two-and-twenty shillings, all accounts being kept, and almost all obligations for debt being expressed, in silver money, the greater part of payments could in either case be made with the same quantity of silver money as before; but would require very different quantities of gold money; a greater in the one case, and a smaller in the other. Silver would appear to be more invariable in its value than gold. Silver would appear to measure the value of gold, and gold would not appear to measure the value of silver. The value of gold would seem to depend upon the quantity of silver which it would exchange for, and the value of silver would not seem to depend upon the quantity of gold which it would exchange for. This difference, however, would be altogether owing to the custom of keeping accounts, and of expressing the amount of all great and small sums rather in silver than in gold money. One of Mr Drummond’s notes for five-and-twenty or fifty guineas would, after an alteration of this kind, be still payable with five-and-twenty or fifty guineas, in the same manner as before. It would, after such an alteration, be payable with the same quantity of gold as before, but with very different quantities of silver. In the payment of such a note, gold would appear to be more invariable in its value than silver. Gold would appear to measure the value of silver, and silver would not appear to measure the value of gold. If the custom of keeping accounts, and of expressing promissory-notes and other obligations for money, in this manner should ever become general, gold, and not silver, would be considered as the metal which was peculiarly the standard or measure of value.

In reality, during the continuance of any one regulated proportion between the respective values of the different metals in coin, the value of the most precious metal regulates the value of the whole coin. Twelve copper pence contain half a pound avoirdupois of copper, of not the best quality, which, before it is coined, is seldom worth sevenpence in silver. But as, by the regulation, twelve such pence are ordered to exchange for a shilling, they are in the market considered as worth a shilling, and a shilling can at any time be had for them. Even before the late reformation of the gold coin of Great Britain, the gold, that part of it at least which

circulated in London and its neighbourhood, was in general less degraded below its standard weight than the greater part of the silver. One-and-twenty worn and defaced shillings, however, were considered as equivalent to a guinea, which, perhaps, indeed, was worn and defaced too, but seldom so much so. The late regulations have brought the gold coin as near, perhaps, to its standard weight as it is possible to bring the current coin of any nation; and the order to receive no gold at the public offices but by weight, is likely to preserve it so, as long as that order is enforced. The silver coin still continues in the same worn and degraded state as before the reformation of the gold coin. In the market, however, one-and-twenty shillings of this degraded silver coin are still considered as worth a guinea of this excellent gold coin.

The reformation of the gold coin has evidently raised the value of the silver coin which can be exchanged for it.

In the English mint, a pound weight of gold is coined into forty-four guineas and a half, which at one-and-twenty shillings the guinea, is equal to forty-six pounds fourteen shillings and sixpence. An ounce of such gold coin, therefore, is worth L.3 : 17 : 10½ in silver. In England, no duty or seignorage is paid upon the coinage, and he who carries a pound weight or an ounce weight of standard gold bullion to the mint, gets back a pound weight or an ounce weight of gold in coin, without any deduction. Three pounds seventeen shillings and tenpence halfpenny an ounce, therefore, is said to be the mint price of gold in England, or the quantity of gold coin which the mint gives in return for standard gold bullion.

Before the reformation of the gold coin, the price of standard gold bullion in the market had, for many years, been upwards of L.3 : 18s. sometimes L.3 : 19s. and very frequently L.4 an ounce; that sum, it is probable, in the worn and degraded gold coin, seldom containing more than an ounce of standard gold. Since the reformation of the gold coin, the market price of standard gold bullion seldom exceeds L.3 : 17 : 7 an ounce. Before the reformation of the gold coin, the market price was always more or less above the mint price. Since that reformation, the market price has been constantly below the mint price. But that market price is the same whether it is paid in gold or in silver coin. The late reformation of the gold coin, therefore, has raised not only the value of the gold coin, but likewise that of the silver coin in proportion to gold bullion, and probably, too, in proportion to all other commodities; though the price of the greater part of other commodities being influenced by so

many other causes, the rise in the value of either gold or silver coin in proportion to them may not be so distinct and sensible.

In the English mint, a pound weight of standard silver bullion is coined into sixty-two shillings, containing, in the same manner, a pound weight of standard silver. Five shillings and twopence an ounce, therefore, is said to be the mint price of silver in England, or the quantity of silver coin which the mint gives in return for standard silver bullion. Before the reformation of the gold coin, the market price of standard silver bullion was, upon different occasions, five shillings and fourpence, five shillings and fivepence, five shillings and sixpence, five shillings and sevenpence, and very often five shillings and eightpence an ounce. Five shillings and sevenpence, however, seems to have been the most common price. Since the reformation of the gold coin, the market price of standard silver bullion has fallen occasionally to five shillings and threepence, five shillings and fourpence, and five shillings and fivepence an ounce, which last price it has scarce ever exceeded. Though the market price of silver bullion has fallen considerably since the reformation of the gold coin, it has not fallen so low as the mint price.

In the proportion between the different metals in the English coin, as copper is rated very much above its real value, so silver is rated somewhat below it. In the market of Europe, in the French coin and in the Dutch coin, an ounce of fine gold exchanges for about fourteen ounces of fine silver. In the English coin, it exchanges for about fifteen ounces, that is, for more silver than it is worth, according to the common estimation of Europe. But as the price of copper in bars is not, even in England, raised by the high price of copper in English coin, so the price of silver in bullion is not sunk by the low rate of silver in English coin. Silver in bullion still preserves its proper proportion to gold, for the same reason that copper in bars preserves its proper proportion to silver.

Upon the reformation of the silver coin, in the reign of William III., the price of silver bullion still continued to be somewhat above the mint price. Mr Locke imputed this high price to the permission of exporting silver bullion, and to the prohibition of exporting silver coin. This permission of exporting, he said, rendered the demand for silver bullion greater than the demand for silver coin. But the number of people who want silver coin for the common uses of buying and selling at home, is surely much greater than that of those who want silver bullion either for the use of exportation or for any other use. There subsists at present a like permission of exporting gold bullion, and a like prohibition of exporting gold coin; and yet the price of gold bullion has fallen below

the mint price. But in the English coin, silver was then, in the same manner as now, under-rated in proportion to gold; and the gold coin (which at that time, too, was not supposed to require any reformation) regulated then, as well as now, the real value of the whole coin. As the reformation of the silver coin did not then reduce the price of silver bullion to the mint price, it is not very probable that a like reformation will do so now.

Were the silver coin brought back as near to its standard weight as the gold, a guinea, it is probable, would, according to the present proportion, exchange for more silver in coin than it would purchase in bullion. The silver coin containing its full standard weight, there would in this case, be a profit in melting it down, in order, first to sell the bullion for gold coin, and afterwards to exchange this gold coin for silver coin, to be melted down in the same manner. Some alteration in the present proportion seems to be the only method of preventing this inconveniency.

The inconveniency, perhaps, would be less, if silver was rated in the coin as much above its proper proportion to gold as it is at present rated below it, provided it was at the same time enacted, that silver should not be a legal tender for more than the change of a guinea, in the same manner as copper is not a legal tender for more than the change of a shilling. No creditor could, in this case, be cheated in consequence of the high valuation of silver in coin; as no creditor can at present be cheated in consequence of the high valuation of copper. The bankers only would suffer by this regulation. When a run comes upon them, they sometimes endeavour to gain time, by paying in sixpences, and they would be precluded by this regulation from this discreditable method of evading immediate payment. They would be obliged, in consequence, to keep at all times in their coffers a greater quantity of cash than at present; and though this might, no doubt, be a considerable inconveniency to them, it would, at the same time, be a considerable security to their creditors.

Three pounds seventeen shillings and tenpence halfpenny (the mint price of gold) certainly does not contain, even in our present excellent gold coin, more than an ounce of standard gold, and it may be thought, therefore, should not purchase more standard bullion. But gold in coin is more convenient than gold in bullion; and though, in England, the coinage is free, yet the gold which is carried in bullion to the mint, can seldom be returned in coin to the owner till after a delay of several weeks. In the present hurry of the mint, it could not be returned till after a delay of several months. This delay is equivalent to a small duty, and

renders gold in coin somewhat more valuable than an equal quantity of gold in bullion. If, in the English coin, silver was rated according to its proper proportion to gold, the price of silver bullion would probably fall below the mint price, even without any reformation of the silver coin; the value even of the present worn and defaced silver coin being regulated by the value of the excellent gold coin for which it can be changed.

A small seignorage or duty upon the coinage of both gold and silver, would probably increase still more the superiority of those metals in coin above an equal quantity of either of them in bullion. The coinage would, in this case, increase the value of the metal coined in proportion to the extent of this small duty, for the same reason that the fashion increases the value of plate in proportion to the price of that fashion. The superiority of coin above bullion would prevent the melting down of the coin, and would discourage its exportation. If, upon any public exigency, it should become necessary to export the coin, the greater part of it would soon return again, of its own accord. Abroad, it would sell only for its weight in bullion. At home, it would buy more than that weight. There would be a profit, therefore, in bringing it home again. In France, a seignorage of about eight per cent. is imposed upon the coinage, and the French coin, when exported, is said to return home again, of its own accord.

The occasional fluctuations in the market price of gold and silver bullion arise from the same causes as the like fluctuations in that of all other commodities. The frequent loss of those metals from various accidents by sea and land, the continual waste of them in gilding and plating, in lace and embroidery, in the wear and tear of coin, and in that of plate, require, in all countries which possess no mines of their own, a continual importation, in order to repair this lose and this waste. The merchant importers, like all other merchants, we may believe, endeavour, as well as they can, to suit their occasional importations to what they judge is likely to be the immediate demand. With all their attention, however, they sometimes overdo the business, and sometimes underdo it. When they import more bullion than is wanted, rather than incur the risk and trouble of exporting it again, they are sometimes willing to sell a part of it for something less than the ordinary or average price. When, on the other hand, they import less than is wanted, they get something more than this price. But when, under all those occasional fluctuations, the market price either of gold or silver bullion continues for several years together steadily and constantly, either more or less above, or more or less below the mint price, we may be assured that this steady and

constant, either superiority or inferiority of price, is the effect of something in the state of the coin, which, at that time, renders a certain quantity of coin either of more value or of less value than precise quantity of bullion which it ought to contain. The constancy and steadiness of the effect supposes a proportionable constancy and steadiness in the cause.

The money of any particular country is, at any particular time and place, more or less an accurate measure or value, according as the current coin is more or less exactly agreeable to its standard, or contains more or less exactly the precise quantity of pure gold or silver which it ought to contain. If in England, for example, forty-four guineas and a half contained exactly a pound weight of standard gold, or eleven ounces of fine gold, and one ounce of alloy, the gold coin of England would be as accurate a measure of the actual goods at any particular time and place as the nature of the thing would admit. But if, by rubbing and wearing, forty-four guineas and a half generally contain less than a pound weight of standard gold, the diminution, however, being greater in some pieces than in others, the measure of value comes to be liable to the same sort of uncertainty to which all other weights and measures are commonly exposed. As it rarely happens that these are exactly agreeable to their standard, the merchant adjusts the price of his goods as well as he can, not to what those weights and measures ought to be, but to what, upon an average, he finds, by experience, they actually are. In consequence of a like disorder in the coin, the price of goods comes, in the same manner, to be adjusted, not to the quantity of pure gold or silver which the coin ought to contain, but to that which, upon an average, it is found, by experience, it actually does contain.

By the money price of goods, it is to be observed, I understand always the quantity of pure gold or silver for which they are sold, without any regard to the denomination of the coin. Six shillings and eight pence, for example, in the time of Edward I., I consider as the same money price with a pound sterling in the present times, because it contained, as nearly as we can judge, the same quantity of pure silver.

CHAP. VI. OF THE COMPONENT PART OF THE PRICE OF COMMODITIES.

In that early and rude state of society which precedes both the accumulation of stock and the appropriation of land, the proportion between the quantities of labour necessary for acquiring different objects, seems to be the only circumstance which can afford any rule for exchanging them for one another. If among a nation of hunters, for example, it usually costs twice the labour to kill a beaver which it does to kill a deer, one beaver should naturally exchange for or be worth two deer. It is natural that what is usually the produce of two days or two hours labour, should be worth double of what is usually the produce of one day’s or one hour’s labour.

If the one species of labour should be more severe than the other, some allowance will naturally be made for this superior hardship; and the produce of one hour’s labour in the one way may frequently exchange for that of two hour’s labour in the other.

Or if the one species of labour requires an uncommon degree of dexterity and ingenuity, the esteem which men have for such talents, will naturally give a value to their produce, superior to what would be due to the time employed about it. Such talents can seldom be acquired but in consequence of long application, and the superior value of their produce may frequently be no more than a reasonable compensation for the time and labour which must be spent in acquiring them. In the advanced state of society, allowances of this kind, for superior hardship and superior skill, are commonly made in the wages of labour; and something of the same kind must probably have taken place in its earliest and rudest period.

In this state of things, the whole produce of labour belongs to the labourer; and the quantity of labour commonly employed in acquiring or producing any commodity, is the only circumstance which can regulate the quantity of labour which it ought commonly to purchase, command, or exchange for.

As soon as stock has accumulated in the hands of particular persons, some of them will naturally employ it in setting to work industrious people, whom they will supply with materials and subsistence, in order to make a profit by the sale of their work, or by what their labour adds to the value of the materials. In exchanging the complete manufacture

either for money, for labour, or for other goods, over and above what may be sufficient to pay the price of the materials, and the wages of the workmen, something must be given for the profits of the undertaker of the work, who hazards his stock in this adventure. The value which the workmen add to the materials, therefore, resolves itself in this case into two parts of which the one pays their wages, the other the profits of their employer upon the whole stock of materials and wages which he advanced. He could have no interest to employ them, unless he expected from the sale of their work something more than what was sufficient to replace his stock to him; and he could have no interest to employ a great stock rather than a small one, unless his profits were to bear some proportion to the extent of his stock.

The profits of stock, it may perhaps be thought, are only a different name for the wages of a particular sort of labour, the labour of inspection and direction. They are, however, altogether different, are regulated by quite different principles, and bear no proportion to the quantity, the hardship, or the ingenuity of this supposed labour of inspection and direction. They are regulated altogether by the value of the stock employed, and are greater or smaller in proportion to the extent of this stock. Let us suppose, for example, that in some particular place, where the common annual profits of manufacturing stock are ten per cent. there are two different manufactures, in each of which twenty workmen are employed, at the rate of fifteen pounds a year each, or at the expense of three hundred a-year in each manufactory. Let us suppose, too, that the coarse materials annually wrought up in the one cost only seven hundred pounds, while the finer materials in the other cost seven thousand. The capital annually employed in the one will, in this case, amount only to one thousand pounds; whereas that employed in the other will amount to seven thousand three hundred pounds. At the rate of ten per cent. therefore, the undertaker of the one will expect a yearly profit of about one hundred pounds only; while that of the other will expect about seven hundred and thirty pounds. But though their profits are so very different, their labour of inspection and direction may be either altogether or very nearly the same. In many great works, almost the whole labour of this kind is committed to some principal clerk. His wages properly express the value of this labour of inspection and direction. Though in settling them some regard is had commonly, not only to his labour and skill, but to the trust which is reposed in him, yet they never bear any regular proportion to the capital of which he oversees the management; and the owner of this capital, though he is thus discharged of almost all labour,

still expects that his profit should bear a regular proportion to his capital. In the price of commodities, therefore, the profits of stock constitute a component part altogether different from the wages of labour, and regulated by quite different principles.

In this state of things, the whole produce of labour does not always belong to the labourer. He must in most cases share it with the owner of the stock which employs him. Neither is the quantity of labour commonly employed in acquiring or producing any commodity, the only circumstance which can regulate the quantity which it ought commonly to purchase, command or exchange for. An additional quantity, it is evident, must be due for the profits of the stock which advanced the wages and furnished the materials of that labour.

As soon as the land of any country has all become private property, the landlords, like all other men, love to reap where they never sowed, and demand a rent even for its natural produce. The wood of the forest, the grass of the field, and all the natural fruits of the earth, which, when land was in common, cost the labourer only the trouble of gathering them, come, even to him, to have an additional price fixed upon them. He must then pay for the licence to gather them, and must give up to the landlord a portion of what his labour either collects or produces. This portion, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of this portion, constitutes the rent of land, and in the price of the greater part of commodities, makes a third component part.

The real value of all the different component parts of price, it must be observed, is measured by the quantity of labour which they can, each of them, purchase or command. Labour measures the value, not only of that part of price which resolves itself into labour, but of that which resolves itself into rent, and of that which resolves itself into profit.

In every society, the price of every commodity finally resolves itself into some one or other, or all of those three parts; and in every improved society, all the three enter, more or less, as component parts, into the price of the far greater part of commodities.

In the price of corn, for example, one part pays the rent of the landlord, another pays the wages or maintenance of the labourers and labouring cattle employed in producing it, and the third pays the profit of the farmer. These three parts seem either immediately or ultimately to make up the whole price of corn. A fourth part, it may perhaps be thought is necessary for replacing the stock of the farmer, or for compensating the wear and tear of his labouring cattle, and other instruments of husbandry. But it must be considered, that the price of any

instrument of husbandry, such as a labouring horse, is itself made up of the same three parts; the rent of the land upon which he is reared, the labour of tending and rearing him, and the profits of the farmer, who advances both the rent of this land, and the wages of this labour. Though the price of the corn, therefore, may pay the price as well as the maintenance of the horse, the whole price still resolves itself, either immediately or ultimately, into the same three parts of rent, labour, and profit.

In the price of flour or meal, we must add to the price of the corn, the profits of the miller, and the wages of his servants; in the price of bread, the profits of the baker, and the wages of his servants; and in the price of both, the labour of transporting the corn from the house of the farmer to that of the miller, and from that of the miller to that of the baker, together with the profits of those who advance the wages of that labour.

The price of flax resolves itself into the same three parts as that of corn. In the price of linen we must add to this price the wages of the flax-dresser, of the spinner, of the weaver, of the bleacher, &c. together with the profits of their respective employers.

As any particular commodity comes to be more manufactured, that part of the price which resolves itself into wages and profit, comes to be greater in proportion to that which resolves itself into rent. In the progress of the manufacture, not only the number of profits increase, but every subsequent profit is greater than the foregoing; because the capital from which it is derived must always be greater. The capital which employs the weavers, for example, must be greater than that which employs the spinners; because it not only replaces that capital with its profits, but pays, besides, the wages of the weavers: and the profits must always bear some proportion to the capital.

In the most improved societies, however, there are always a few commodities of which the price resolves itself into two parts only, the wages of labour, and the profits of stock; and a still smaller number, in which it consists altogether in the wages of labour. In the price of sea-fish, for example, one part pays the labour of the fisherman, and the other the profits of the capital employed in the fishery. Rent very seldom makes any part of it, though it does sometimes, as I shall shew hereafter. It is otherwise, at least through the greater part of Europe, in river fisheries. A salmon fishery pays a rent; and rent, though it cannot well be called the rent of land, makes a part of the price of a salmon, as well as wages and profit. In some parts of Scotland, a few poor people make a trade of gathering, along the sea-shore, those little variegated stones

commonly known by the name of Scotch pebbles. The price which is paid to them by the stone-cutter, is altogether the wages of their labour; neither rent nor profit makes any part of it.

But the whole price of any commodity must still finally resolve itself into some one or other or all of those three parts; as whatever part of it remains after paying the rent of the land, and the price of the whole labour employed in raising, manufacturing, and bringing it to market, must necessarily be profit to somebody.

As the price or exchangeable value of every particular commodity, taken separately, resolves itself into some one or other, or all of those three parts; so that of all the commodities which compose the whole annual produce of the labour of every country, taken complexly, must resolve itself into the same three parts, and be parcelled out among different inhabitants of the country, either as the wages of their labour, the profits of their stock, or the rent of their land. The whole of what is annually either collected or produced by the labour of every society, or, what comes to the same thing, the whole price of it, is in this manner originally distributed among some of its different members. Wages, profit, and rent, are the three original sources of all revenue, as well as of all exchangeable value. All other revenue is ultimately derived from some one or other of these.

Whoever derives his revenue from a fund which is his own, must draw it either from his labour, from his stock, or from his land. The revenue derived from labour is called wages; that derived from stock, by the person who manages or employs it, is called profit; that derived from it by the person who does not employ it himself, but lends it to another, is called the interest or the use of money. It is the compensation which the borrower pays to the lender, for the profit which he has an opportunity of making by the use of the money. Part of that profit naturally belongs to the borrower, who runs the risk and takes the trouble of employing it, and part to the lender, who affords him the opportunity of making this profit. The interest of money is always a derivative revenue, which, if it is not paid from the profit which is made by the use of the money, must be paid from some other source of revenue, unless perhaps the borrower is a spendthrift, who contracts a second debt in order to pay the interest of the first. The revenue which proceeds altogether from land, is called rent, and belongs to the landlord. The revenue of the farmer is derived partly from his labour, and partly from his stock. To him, land is only the instrument which enables him to earn the wages of this labour, and to make the profits of this stock. All taxes,

and all the revenue which is founded upon them, all salaries, pensions, and annuities of every kind, are ultimately derived from some one or other of those three original sources of revenue, and are paid either immediately or mediately from the wages of labour, the profits of stock, or the rent of land.

When those three different sorts of revenue belong to different persons, they are readily distinguished; but when they belong to the same, they are sometimes confounded with one another, at least in common language.

A gentleman who farms a part of his own estate, after paying the expense of cultivation, should gain both the rent of the landlord and the profit of the farmer. He is apt to denominate, however, his whole gain, profit, and thus confounds rent with profit, at least in common language. The greater part of our North American and West Indian planters are in this situation. They farm, the greater part of them, their own estates; and accordingly we seldom hear of the rent of a plantation, but frequently of its profit.

Common farmers seldom employ any overseer to direct the general operations of the farm. They generally, too, work a good deal with their own hands, as ploughmen, harrowers, &c. What remains of the crop, after paying the rent, therefore, should not only replace to them their stock employed in cultivation, together with its ordinary profits, but pay them the wages which are due to them, both as labourers and overseers. Whatever remains, however, after paying the rent and keeping up the stock, is called profit. But wages evidently make a part of it. The farmer, by saving these wages, must necessarily gain them. Wages, therefore, are in this case confounded with profit.

An independent manufacturer, who has stock enough both to purchase materials, and to maintain himself till he can carry his work to market, should gain both the wages of a journeyman who works under a master, and the profit which that master makes by the sale of that journeyman’s work. His whole gains, however, are commonly called profit, and wages are, in this case, too, confounded with profit.

A gardener who cultivates his own garden with his own hands, unites in his own person the three different characters, of landlord, farmer, and labourer. His produce, therefore, should pay him the rent of the first, the profit of the second, and the wages of the third. The whole, however, is commonly considered as the earnings of his labour. Both rent and profit are, in this case, confounded with wages.

As in a civilized country there are but few commodities of which the exchangeable value arises from labour only, rent and profit contributing largely to that of the far greater part of them, so the annual produce of its labour will always be sufficient to purchase or command a much greater quantity of labour than what was employed in raising, preparing, and bringing that produce to market. If the society were annually to employ all the labour which it can annually purchase, as the quantity of labour would increase greatly every year, so the produce of every succeeding year would be of vastly greater value than that of the foregoing. But there is no country in which the whole annual produce is employed in maintaining the industrious. The idle everywhere consume a great part of it; and, according to the different proportions in which it is annually divided between these two different orders of people, its ordinary or average value must either annually increase or diminish, or continue the same from one year to another.

CHAP. VII. OF THE NATURAL AND MARKET PRICE OF COMMODITIES.

There is in every society or neighbourhood an ordinary or average rate, both of wages and profit, in every different employment of labour and stock. This rate is naturally regulated, as I shall show hereafter, partly by the general circumstances of the society, their riches or poverty, their advancing, stationary, or declining condition, and partly by the particular nature of each employment.

There is likewise in every society or neighbourhood an ordinary or average rate of rent, which is regulated, too, as I shall shew hereafter, partly by the general circumstances of the society or neighbourhood in which the land is situated, and partly by the natural improved fertility of the land.

These ordinary or average rates may be called the natural rates of wages, profit and rent, at the time and place in which they commonly prevail.

When the price of any commodity is neither more nor less than what is sufficient to pay the rent of the land, the wages of the labour, and the profits of the stock employed in raising, preparing, and bringing it to market, according to their natural rates, the commodity is then sold for what may be called its natural price.

The commodity is then sold precisely for what it is worth, or for what it really costs the person who brings it to market; for though, in common language, what is called the prime cost of any commodity does not comprehend the profit of the person who is sell it again, yet, if he sells it at a price which does not allow him the ordinary rate of profit in his neighbourhood, he is evidently a loser by the trade; since, by employing his stock in some other way, he might have made that profit. His profit, besides, is his revenue, the proper fund of his subsistence. As, while he is preparing and bringing the goods to market, he advances to his workmen their wages, or their subsistence, so he advances to himself, in the same manner, his own subsistence, which is generally suitable to the profit which he may reasonably expect from the sale of his goods. Unless they yield him this profit, therefore, they do not repay him what they may very properly be said to have really cost him.

Though the price, therefore, which leaves him this profit, is not always the lowest at which a dealer may sometimes sell his goods, it is

the lowest at which he is likely to sell them for any considerable time; at least where there is perfect liberty, or where he may change his trade as often as he pleases.

The actual price at which any commodity is commonly sold, is called its market price. It may either be above, or below, or exactly the same with its natural price.

The market price of every particular commodity is regulated by the proportion between the quantity which is actually brought to market, and the demand of those who are willing to pay the natural price of the commodity, or the whole value of the rent, labour, and profit, which must be paid in order to bring it thither, Such people may be called the effectual demanders, and their demand the effectual demand; since it may be sufficient to effectuate the bringing of the commodity to market. It is different from the absolute demand. A very poor man may be said, in some sense, to have a demand for a coach and six; he might like to have it; but his demand is not an effectual demand, as the commodity can never he brought to market in order to satisfy it.

When the quantity of any commodity which is brought to market falls short of the effectual demand, all those who are willing to pay the whole value of the rent, wages, and profit, which must he paid in order to bring it thither, cannot be supplied with the quantity which they want. Rather than want it altogether, some of them will be willing to give more. A competition will immediately begin among them, and the market price will rise more or less above the natural price, according as either the greatness of the deficiency, or the wealth and wanton luxury of the competitors, happen to animate more or less the eagerness of the competition. Among competitors of equal wealth and luxury, the same deficiency will generally occasion a more or less eager competition, according as the acquisition of the commodity happens to be of more or less importance to them. Hence the exorbitant price of the necessaries of life during the blockade of a town, or in a famine.

When the quantity brought to market exceeds the effectual demand, it cannot be all sold to those who are willing to pay the whole value of the rent, wages, and profit, which must be paid in order to bring it thither. Some part must be sold to those who are willing to pay less, and the low price which they give for it must reduce the price of the whole. The market price will sink more or less below the natural price, according as the greatness of the excess increases more or less the competition of the sellers, or according as it happens to be more or less important to them to get immediately rid of the commodity. The same excess in the

importation of perishable, will occasion a much greater competition than in that of durable commodities; in the importation of oranges, for example, than in that of old iron.

When the quantity brought to market is just sufficient to supply the effectual demand, and no more, the market price naturally comes to be either exactly, or as nearly as can be judged of, the same with the natural price. The whole quantity upon hand can be disposed of for this price, and cannot be disposed of for more. The competition of the different dealers obliges them all to accept of this price, but does not oblige them to accept of less.

The quantity of every commodity brought to market naturally suits itself to the effectual demand. It is the interest of all those who employ their land, labour, or stock, in bringing any commodity to market, that the quantity never should exceed the effectual demand; and it is the interest of all other people that it never should fall short of that demand.

If at any time it exceeds the effectual demand, some of the component parts of its price must be paid below their natural rate. If it is rent, the interest of the landlords will immediately prompt them to withdraw a part of their land; and if it is wages or profit, the interest of the labourers in the one case, and of their employers in the other, will prompt them to withdraw a part of their labour or stock, from this employment. The quantity brought to market will soon be no more than sufficient to supply the effectual demand. All the different parts of its price will rise to their natural rate, and the whole price to its natural price.

If, on the contrary, the quantity brought to market should at any time fall short of the effectual demand, some of the component parts of its price must rise above their natural rate. If it is rent, the interest of all other landlords will naturally prompt them to prepare more land for the raising of this commodity; if it is wages or profit, the interest of all other labourers and dealers will soon prompt them to employ more labour and stock in preparing and bringing it to market. The quantity brought thither will soon be sufficient to supply the effectual demand. All the different parts of its price will soon sink to their natural rate, and the whole price to its natural price.

The natural price, therefore, is, as it were, the central price, to which the prices of all commodities are continually gravitating. Different accidents may sometimes keep them suspended a good deal above it, and sometimes force them down even somewhat below it. But whatever may be the obstacles which hinder them from settling in this centre of repose and continuance, they are constantly tending towards it.

The whole quantity of industry annually employed in order to bring any commodity to market, naturally suits itself in this manner to the effectual demand. It naturally aims at bringing always that precise quantity thither which may be sufficient to supply, and no more than supply, that demand.

But, in some employments, the same quantity of industry will, in different years, produce very different quantities of commodities; while, in others, it will produce always the same, or very nearly the same. The same number of labourers in husbandry will, in different years, produce very different quantities of corn, wine, oil, hops, &c. But the same number of spinners or weavers will every year produce the same, or very nearly the same, quantity of linen and woollen cloth. It is only the average produce of the one species of industry which can be suited, in any respect, to the effectual demand; and as its actual produce is frequently much greater, and frequently much less, than its average produce, the quantity of the commodities brought to market will sometimes exceed a good deal, and sometimes fall short a good deal, of the effectual demand. Even though that demand, therefore, should continue always the same, their market price will be liable to great fluctuations, will sometimes fall a good deal below, and sometimes rise a good deal above, their natural price. In the other species of industry, the produce of equal quantities of labour being always the same, or very nearly the same, it can be more exactly suited to the effectual demand. While that demand continues the same, therefore, the market price of the commodities is likely to do so too, and to be either altogether, or as nearly as can be judged of, the same with the natural price. That the price of linen and woollen cloth is liable neither to such frequent, nor to such great variations, as the price of corn, every man’s experience will inform him. The price of the one species of commodities varies only with the variations in the demand; that of the other varies not only with the variations in the demand, but with the much greater, and more frequent, variations in the quantity of what is brought to market, in order to supply that demand.

The occasional and temporary fluctuations in the market price of any commodity fall chiefly upon those parts of its price which resolve themselves into wages and profit. That part which resolves itself into rent is less affected by them. A rent certain in money is not in the least affected by them, either in its rate or in its value. A rent which consists either in a certain proportion, or in a certain quantity, of the rude produce, is no doubt affected in its yearly value by all the occasional and

temporary fluctuations in the market price of that rude produce; but it is seldom affected by them in its yearly rate. In settling the terms of the lease, the landlord and farmer endeavour, according to their best judgment, to adjust that rate, not to the temporary and occasional, but to the average and ordinary price of the produce.

Such fluctuations affect both the value and the rate, either of wages or of profit, according as the market happens to be either overstocked or understocked with commodities or with labour, with work done, or with work to be done. A public mourning raises the price of black cloth (with which the market is almost always understocked upon such occasions), and augments the profits of the merchants who possess any considerable quantity of it. It has no effect upon the wages of the weavers. The market is understocked with commodities, not with labour, with work done, not with work to be done. It raises the wages of journeymen tailors. The market is here understocked with labour. There is an effectual demand for more labour, for more work to be done, than can be had. It sinks the price of coloured silks and cloths, and thereby reduces the profits of the merchants who have any considerable quantity of them upon hand. It sinks, too, the wages of the workmen employed in preparing such commodities, for which all demand is stopped for six months, perhaps for a twelvemonth. The market is here overstocked both with commodities and with labour.

But though the market price of every particular commodity is in this manner continually gravitating, if one may say so, towards the natural price; yet sometimes particular accidents, sometimes natural causes, and sometimes particular regulations of police, may, in many commodities, keep up the market price, for a long time together, a good deal above the natural price.

When, by an increase in the effectual demand, the market price of some particular commodity happens to rise a good deal above the natural price, those who employ their stocks in supplying that market, are generally careful to conceal this change. If it was commonly known, their great profit would tempt so many new rivals to employ their stocks in the same way, that, the effectual demand being fully supplied, the market price would soon be reduced to the natural price, and, perhaps, for some time even below it. If the market is at a great distance from the residence of those who supply it, they may sometimes be able to keep the secret for several years together, and may so long enjoy their extraordinary profits without any new rivals. Secrets of this kind,

however, it must be acknowledged, can seldom be long kept; and the extraordinary profit can last very little longer than they are kept.

Secrets in manufactures are capable of being longer kept than secrets in trade. A dyer who has found the means of producing a particular colour with materials which cost only half the price of those commonly made use of, may, with good management, enjoy the advantage of his discovery as long as he lives, and even leave it as a legacy to his posterity. His extraordinary gains arise from the high price which is paid for his private labour. They properly consist in the high wages of that labour. But as they are repeated upon every part of his stock, and as their whole amount bears, upon that account, a regular proportion to it, they are commonly considered as extraordinary profits of stock.

Such enhancements of the market price are evidently the effects of particular accidents, of which, however, the operation may sometimes last for many years together.

Some natural productions require such a singularity of soil and situation, that all the land in a great country, which is fit for producing them, may not be sufficient to supply the effectual demand. The whole quantity brought to market, therefore, may be disposed of to those who are willing to give more than what is sufficient to pay the rent of the land which produced them, together with the wages of the labour and the profits of the stock which were employed in preparing and bringing them to market, according to their natural rates. Such commodities may continue for whole centuries together to be sold at this high price; and that part of it which resolves itself into the rent of land, is in this case the part which is generally paid above its natural rate. The rent of the land which affords such singular and esteemed productions, like the rent of some vineyards in France of a peculiarly happy soil and situation, bears no regular proportion to the rent of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land in its neighbourhood. The wages of the labour, and the profits of the stock employed in bringing such commodities to market, on the contrary, are seldom out of their natural proportion to those of the other employments of labour and stock in their neighbourhood.

Such enhancements of the market price are evidently the effect of natural causes, which may hinder the effectual demand from ever being fully supplied, and which may continue, therefore, to operate for ever.

A monopoly granted either to an individual or to a trading company, has the same effect as a secret in trade or manufactures. The monopolists, by keeping the market constantly understocked by never fully supplying the effectual demand, sell their commodities much above

the natural price, and raise their emoluments, whether they consist in wages or profit, greatly above their natural rate.

The price of monopoly is upon every occasion the highest which can be got. The natural price, or the price of free competition, on the contrary, is the lowest which can be taken, not upon every occasion indeed, but for any considerable time together. The one is upon every occasion the highest which can be squeezed out of the buyers, or which it is supposed they will consent to give; the other is the lowest which the sellers can commonly afford to take, and at the same time continue their business.

The exclusive privileges of corporations, statutes of apprenticeship, and all those laws which restrain in particular employments, the competition to a smaller number than might otherwise go into them, have the same tendency, though in a less degree. They are a sort of enlarged monopolies, and may frequently, for ages together, and in whole classes of employments, keep up the market price of particular commodities above the natural price, and maintain both wages of the labour and the profits of the stock employed about them somewhat above their natural rate.

Such enhancements of the market price may last as long as the regulations of police which give occasion to them.

The market price of any particular commodity, though it may continue long above, can seldom continue long below, its natural price. Whatever part of it was paid below the natural rate, the persons whose interest is affected would immediately feel the loss, and would immediately withdraw either so much land or so much labour, or so much stock, from being employed about it, that the quantity brought to market would soon be no more than sufficient to supply the effectual demand. Its market price, therefore, would soon rise to the natural price; this at least would be the case where there was perfect liberty.

The same statutes of apprenticeship and other corporation laws, indeed, which, when a manufacture is in prosperity, enable the workman to raise his wages a good deal above their natural rate, sometimes oblige him, when it decays, to let them down a good deal below it. As in the one case they exclude many people from his employment, so in the other they exclude him from many employments. The effect of such regulations, however, is not near so durable in sinking the workman’s wages below, as in raising them above their natural rate. Their operation in the one way may endure for many centuries, but in the other it can last no longer than the lives of some of the workmen who were bred to the

business in the time of prosperity. When they are gone, the number of those who are afterwards educated to the trade will naturally suit itself to the effectual demand. The police must be as violent as that of Indostan or ancient Egypt (where every man was bound by a principle of religion to follow the occupation of his father, and was supposed to commit the most horrid sacrilege if he changed it for another), which can in any particular employment, and for several generations together, sink either the wages of labour or the profits of stock below their natural rate.

This is all that I think necessary to be observed at present concerning the deviations, whether occasional or permanent, of the market price of commodities from the natural price.

The natural price itself varies with the natural rate of each of its component parts, or wages, profit, and rent; and in every society this rate varies according to their circumstances, according to their riches and poverty, their advancing, stationary, or declining condition. I shall, in the four following chapters, endeavour to explain, as fully and distinctly as I can, the causes of those different variations.

First, I shall endeavour to explain what are the circumstances which naturally determine the rate of wages, and in what manner those circumstances are affected by the riches or poverty, by the advancing, stationary, or declining state of the society.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to shew what are the circumstances which naturally determine the rate of profit; and in what manner, too, those circumstances are affected by the like variations in the state of the society.

Though pecuniary wages and profit are very different in the different employments of labour and stock; yet a certain proportion seems commonly to take place between both the pecuniary wages in all the different employments of labour, and the pecuniary profits in all the different employments of stock. This proportion, it will appear hereafter, depends partly upon the nature of the different employments, and partly upon the different laws and policy of the society in which they are carried on. But though in many respects dependent upon the laws and policy, this proportion seems to be little affected by the riches or poverty of that society, by its advancing, stationary, or declining condition, but to remain the same, or very nearly the same, in all those different states. I shall, in the third place, endeavour to explain all the different circumstances which regulate this proportion.

In the fourth and last place, I shall endeavour to shew what are the circumstances which regulate the rent of land, and which either raise or

lower the price of all the different substances which it produces.

CHAP. VIII. OF THE WAGES OF LABOUR.

The produce of labour constitutes the natural recompence or wages of labour.

In that original state of things which precedes both the appropriation of land and the accumulation of stock, the whole produce of labour belongs to the labourer. He has neither landlord nor master to share with him.

Had this state continued, the wages of labour would have augmented with all those improvements in its productive powers, to which the division of labour gives occasion. All things would gradually have become cheaper. They would have been produced by a smaller quantity of labour; and as the commodities produced by equal quantities of labour would naturally in this state of things be exchanged for one another, they would have been purchased likewise with the produce of a smaller quantity.

But though all things would have become cheaper in reality, in appearance many things might have become dearer, than before, or have been exchanged for a greater quantity of other goods. Let us suppose, for example, that in the greater part of employments the productive powers of labour had been improved to tenfold, or that a day's labour could produce ten times the quantity of work which it had done originally; but that in a particular employment they had been improved only to double, or that a day's labour could produce only twice the quantity of work which it had done before. In exchanging the produce of a day's labour in the greater part of employments for that of a day's labour in this particular one, ten times the original quantity of work in them would purchase only twice the original quantity of it. Any particular quantity in it, therefore, a pound weight, for example, would appear to be five times dearer than before. In reality, however, it would be twice as cheap. Though it required five times the quantity of other goods to purchase it, it would require only half the quantity of labour either to purchase or to produce it. The acquisition, therefore, would be twice as easy as before.

But this original state of things, in which the labourer enjoyed the whole produce of his own labour, could not last beyond the first introduction of the appropriation of land and the accumulation of stock. It was at an end, therefore, long before the most considerable improvements were made in the productive powers of labour; and it

would be to no purpose to trace further what might have been its effects upon the recompence or wages of labour.

As soon as land becomes private property, the landlord demands a share of almost all the produce which the labourer can either raise or collect from it. His rent makes the first deduction from the produce of the labour which is employed upon land.

It seldom happens that the person who tills the ground has wherewithal to maintain himself till he reaps the harvest. His maintenance is generally advanced to him from the stock of a master, the farmer who employs him, and who would have no interest to employ him, unless he was to share in the produce of his labour, or unless his stock was to be replaced to him with a profit. This profit makes a second deduction from the produce of the labour which is employed upon land.

The produce of almost all other labour is liable to the like deduction of profit. In all arts and manufactures, the greater part of the workmen stand in need of a master, to advance them the materials of their work, and their wages and maintenance, till it be completed. He shares in the produce of their labour, or in the value which it adds to the materials upon which it is bestowed; and in this share consists his profit.

It sometimes happens, indeed, that a single independent workman has stock sufficient both to purchase the materials of his work, and to maintain himself till it be completed. He is both master and workman, and enjoys the whole produce of his own labour, or the whole value which it adds to the materials upon which it is bestowed. It includes what are usually two distinct revenues, belonging to two distinct persons, the profits of stock, and the wages of labour.

Such cases, however, are not very frequent; and in every part of Europe twenty workmen serve under a master for one that is independent, and the wages of labour are everywhere understood to be, what they usually are, when the labourer is one person, and the owner of the stock which employs him another.

What are the common wages of labour, depends everywhere upon the contract usually made between those two parties, whose interests are by no means the same. The workmen desire to get as much, the masters to give as little, as possible. The former are disposed to combine in order to raise, the latter in order to lower, the wages of labour.

It is not, however, difficult to foresee which of the two parties must, upon all ordinary occasions, have the advantage in the dispute, and force the other into a compliance with their terms. The masters, being fewer in number, can combine much more easily: and the law, besides, authorises,

or at least does not prohibit, their combinations, while it prohibits those of the workmen. We have no acts of parliament against combining to lower the price of work, but many against combining to raise it. In all such disputes, the masters can hold out much longer. A landlord, a farmer, a master manufacturer, or merchant, though they did not employ a single workman, could generally live a year or two upon the stocks, which they have already acquired. Many workmen could not subsist a week, few could subsist a month, and scarce any a year, without employment. In the long run, the workman may be as necessary to his master as his master is to him; but the necessity is not so immediate.

We rarely hear, it has been said, of the combinations of masters, though frequently of those of workmen. But whoever imagines, upon this account, that masters rarely combine, is as ignorant of the world as of the subject. Masters are always and everywhere in a sort of tacit, but constant and uniform, combination, not to raise the wages of labour above their actual rate. To violate this combination is everywhere a most unpopular action, and a sort of reproach to a master among his neighbors and equals. We seldom, indeed, hear of this combination, because it is the usual, and, one may say, the natural state of things, which nobody ever hears of. Masters, too, sometimes enter into particular combinations to sink the wages of labour even below this rate. These are always conducted with the utmost silence and secrecy till the moment of execution; and when the workmen yield, as they sometimes do without resistance, though severely felt by them, they are never heard of by other people. Such combinations, however, are frequently resisted by a contrary defensive combination of the workmen, who sometimes, too, without any provocation of this kind, combine, of their own accord, to raise the price of their labour. Their usual pretences are, sometimes the high price of provisions, sometimes the great profit which their masters make by their work. But whether their combinations be offensive or defensive, they are always abundantly heard of. In order to bring the point to a speedy decision, they have always recourse to the loudest clamour, and sometimes to the most shocking violence and outrage. They are desperate, and act with the folly and extravagance of desperate men, who must either starve, or frighten their masters into an immediate compliance with their demands. The masters, upon these occasions, are just as clamorous upon the other side, and never cease to call aloud for the assistance of the civil magistrate, and the rigorous execution of those laws which have been enacted with so much severity against the combination of servants, labourers, and journeymen. The workmen,

accordingly, very seldom derive any advantage from the violence of those tumultuous combinations, which, partly from the interposition of the civil magistrate, partly from the superior steadiness of the masters, partly from the necessity which the greater part of the workmen are under of submitting for the sake of present subsistence, generally end in nothing but the punishment or ruin of the ringleaders.

But though, in disputes with their workmen, masters must generally have the advantage, there is, however, a certain rate, below which it seems impossible to reduce, for any considerable time, the ordinary wages even of the lowest species of labour.

A man must always live by his work, and his wages must at least be sufficient to maintain him. They must even upon most occasions be somewhat more, otherwise it would be impossible for him to bring up a family, and the race of such workmen could not last beyond the first generation. Mr. Cantillon seems, upon this account, to suppose that the lowest species of common labourers must everywhere earn at least double their own maintenance, in order that, one with another, they may be enabled to bring up two children; the labour of the wife, on account of her necessary attendance on the children, being supposed no more than sufficient to provide for herself. But one half the children born, it is computed, die before the age of manhood. The poorest labourers, therefore, according to this account, must, one with another, attempt to rear at least four children, in order that two may have an equal chance of living to that age. But the necessary maintenance of four children, it is supposed, may be nearly equal to that of one man. The labour of an able-bodied slave, the same author adds, is computed to be worth double his maintenance; and that of the meanest labourer, he thinks, cannot be worth less than that of an able-bodied slave. Thus far at least seems certain, that, in order to bring up a family, the labour of the husband and wife together must, even in the lowest species of common labour, be able to earn something more than what in precisely necessary for their own maintenance; but in what proportion, whether in that above-mentioned, or in any other, I shall not take upon me to determine.

There are certain circumstances, however, which sometimes give the labourers an advantage, and enable them to raise their wages considerably above this rate, evidently the lowest which is consistent with common humanity.

When in any country the demand for those who live by wages, labourers, journeymen, servants of every kind, is continually increasing; when every year furnishes employment for a greater number than had

been employed the year before, the workmen have no occasion to combine in order to raise their wages. The scarcity of hands occasions a competition among masters, who bid against one another in order to get workmen, and thus voluntarily break through the natural combination of master not to raise wages.

The demand for those who live by wages, it is evident, cannot increase but in proportion to the increase of the funds which are destined to the payment of wages. These funds are of two kinds; first, the revenue which is over and above what is necessary for the maintenance; and, secondly, the stock which is over and above what is necessary for the employment of their masters.

When the landlord, annuitant, or monied man, has a greater revenue than what he judges sufficient to maintain his own family, he employs either the whole or a part of the surplus in maintaining one or more menial servants. Increase this surplus, and he will naturally increase the number of those servants.

When an independent workman, such as a weaver or shoemaker, has got more stock than what is sufficient to purchase the materials of his own work, and to maintain himself till he can dispose of it, he naturally employs one or more journeymen with the surplus, in order to make a profit by their work. Increase this surplus, and he will naturally increase the number of his journeymen.

The demand for those who live by wages, therefore, necessarily increases with the increase of the revenue and stock of every country, and cannot possibly increase without it. The increase of revenue and stock is the increase of national wealth. The demand for those who live by wages, therefore, naturally increases with the increase of national wealth, and cannot possibly increase without it.

It is not the actual greatness of national wealth, but its continual increase, which occasions a rise in the wages of labour. It is not, accordingly, in the richest countries, in the most thriving, or in those which are growing rich the fastest, that the wages of labour are highest. England is certainly, in the present times, a much richer country than any part of North America. The wages of labour, however, are much higher in North America than in any part of England. In the province of New York, common labourers earn[8*] three shillings and sixpence currency, equal to two shillings sterling, a-day; ship-carpenters, ten shillings and sixpence currency, with a pint of rum, worth sixpence sterling, equal in all to six shillings and sixpence sterling; house-carpenters and bricklayers, eight shillings currency, equal to four shillings and sixpence

sterling; journeymen tailors, five shillings currency, equal to about two shillings and tenpence sterling. These prices are all above the London price; and wages are said to be as high in the other colonies as in New York. The price of provisions is everywhere in North America much lower than in England. A dearth has never been known there. In the worst seasons they have always had a sufficiency for themselves, though less for exportation. If the money price of labour, therefore, be higher than it is anywhere in the mother-country, its real price, the real command of the necessaries and conveniencies of life which it conveys to the labourer, must be higher in a still greater proportion.

But though North America is not yet so rich as England, it is much more thriving, and advancing with much greater rapidity to the further acquisition of riches. The most decisive mark of the prosperity of any country is the increase of the number of its inhabitants. In Great Britain, and most other European countries, they are not supposed to double in less than five hundred years. In the British colonies in North America, it has been found that they double in twenty or five-and-twenty years. Nor in the present times is this increase principally owing to the continual importation of new inhabitants, but to the great multiplication of the species. Those who live to old age, it is said, frequently see there from fifty to a hundred, and sometimes many more, descendants from their own body. Labour is there so well rewarded, that a numerous family of children, instead of being a burden, is a source of opulence and prosperity to the parents. The labour of each child, before it can leave their house, is computed to be worth a hundred pounds clear gain to them. A young widow with four or five young children, who, among the middling or inferior ranks of people in Europe, would have so little chance for a second husband, is there frequently courted as a sort of fortune. The value of children is the greatest of all encouragements to marriage. We cannot, therefore, wonder that the people in North America should generally marry very young. Notwithstanding the great increase occasioned by such early marriages, there is a continual complaint of the scarcity of hands in North America. The demand for labourers, the funds destined for maintaining them increase, it seems, still faster than they can find labourers to employ.

Though the wealth of a country should be very great, yet if it has been long stationary, we must not expect to find the wages of labour very high in it. The funds destined for the payment of wages, the revenue and stock of its inhabitants, may be of the greatest extent; but if they have continued for several centuries of the same, or very nearly of the same

extent, the number of labourers employed every year could easily supply, and even more than supply, the number wanted the following year. There could seldom be any scarcity of hands, nor could the masters be obliged to bid against one another in order to get them. The hands, on the contrary, would, in this case, naturally multiply beyond their employment. There would be a constant scarcity of employment, and the labourers would be obliged to bid against one another in order to get it. If in such a country the wages of labour had ever been more than sufficient to maintain the labourer, and to enable him to bring up a family, the competition of the labourers and the interest of the masters would soon reduce them to the lowest rate which is consistent with common humanity. China has been long one of the richest, that is, one of the most fertile, best cultivated, most industrious, and most populous, countries in the world. It seems, however, to have been long stationary. Marco Polo, who visited it more than five hundred years ago, describes its cultivation, industry, and populousness, almost in the same terms in which they are described by travellers in the present times. It had, perhaps, even long before his time, acquired that full complement of riches which the nature of its laws and institutions permits it to acquire. The accounts of all travellers, inconsistent in many other respects, agree in the low wages of labour, and in the difficulty which a labourer finds in bringing up a family in China. If by digging the ground a whole day he can get what will purchase a small quantity of rice in the evening, he is contented. The condition of artificers is, if possible, still worse. Instead of waiting indolently in their work-houses for the calls of their customers, as in Europe, they are continually running about the streets with the tools of their respective trades, offering their services, and, as it were, begging employment. The poverty of the lower ranks of people in China far surpasses that of the most beggarly nations in Europe. In the neighborhood of Canton, many hundred, it is commonly said, many thousand families have no habitation on the land, but live constantly in little fishing-boats upon the rivers and canals. The subsistence which they find there is so scanty, that they are eager to fish up the nastiest garbage thrown overboard from any European ship. Any carrion, the carcase of a dead dog or cat, for example, though half putrid and stinking, is as welcome to them as the most wholesome food to the people of other countries. Marriage is encouraged in China, not by the profitableness of children, but by the liberty of destroying them. In all great towns, several are every night exposed in the street, or drowned like puppies in the water. The performance of this horrid office is even

said to be the avowed business by which some people earn their subsistence.

China, however, though it may, perhaps, stand still, does not seem to go backwards. Its towns are nowhere deserted by their inhabitants. The lands which had once been cultivated, are nowhere neglected. The same, or very nearly the same, annual labour, must, therefore, continue to be performed, and the funds destined for maintaining it must not, consequently, be sensibly diminished. The lowest class of labourers, therefore, notwithstanding their scanty subsistence, must some way or other make shift to continue their race so far as to keep up their usual numbers.

But it would be otherwise in a country where the funds destined for the maintenance of labour were sensibly decaying. Every year the demand for servants and labourers would, in all the different classes of employments, be less than it had been the year before. Many who had been bred in the superior classes, not being able to find employment in their own business, would be glad to seek it in the lowest. The lowest class being not only overstocked with its own workmen, but with the overflowings of all the other classes, the competition for employment would be so great in it, as to reduce the wages of labour to the most miserable and scanty subsistence of the labourer. Many would not be able to find employment even upon these hard terms, but would either starve, or be driven to seek a subsistence, either by begging, or by the perpetration, perhaps, of the greatest enormities. Want, famine, and mortality, would immediately prevail in that class, and from thence extend themselves to all the superior classes, till the number of inhabitants in the country was reduced to what could easily be maintained by the revenue and stock which remained in it, and which had escaped either the tyranny or calamity which had destroyed the rest. This, perhaps, is nearly the present state of Bengal, and of some other of the English settlements in the East Indies. In a fertile country, which had before been much depopulated, where subsistence, consequently, should not be very difficult, and where, notwithstanding, three or four hundred thousand people die of hunger in one year, we may be assured that the funds destined for the maintenance of the labouring poor are fast decaying. The difference between the genius of the British constitution, which protects and governs North America, and that of the mercantile company which oppresses and domineers in the East Indies, cannot, perhaps, be better illustrated than by the different state of those countries.

The liberal reward of labour, therefore, as it is the necessary effect, so it is the natural symptom of increasing national wealth. The scanty maintenance of the labouring poor, on the other hand, is the natural symptom that things are at a stand, and their starving condition, that they are going fast backwards.

In Great Britain, the wages of labour seem, in the present times, to be evidently more than what is precisely necessary to enable the labourer to bring up a family. In order to satisfy ourselves upon this point, it will not be necessary to enter into any tedious or doubtful calculation of what may be the lowest sum upon which it is possible to do this. There are many plain symptoms, that the wages of labour are nowhere in this country regulated by this lowest rate, which is consistent with common humanity.

First, in almost every part of Great Britain there is a distinction, even in the lowest species of labour, between summer and winter wages. Summer wages are always highest. But, on account of the extraordinary expense of fuel, the maintenance of a family is most expensive in winter. Wages, therefore, being highest when this expense is lowest, it seems evident that they are not regulated by what is necessary for this expense, but by the quantity and supposed value of the work. A labourer, it may be said, indeed, ought to save part of his summer wages, in order to defray his winter expense; and that, through the whole year, they do not exceed what is necessary to maintain his family through the whole year. A slave, however, or one absolutely dependent on us for immediate subsistence, would not be treated in this manner. His daily subsistence would be proportioned to his daily necessities.

Secondly, the wages of labour do not, in Great Britain, fluctuate with the price of provisions. These vary everywhere from year to year, frequently from month to month. But in many places, the money price of labour remains uniformly the same, sometimes for half a century together. If, in these places, therefore, the labouring poor can maintain their families in dear years, they must be at their ease in times of moderate plenty, and in affluence in those of extraordinary cheapness. The high price of provisions during these ten years past, has not, in many parts of the kingdom, been accompanied with any sensible rise in the money price of labour. It has, indeed, in some; owing, probably, more to the increase of the demand for labour, than to that of the price of provisions.

Thirdly, as the price of provisions varies more from year to year than the wages of labour, so, on the other hand, the wages of labour vary more

from place to place than the price of provisions. The prices of bread and butchers' meat are generally the same, or very nearly the same, through the greater part of the united kingdom. These, and most other things which are sold by retail, the way in which the labouring poor buy all things, are generally fully as cheap, or cheaper, in great towns than in the remoter parts of the country, for reasons which I shall have occasion to explain hereafter. But the wages of labour in a great town and its neighbourhood, are frequently a fourth or a fifth part, twenty or five-and-twenty per cent. higher than at a few miles distance. Eighteen pence a day may be reckoned the common price of labour in London and its neighborhood. At a few miles distance, it falls to fourteen and fifteen pence. Tenpence may be reckoned its price in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood. At a few miles distance, it falls to eightpence, the usual price of common labour through the greater part of the low country of Scotland, where it varies a good deal less than in England. Such a difference of prices, which, it seems, is not always sufficient to transport a man from one parish to another, would necessarily occasion so great a transportation of the most bulky commodities, not only from one parish to another, but from one end of the kingdom, almost from one end of the world to the other, as would soon reduce them more nearly to a level. After all that has been said of the levity and inconstancy of human nature, it appears evidently from experience, that man is, of all sorts of luggage, the most difficult to be transported. If the labouring poor, therefore, can maintain their families in those parts of the kingdom where the price of labour is lowest, they must be in affluence where it is highest.

Fourthly, the variations in the price of labour not only do not correspond, either in place or time, with those in the price of provisions, but they are frequently quite opposite.

Grain, the food of the common people, is dearer in Scotland than in England, whence Scotland receives almost every year very large supplies. But English corn must be sold dearer in Scotland, the country to which it is brought, than in England, the country from which it comes; and it proportion to its quality it cannot be sold dearer in Scotland than the Scotch corn that comes to the same market in competition with it. The quality of grain depends chiefly upon the quantity of flour or meal which it yields at the mill; and, in this respect, English grain is so much superior to the Scotch, that though often dearer in appearance, or in proportion to the measure of its bulk, it is generally cheaper in reality, or in proportion to its quality, or even to the measure of its weight. The

price of labour, on the contrary, is dearer in England than in Scotland. If the labouring poor, therefore, can maintain their families in the one part of the united kingdom, they must be in affluence in the other. Oatmeal, indeed, supplies the common people in Scotland with the greatest and the best part of their food, which is, in general, much inferior to that of their neighbours of the same rank in England. This difference, however, in the mode of their subsistence, is not the cause, but the effect, of the difference in their wages; though, by a strange misapprehension, I have frequently heard it represented as the cause. It is not because one man keeps a coach, while his neighbour walks a-foot, that one is rich, and the other poor; but because the one is rich, he keeps a coach, and because the other is poor, he walks a-foot.

During the course of the last century, taking one year with another, grain was dearer in both parts of the united kingdom than during that of the present. This is a matter of fact which cannot now admit of any reasonable doubt; and the proof of it is, if possible, still more decisive with regard to Scotland than with regard to England. It is in Scotland supported by the evidence of the public fiars, annual valuations made upon oath, according to the actual state of the markets, of all the different sorts of grain in every different county of Scotland. If such direct proof could require any collateral evidence to confirm it, I would observe, that this has likewise been the case in France, and probably in most other parts of Europe. With regard to France, there is the clearest proof. But though it is certain, that in both parts of the united kingdom grain was somewhat dearer in the last century than in the present, it is equally certain that labour was much cheaper. If the labouring poor, therefore, could bring up their families then, they must be much more at their ease now. In the last century, the most usual day-wages of common labour through the greater part of Scotland were sixpence in summer, and fivepence in winter. Three shillings a-week, the same price, very nearly still continues to be paid in some parts of the Highlands and Western islands. Through the greater part of the Low country, the most usual wages of common labour are now eightpence a-day; tenpence, sometimes a shilling, about Edinburgh, in the counties which border upon England, probably on account of that neighbourhood, and in a few other places where there has lately been a considerable rise in the demand for labour, about Glasgow, Carron, Ayrshire, &c. In England, the improvements of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, began much earlier than in Scotland. The demand for labour, and consequently its price, must necessarily have increased with those improvements. In the

last century, accordingly, as well as in the present, the wages of labour were higher in England than in Scotland. They have risen, too, considerably since that time, though, on account of the greater variety of wages paid there in different places, it is more difficult to ascertain how much. In 1614, the pay of a foot soldier was the same as in the present times, eightpence a-day. When it was first established, it would naturally be regulated by the usual wages of common labourers, the rank of people from which foot soldiers are commonly drawn. Lord-chief-justice Hales, who wrote in the time of Charles II. computes the necessary expense of a labourer's family, consisting of six persons, the father and mother, two children able to do something, and two not able, at ten shillings a-week, or twenty-six pounds a-year. If they cannot earn this by their labour, they must make it up, he supposes, either by begging or stealing. He appears to have enquired very carefully into this subject[9*]. In 1688, Mr Gregory King, whose skill in political arithmetic is so much extolled by Dr Davenant, computed the ordinary income of labourers and out-servants to be fifteen pounds a-year to a family, which he supposed to consist, one with another, of three and a half persons. His calculation, therefore, though different in appearance, corresponds very nearly at bottom with that of Judge Hales. Both suppose the weekly expense of such families to be about twenty-pence a-head. Both the pecuniary income and expense of such families have increased considerably since that time through the greater part of the kingdom, in some places more, and in some less, though perhaps scarce anywhere so much as some exaggerated accounts of the present wages of labour have lately represented them to the public. The price of labour, it must be observed, cannot be ascertained very accurately anywhere, different prices being often paid at the same place and for the same sort of labour, not only according to the different abilities of the workman, but according to the easiness or hardness of the masters. Where wages are not regulated by law, all that we can pretend to determine is, what are the most usual; and experience seems to shew that law can never regulate them properly, though it has often pretended to do so.

The real recompence of labour, the real quantity of the necessaries and conveniencies of life which it can procure to the labourer, has, during the course of the present century, increased perhaps in a still greater proportion than its money price. Not only grain has become somewhat cheaper, but many other things, from which the industrious poor derive an agreeable and wholesome variety of food, have become a great deal cheaper. Potatoes, for example, do not at present, through the

greater part of the kingdom, cost half the price which they used to do thirty or forty years ago. The same thing may be said of turnips, carrots, cabbages; things which were formerly never raised but by the spade, but which are now commonly raised by the plough. All sort of garden stuff, too, has become cheaper. The greater part of the apples, and even of the onions, consumed in Great Britain, were, in the last century, imported from Flanders. The great improvements in the coarser manufactories of both linen and woollen cloth furnish the labourers with cheaper and better clothing; and those in the manufactories of the coarser metals, with cheaper and better instruments of trade, as well as with many agreeable and convenient pieces of household furniture. Soap, salt, candles, leather, and fermented liquors, have, indeed, become a good deal dearer, chiefly from the taxes which have been laid upon them. The quantity of these, however, which the labouring poor are under any necessity of consuming, is so very small, that the increase in their price does not compensate the diminution in that of so many other things. The common complaint, that luxury extends itself even to the lowest ranks of the people, and that the labouring poor will not now be contented with the same food, clothing, and lodging, which satisfied them in former times, may convince us that it is not the money price of labour only, but its real recompence, which has augmented.

Is this improvement in the circumstances of the lower ranks of the people to be regarded as an advantage, or as an inconveniency, to the society? The answer seems at first abundantly plain. Servants, labourers, and workmen of different kinds, make up the far greater part of every great political society. But what improves the circumstances of the greater part, can never be regarded as any inconveniency to the whole. No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable. It is but equity, besides, that they who feed, clothe, and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed, and lodged.

Poverty, though it no doubt discourages, does not always prevent, marriage. It seems even to be favourable to generation. A half-starved Highland woman frequently bears more than twenty children, while a pampered fine lady is often incapable of bearing any, and is generally exhausted by two or three. Barrenness, so frequent among women of fashion, is very rare among those of inferior station. Luxury, in the fair sex, while it inflames, perhaps, the passion for enjoyment, seems always

to weaken, and frequently to destroy altogether, the powers of generation.

But poverty, though it does not prevent the generation, is extremely unfavourable to the rearing of children. The tender plant is produced; but in so cold a soil, and so severe a climate, soon withers and dies. It is not uncommon, I have been frequently told, in the Highlands of Scotland, for a mother who has born twenty children not to have two alive. Several officers of great experience have assured me, that, so far from recruiting their regiment, they have never been able to supply it with drums and fifes, from all the soldiers' children that were born in it. A greater number of fine children, however, is seldom seen anywhere than about a barrack of soldiers. Very few of them, it seems, arrive at the age of thirteen or fourteen. In some places, one half the children die before they are four years of age, in many places before they are seven, and in almost all places before they are nine or ten. This great mortality, however will everywhere be found chiefly among the children of the common people, who cannot afford to tend them with the same care as those of better station. Though their marriages are generally more fruitful than those of people of fashion, a smaller proportion of their children arrive at maturity. In foundling hospitals, and among the children brought up by parish charities, the mortality is still greater than among those of the common people.

Every species of animals naturally multiplies in proportion to the means of their subsistence, and no species can ever multiply beyond it. But in civilized society, it is only among the inferior ranks of people that the scantiness of subsistence can set limits to the further multiplication of the human species; and it can do so in no other way than by destroying a great part of the children which their fruitful marriages produce.

The liberal reward of labour, by enabling them to provide better for their children, and consequently to bring up a greater number, naturally tends to widen and extend those limits. It deserves to be remarked, too, that it necessarily does this as nearly as possible in the proportion which the demand for labour requires. If this demand is continually increasing, the reward of labour must necessarily encourage in such a manner the marriage and multiplication of labourers, as may enable them to supply that continually increasing demand by a continually increasing population. If the reward should at any time be less than what was requisite for this purpose, the deficiency of hands would soon raise it; and if it should at any time be more, their excessive multiplication would soon lower it to this necessary rate. The market would be so much

understocked with labour in the one case, and so much overstocked in the other, as would soon force back its price to that proper rate which the circumstances of the society required. It is in this manner that the demand for men, like that for any other commodity, necessarily regulates the production of men, quickens it when it goes on too slowly, and stops it when it advances too fast. It is this demand which regulates and determines the state of propagation in all the different countries of the world; in North America, in Europe, and in China; which renders it rapidly progressive in the first, slow and gradual in the second, and altogether stationary in the last.

The wear and tear of a slave, it has been said, is at the expense of his master; but that of a free servant is at his own expense. The wear and tear of the latter, however, is, in reality, as much at the expense of his master as that of the former. The wages paid to journeymen and servants of every kind must be such as may enable them, one with another to continue the race of journeymen and servants, according as the increasing, diminishing, or stationary demand of the society, may happen to require. But though the wear and tear of a free servant be equally at the expense of his master, it generally costs him much less than that of a slave. The fund destined for replacing or repairing, if I may say so, the wear and tear of the slave, is commonly managed by a negligent master or careless overseer. That destined for performing the same office with regard to the freeman is managed by the freeman himself. The disorders which generally prevail in the economy of the rich, naturally introduce themselves into the management of the former; the strict frugality and parsimonious attention of the poor as naturally establish themselves in that of the latter. Under such different management, the same purpose must require very different degrees of expense to execute it. It appears, accordingly, from the experience of all ages and nations, I believe, that the work done by freemen comes cheaper in the end than that performed by slaves. It is found to do so even at Boston, New-York, and Philadelphia, where the wages of common labour are so very high.

The liberal reward of labour, therefore, as it is the effect of increasing wealth, so it is the cause of increasing population. To complain of it, is to lament over the necessary cause and effect of the greatest public prosperity.

It deserves to be remarked, perhaps, that it is in the progressive state, while the society is advancing to the further acquisition, rather than when it has acquired its full complement of riches, that the condition of the labouring poor, of the great body of the people, seems to be the happiest

and the most comfortable. It is hard in the stationary, and miserable in the declining state. The progressive state is, in reality, the cheerful and the hearty state to all the different orders of the society; the stationary is dull; the declining melancholy.

The liberal reward of labour, as it encourages the propagation, so it increases the industry of the common people. The wages of labour are the encouragement of industry, which, like every other human quality, improves in proportion to the encouragement it receives. A plentiful subsistence increases the bodily strength of the labourer, and the comfortable hope of bettering his condition, and of ending his days, perhaps, in ease and plenty, animates him to exert that strength to the utmost. Where wages are high, accordingly, we shall always find the workmen more active, diligent, and expeditious, than where they are low; in England, for example, than in Scotland; in the neighbourhood of great towns, than in remote country places. Some workmen, indeed, when they can earn in four days what will maintain them through the week, will be idle the other three. This, however, is by no means the case with the greater part. Workmen, on the contrary, when they are liberally paid by the piece, are very apt to overwork themselves, and to ruin their health and constitution in a few years. A carpenter in London, and in some other places, is not supposed to last in his utmost vigour above eight years. Something of the same kind happens in many other trades, in which the workmen are paid by the piece; as they generally are in manufactures, and even in country labour, wherever wages are higher than ordinary. Almost every class of artificers is subject to some peculiar infirmity occasioned by excessive application to their peculiar species of work. Ramuzzini, an eminent Italian physician, has written a particular book concerning such diseases. We do not reckon our soldiers the most industrious set of people among us; yet when soldiers have been employed in some particular sorts of work, and liberally paid by the piece, their officers have frequently been obliged to stipulate with the undertaker, that they should not be allowed to earn above a certain sum every day, according to the rate at which they were paid. Till this stipulation was made, mutual emulation, and the desire of greater gain, frequently prompted them to overwork themselves, and to hurt their health by excessive labour. Excessive application, during four days of the week, is frequently the real cause of the idleness of the other three, so much and so loudly complained of. Great labour, either of mind or body, continued for several days together is, in most men, naturally followed by a great desire of relaxation, which, if not restrained by force, or by

some strong necessity, is almost irresistible. It is the call of nature, which requires to be relieved by some indulgence, sometimes of ease only, but sometimes too of dissipation and diversion. If it is not complied with, the consequences are often dangerous and sometimes fatal, and such as almost always, sooner or later, bring on the peculiar infirmity of the trade. If masters would always listen to the dictates of reason and humanity, they have frequently occasion rather to moderate, than to animate the application of many of their workmen. It will be found, I believe, in every sort of trade, that the man who works so moderately, as to be able to work constantly, not only preserves his health the longest, but, in the course of the year, executes the greatest quantity of work.

In cheap years it is pretended, workmen are generally more idle, and in dear times more industrious than ordinary. A plentiful subsistence, therefore, it has been concluded, relaxes, and a scanty one quickens their industry. That a little more plenty than ordinary may render some workmen idle, cannot be well doubted; but that it should have this effect upon the greater part, or that men in general should work better when they are ill fed, than when they are well fed, when they are disheartened than when they are in good spirits, when they are frequently sick than when they are generally in good health, seems not very probable. Years of dearth, it is to be observed, are generally among the common people years of sickness and mortality, which cannot fail to diminish the produce of their industry.

In years of plenty, servants frequently leave their masters, and trust their subsistence to what they can make by their own industry. But the same cheapness of provisions, by increasing the fund which is destined for the maintenance of servants, encourages masters, farmers especially, to employ a greater number. Farmers, upon such occasions, expect more profit from their corn by maintaining a few more labouring servants, than by selling it at a low price in the market. The demand for servants increases, while the number of those who offer to supply that demand diminishes. The price of labour, therefore, frequently rises in cheap years.

In years of scarcity, the difficulty and uncertainty of subsistence make all such people eager to return to service. But the high price of provisions, by diminishing the funds destined for the maintenance of servants, disposes masters rather to diminish than to increase the number of those they have. In dear years, too, poor independent workmen frequently consume the little stock with which they had used to supply themselves with the materials of their work, and are obliged to become

journeymen for subsistence. More people want employment than easily get it; many are willing to take it upon lower terms than ordinary; and the wages of both servants and journeymen frequently sink in dear years.

Masters of all sorts, therefore, frequently make better bargains with their servants in dear than in cheap years, and find them more humble and dependent in the former than in the latter. They naturally, therefore, commend the former as more favourable to industry. Landlords and farmers, besides, two of the largest classes of masters, have another reason for being pleased with dear years. The rents of the one, and the profits of the other, depend very much upon the price of provisions. Nothing can be more absurd, however, than to imagine that men in general should work less when they work for themselves, than when they work for other people. A poor independent workman will generally be more industrious than even a journeyman who works by the piece. The one enjoys the whole produce of his own industry, the other shares it with his master. The one, in his separate independent state, is less liable to the temptations of bad company, which, in large manufactories, so frequently ruin the morals of the other. The superiority of the independent workman over those servants who are hired by the month or by the year, and whose wages and maintenance are the same, whether they do much or do little, is likely to be still greater. Cheap years tend to increase the proportion of independent workmen to journeymen and servants of all kinds, and dear years to diminish it.

A French author of great knowledge and ingenuity, Mr Messance, receiver of the tallies in the election of St Etienne, endeavours to shew that the poor do more work in cheap than in dear years, by comparing the quantity and value of the goods made upon those different occasions in three different manufactures; one of coarse woollens, carried on at Elbeuf; one of linen, and another of silk, both which extend through the whole generality of Rouen. It appears from his account, which is copied from the registers of the public offices, that the quantity and value of the goods made in all those three manufactories has generally been greater in cheap than in dear years, and that it has always been greatest in the cheapest, and least in the dearest years. All the three seem to be stationary manufactures, or which, though their produce may vary somewhat from year to year, are, upon the whole, neither going backwards nor forwards.

The manufacture of linen in Scotland, and that of coarse woollens in the West Riding of Yorkshire, are growing manufactures, of which the produce is generally, though with some variations, increasing both in

quantity and value. Upon examining, however, the accounts which have been published of their annual produce, I have not been able to observe that its variations have had any sensible connection with the dearness or cheapness of the seasons. In 1740, a year of great scarcity, both manufactures, indeed, appear to have declined very considerably. But in 1756, another year of great scarcity, the Scotch manufactures made more than ordinary advances. The Yorkshire manufacture, indeed, declined, and its produce did not rise to what it had been in 1755, till 1766, after the repeal of the American stamp act. In that and the following year, it greatly exceeded what it had ever been before, and it has continued to advance ever since.

The produce of all great manufactures for distant sale must necessarily depend, not so much upon the dearness or cheapness of the seasons in the countries where they are carried on, as upon the circumstances which affect the demand in the countries where they are consumed; upon peace or war, upon the prosperity or declension of other rival manufactures, and upon the good or bad humour of their principal customers. A great part of the extraordinary work, besides, which is probably done in cheap years, never enters the public registers of manufactures. The men-servants, who leave their masters, become independent labourers. The women return to their parents, and commonly spin, in order to make clothes for themselves and their families. Even the independent workmen do not always work for public sale, but are employed by some of their neighbours in manufactures for family use. The produce of their labour, therefore, frequently makes no figure in those public registers, of which the records are sometimes published with so much parade, and from which our merchants and manufacturers would often vainly pretend to announce the prosperity or declension of the greatest empires.

Though the variations in the price of labour not only do not always correspond with those in the price of provisions, but are frequently quite opposite, we must not, upon this account, imagine that the price of provisions has no influence upon that of labour. The money price of labour is necessarily regulated by two circumstances; the demand for labour, and the price of the necessaries and conveniencies of life. The demand for labour, according as it happens to be increasing, stationary, or declining, or to require an increasing, stationary, or declining population, determines the quantities of the necessaries and conveniencies of life which must be given to the labourer; and the money price of labour is determined by what is requisite for purchasing this

quantity. Though the money price of labour, therefore, is sometimes high where the price of provisions is low, it would be still higher, the demand continuing the same, if the price of provisions was high.

It is because the demand for labour increases in years of sudden and extraordinary plenty, and diminishes in those of sudden and extraordinary scarcity, that the money price of labour sometimes rises in the one, and sinks in the other.

In a year of sudden and extraordinary plenty, there are funds in the hands of many of the employers of industry, sufficient to maintain and employ a greater number of industrious people than had been employed the year before; and this extraordinary number cannot always be had. Those masters, therefore, who want more workmen, bid against one another, in order to get them, which sometimes raises both the real and the money price of their labour.

The contrary of this happens in a year of sudden and extraordinary scarcity. The funds destined for employing industry are less than they had been the year before. A considerable number of people are thrown out of employment, who bid one against another, in order to get it, which sometimes lowers both the real and the money price of labour. In 1740, a year of extraordinary scarcity, many people were willing to work for bare subsistence. In the succeeding years of plenty, it was more difficult to get labourers and servants.

The scarcity of a dear year, by diminishing the demand for labour, tends to lower its price, as the high price of provisions tends to raise it. The plenty of a cheap year, on the contrary, by increasing the demand, tends to raise the price of labour, as the cheapness of provisions tends to lower it. In the ordinary variations of the prices of provisions, those two opposite causes seem to counterbalance one another, which is probably, in part, the reason why the wages of labour are everywhere so much more steady and permanent than the price of provisions.

The increase in the wages of labour necessarily increases the price of many commodities, by increasing that part of it which resolves itself into wages, and so far tends to diminish their consumption, both at home and abroad. The same cause, however, which raises the wages of labour, the increase of stock, tends to increase its productive powers, and to make a smaller quantity of labour produce a greater quantity of work. The owner of the stock which employs a great number of labourers necessarily endeavours, for his own advantage, to make such a proper division and distribution of employment, that they may be enabled to produce the greatest quantity of work possible. For the same reason, he endeavours to

supply them with the best machinery which either he or they can think of. What takes place among the labourers in a particular workhouse, takes place, for the same reason, among those of a great society. The greater their number, the more they naturally divide themselves into different classes and subdivisions of employments. More heads are occupied in inventing the most proper machinery for executing the work of each, and it is, therefore, more likely to be invented. There are many commodities, therefore, which, in consequence of these improvements, come to be produced by so much less labour than before, that the increase of its price is more than compensated by the diminution of its quantity.

CHAP. IX. OF THE PROFITS OF STOCK.

The rise and fall in the profits of stock depend upon the same causes with the rise and fall in the wages of labour, the increasing or declining state of the wealth of the society; but those causes affect the one and the other very differently.

The increase of stock, which raises wages, tends to lower profit. When the stocks of many rich merchants are turned into the same trade, their mutual competition naturally tends to lower its profit; and when there is a like increase of stock in all the different trades carried on in the same society, the same competition must produce the same effect in them all.

It is not easy, it has already been observed, to ascertain what are the average wages of labour, even in a particular place, and at a particular time. We can, even in this case, seldom determine more than what are the most usual wages. But even this can seldom be done with regard to the profits of stock. Profit is so very fluctuating, that the person who carries on a particular trade, cannot always tell you himself what is the average of his annual profit. It is affected, not only by every variation of price in the commodities which he deals in, but by the good or bad fortune both of his rivals and of his customers, and by a thousand other accidents, to which goods, when carried either by sea or by land, or even when stored in a warehouse, are liable. It varies, therefore, not only from year to year, but from day to day, and almost from hour to hour. To ascertain what is the average profit of all the different trades carried on in a great kingdom, must be much more difficult; and to judge of what it may have been formerly, or in remote periods of time, with any degree of precision, must be altogether impossible.

But though it may be impossible to determine, with any degree of precision, what are or were the average profits of stock, either in the present or in ancient times, some notion may be formed of them from the interest of money. It may be laid down as a maxim, that wherever a great deal can be made by the use of money, a great deal will commonly be given for the use of it; and that, wherever little can be made by it, less will commonly be given for it. Accordingly, therefore, as the usual market rate of interest varies in any country, we may be assured that the ordinary profits of stock must vary with it, must sink as it sinks, and rise

as it rises. The progress of interest, therefore, may lead us to form some notion of the progress of profit.

By the 37th of Henry VIII. all interest above ten per cent. was declared unlawful. More, it seems, had sometimes been taken before that. In the reign of Edward VI. religious zeal prohibited all interest. This prohibition, however, like all others of the same kind, is said to have produced no effect, and probably rather increased than diminished the evil of usury. The statute of Henry VIII. was revived by the 13th of Elizabeth, ca. and ten per cent. continued to be the legal rate of interest till the 21st of James I. when it was restricted to eight per cent. It was reduced to six per cent. soon after the Restoration, and by the 12th of Queen Anne, to five per cent. All these different statutory regulations seem to have been made with great propriety. They seem to have followed, and not to have gone before, the market rate of interest, or the rate at which people of good credit usually borrowed. Since the time of Queen Anne, five per cent. seems to have been rather above than below the market rate. Before the late war, the government borrowed at three per cent.; and people of good credit in the capital, and in many other parts of the kingdom, at three and a-half, four, and four and a-half per cent.

Since the time of Henry VIII. the wealth and revenue of the country have been continually advancing, and in the course of their progress, their pace seems rather to have been gradually accelerated than retarded. They seem not only to have been going on, but to have been going on faster and faster. The wages of labour have been continually increasing during the same period, and, in the greater part of the different branches of trade and manufactures, the profits of stock have been diminishing.

It generally requires a greater stock to carry on any sort of trade in a great town than in a country village. The great stock employed in every branch of trade, and the number of rich competitors, generally reduce the rate of profit in the former below what it is in the latter. But the wages of labour are generally higher in a great town than in a country village. In a thriving town, the people who have great stocks to employ, frequently cannot get the number of workmen they want, and therefore bid against one another, in order to get as many as they can, which raises the wages of labour, and lowers the profits of stock. In the remote parts of the country, there is frequently not stock sufficient to employ all the people, who therefore bid against one another, in order to get employment, which lowers the wages of labour, and raises the profits of stock.

In Scotland, though the legal rate of interest is the same as in England, the market rate is rather higher. People of the best credit there seldom borrow under five per cent. Even private bankers in Edinburgh give four per cent. upon their promissory-notes, of which payment, either in whole or in part may be demanded at pleasure. Private bankers in London give no interest for the money which is deposited with them. There are few trades which cannot be carried on with a smaller stock in Scotland than in England. The common rate of profit, therefore, must be somewhat greater. The wages of labour, it has already been observed, are lower in Scotland than in England. The country, too, is not only much poorer, but the steps by which it advances to a better condition, for it is evidently advancing, seem to be much slower and more tardy.

The legal rate of interest in France has not, during the course of the present century, been always regulated by the market rate[10*]. In 1720, interest was reduced from the twentieth to the fiftieth penny, or from five to two per cent. In 1724, it was raised to the thirtieth penny, or to three and a third per cent. In 1725, it was again raised to the twentieth penny, or to five per cent. In 1766, during the administration of Mr Laverdy, it was reduced to the twenty-fifth penny, or to four per cent. The Abbé Terray raised it afterwards to the old rate of five per cent. The supposed purpose of many of those violent reductions of interest was to prepare the way for reducing that of the public debts; a purpose which has sometimes been executed. France is, perhaps, in the present times, not so rich a country as England; and though the legal rate of interest has in France frequently been lower than in England, the market rate has generally been higher; for there, as in other countries, they have several very safe and easy methods of evading the law. The profits of trade, I have been assured by British merchants who had traded in both countries, are higher in France than in England; and it is no doubt upon this account, that many British subjects chuse rather to employ their capitals in a country where trade is in disgrace, than in one where it is highly respected. The wages of labour are lower in France than in England. When you go from Scotland to England, the difference which you may remark between the dress and countenance of the common people in the one country and in the other, sufficiently indicates the difference in their condition. The contrast is still greater when you return from France. France, though no doubt a richer country than Scotland, seems not to be going forward so fast. It is a common and even a popular opinion in the country, that it is going backwards; an opinion which I apprehend, is ill-founded, even with regard to France, but which nobody

can possibly entertain with regard to Scotland, who sees the country now, and who saw it twenty or thirty years ago.

The province of Holland, on the other hand, in proportion to the extent of its territory and the number of its people, is a richer country than England. The government there borrow at two per cent. and private people of good credit at three. The wages of labour are said to be higher in Holland than in England, and the Dutch, it is well known, trade upon lower profits than any people in Europe. The trade of Holland, it has been pretended by some people, is decaying, and it may perhaps be true that some particular branches of it are so; but these symptoms seem to indicate sufficiently that there is no general decay. When profit diminishes, merchants are very apt to complain that trade decays, though the diminution of profit is the natural effect of its prosperity, or of a greater stock being employed in it than before. During the late war, the Dutch gained the whole carrying trade of France, of which they still retain a very large share. The great property which they possess both in French and English funds, about forty millions, it is said in the latter (in which, I suspect, however, there is a considerable exaggeration), the great sums which they lend to private people, in countries where the rate of interest is higher than in their own, are circumstances which no doubt demonstrate the redundancy of their stock, or that it has increased beyond what they can employ with tolerable profit in the proper business of their own country; but they do not demonstrate that that business has decreased. As the capital of a private man, though acquired by a particular trade, may increase beyond what he can employ in it, and yet that trade continue to increase too, so may likewise the capital of a great nation.

In our North American and West Indian colonies, not only the wages of labour, but the interest of money, and consequently the profits of stock, are higher than in England. In the different colonies, both the legal and the market rate of interest run from six to eight per cent. High wages of labour and high profits of stock, however, are things, perhaps, which scarce ever go together, except in the peculiar circumstances of new colonies. A new colony must always, for some time, be more understocked in proportion to the extent of its territory, and more underpeopled in proportion to the extent of its stock, than the greater part of other countries. They have more land than they have stock to cultivate. What they have, therefore, is applied to the cultivation only of what is most fertile and most favourably situated, the land near the sea-shore and along the banks of navigable rivers. Such land, too, is

frequently purchased at a price below the value even of its natural produce. Stock employed in the purchase and improvement of such lands, must yield a very large profit, and, consequently, afford to pay a very large interest. Its rapid accumulation in so profitable an employment enables the planter to increase the number of his hands faster than he can find them in a new settlement. Those whom he can find, therefore, are very liberally rewarded. As the colony increases, the profits of stock gradually diminish. When the most fertile and best situated lands have been all occupied, less profit can be made by the cultivation of what is inferior both in soil and situation, and less interest can be afforded for the stock which is so employed. In the greater part of our colonies, accordingly, both the legal and the market rate of interest have been considerably reduced during the course of the present century. As riches, improvement, and population, have increased, interest has declined. The wages of labour do not sink with the profits of stock. The demand for labour increases with the increase of stock, whatever be its profits; and after these are diminished, stock may not only continue to increase, but to increase much faster than before. It is with industrious nations, who are advancing in the acquisition of riches, as with industrious individuals. A great stock, though with small profits, generally increases faster than a small stock with great profits. Money, says the proverb, makes money. When you have got a little, it is often easy to get more. The great difficulty is to get that little. The connection between the increase of stock and that of industry, or of the demand for useful labour, has partly been explained already, but will be explained more fully hereafter, in treating of the accumulation of stock.

The acquisition of new territory, or of new branches of trade, may sometimes raise the profits of stock, and with them the interest of money, even in a country which is fast advancing in the acquisition of riches. The stock of the country, not being sufficient for the whole accession of business which such acquisitions present to the different people among whom it is divided, is applied to those particular branches only which afford the greatest profit. Part of what had before been employed in other trades, is necessarily withdrawn from them, and turned into some of the new and more profitable ones. In all those old trades, therefore, the competition comes to be less than before. The market comes to be less fully supplied with many different sorts of goods. Their price necessarily rises more or less, and yields a greater profit to those who deal in them, who can, therefore, afford to borrow at a higher interest. For some time after the conclusion of the late war, not only private people of the best

credit, but some of the greatest companies in London, commonly borrowed at five per cent. who, before that, had not been used to pay more than four, and four and a half per cent. The great accession both of territory and trade by our acquisitions in North America and the West Indies, will sufficiently account for this, without supposing any diminution in the capital stock of the society. So great an accession of new business to be carried on by the old stock, must necessarily have diminished the quantity employed in a great number of particular branches, in which the competition being less, the profits must have been greater. I shall hereafter have occasion to mention the reasons which dispose me to believe that the capital stock of Great Britain was not diminished, even by the enormous expense of the late war.

The diminution of the capital stock of the society, or of the funds destined for the maintenance of industry, however, as it lowers the wages of labour, so it raises the profits of stock, and consequently the interest of money. By the wages of labour being lowered, the owners of what stock remains in the society can bring their goods at less expense to market than before; and less stock being employed in supplying the market than before, they can sell them dearer. Their goods cost them less, and they get more for them. Their profits, therefore, being augmented at both ends, can well afford a large interest. The great fortunes so suddenly and so easily acquired in Bengal and the other British settlements in the East Indies, may satisfy us, that as the wages of labour are very low, so the profits of stock are very high in those ruined countries. The interest of money is proportionably so. In Bengal, money is frequently lent to the farmers at forty, fifty, and sixty per cent. and the succeeding crop is mortgaged for the payment. As the profits which can afford such an interest must eat up almost the whole rent of the landlord, so such enormous usury must in its turn eat up the greater part of those profits. Before the fall of the Roman republic, a usury of the same kind seems to have been common in the provinces, under the ruinous administration of their proconsuls. The virtuous Brutus lent money in Cyprus at eight-and-forty per cent. as we learn from the letters of Cicero.

In a country which had acquired that full complement of riches which the nature of its soil and climate, and its situation with respect to other countries, allowed it to acquire, which could, therefore, advance no further, and which was not going backwards, both the wages of labour and the profits of stock would probably be very low. In a country fully peopled in proportion to what either its territory could maintain, or its stock employ, the competition for employment would necessarily be so

great as to reduce the wages of labour to what was barely sufficient to keep up the number of labourers, and the country being already fully peopled, that number could never be augmented. In a country fully stocked in proportion to all the business it had to transact, as great a quantity of stock would be employed in every particular branch as the nature and extent of the trade would admit. The competition, therefore, would everywhere be as great, and, consequently, the ordinary profit as low as possible.

But, perhaps, no country has ever yet arrived at this degree of opulence. China seems to have been long stationary, and had, probably, long ago acquired that full complement of riches which is consistent with the nature of its laws and institutions. But this complement may be much inferior to what, with other laws and institutions, the nature of its soil, climate, and situation, might admit of. A country which neglects or despises foreign commerce, and which admits the vessels of foreign nations into one or two of its ports only, cannot transact the same quantity of business which it might do with different laws and institutions. In a country, too, where, though the rich, or the owners of large capitals, enjoy a good deal of security, the poor, or the owners of small capitals, enjoy scarce any, but are liable, under the pretence of justice, to be pillaged and plundered at any time by the inferior mandarins, the quantity of stock employed in all the different branches of business transacted within it, can never be equal to what the nature and extent of that business might admit. In every different branch, the oppression of the poor must establish the monopoly of the rich, who, by engrossing the whole trade to themselves, will be able to make very large profits. Twelve per cent. accordingly, is said to be the common interest of money in China, and the ordinary profits of stock must be sufficient to afford this large interest.

A defect in the law may sometimes raise the rate of interest considerably above what the condition of the country, as to wealth or poverty, would require. When the law does not enforce the performance of contracts, it puts all borrowers nearly upon the same footing with bankrupts, or people of doubtful credit, in better regulated countries. The uncertainty of recovering his money makes the lender exact the same usurious interest which is usually required from bankrupts. Among the barbarous nations who overran the western provinces of the Roman empire, the performance of contracts was left for many ages to the faith of the contracting parties. The courts of justice of their kings seldom

intermeddled in it. The high rate of interest which took place in those ancient times, may perhaps, be partly accounted for from this cause.

When the law prohibits interest altogether, it does not prevent it. Many people must borrow, and nobody will lend without such a consideration for the use of their money as is suitable, not only to what can be made by the use of it, but to the difficulty and danger of evading the law. The high rate of interest among all Mahometan nations is accounted for by M. Montesquieu, not from their poverty, but partly from this, and partly from the difficulty of recovering the money.

The lowest ordinary rate of profit must always be something more than what is sufficient to compensate the occasional losses to which every employment of stock is exposed. It is this surplus only which is neat or clear profit. What is called gross profit, comprehends frequently not only this surplus, but what is retained for compensating such extraordinary losses. The interest which the borrower can afford to pay is in proportion to the clear profit only.

The lowest ordinary rate of interest must, in the same manner, be something more than sufficient to compensate the occasional losses to which lending, even with tolerable prudence, is exposed. Were it not, mere charity or friendship could be the only motives for lending.

In a country which had acquired its full complement of riches, where, in every particular branch of business, there was the greatest quantity of stock that could be employed in it, as the ordinary rate of clear profit would be very small, so the usual market rate of interest which could be afforded out of it would be so low as to render it impossible for any but the very wealthiest people to live upon the interest of their money. All people of small or middling fortunes would be obliged to superintend themselves the employment of their own stocks. It would be necessary that almost every man should be a man of business, or engage in some sort of trade. The province of Holland seems to be approaching near to this state. It is there unfashionable not to be a man of business. Necessity makes it usual for almost every man to be so, and custom everywhere regulates fashion. As it is ridiculous not to dress, so is it, in some measure, not to be employed like other people. As a man of a civil profession seems awkward in camp or a garrison, and is even in some danger of being despised there, so does an idle man among men of business.

The highest ordinary rate of profit may be such as, in the price of the greater part of commodities, eats up the whole of what should go to the rent of the land, and leaves only what is sufficient to pay the labour of

preparing and bringing them to market, according to the lowest rate at which labour can anywhere be paid, the bare subsistence of the labourer. The workman must always have been fed in some way or other while he was about the work, but the landlord may not always have been paid. The profits of the trade which the servants of the East India Company carry on in Bengal may not, perhaps, be very far from this rate.

The proportion which the usual market rate of interest ought to bear to the ordinary rate of clear profit, necessarily varies as profit rises or falls. Double interest is in Great Britain reckoned what the merchants call a good, moderate, reasonable profit; terms which, I apprehend, mean no more than a common and usual profit. In a country where the ordinary rate of clear profit is eight or ten per cent. it may be reasonable that one half of it should go to interest, wherever business is carried on with borrowed money. The stock is at the risk of the borrower, who, as it were, insures it to the lender; and four or five per cent. may, in the greater part of trades, be both a sufficient profit upon the risk of this insurance, and a sufficient recompence for the trouble of employing the stock. But the proportion between interest and clear profit might not be the same in countries where the ordinary rate of profit was either a good deal lower, or a good deal higher. If it were a good deal lower, one half of it, perhaps, could not be afforded for interest; and more might be afforded if it were a good deal higher.

In countries which are fast advancing to riches, the low rate of profit may, in the price of many commodities, compensate the high wages of labour, and enable those countries to sell as cheap as their less thriving neighbours, among whom the wages of labour may be lower.

In reality, high profits tend much more to raise the price of work than high wages. If, in the linen manufacture, for example, the wages of the different working people, the flax-dressers, the spinners, the weavers, &c. should all of them be advanced twopence a-day, it would be necessary to heighten the price of a piece of linen only by a number of twopences equal to the number of people that had been employed about it, multiplied by the number of days during which they had been so employed. That part of the price of the commodity which resolved itself into the wages, would, through all the different stages of the manufacture, rise only in arithmetical proportion to this rise of wages. But if the profits of all the different employers of those working people should be raised five per cent. that part of the price of the commodity which resolved itself into profit would, through all the different stages of the manufacture, rise in geometrical proportion to this rise of profit. The

employer of the flax-dressers would, in selling his flax, require an additional five per cent. upon the whole value of the materials and wages which he advanced to his workmen. The employer of the spinners would require an additional five per cent. both upon the advanced price of the flax, and upon the wages of the spinners. And the employer of the weavers would require a like five per cent. both upon the advanced price of the linen-yarn, and upon the wages of the weavers. In raising the price of commodities, the rise of wages operates in the same manner as simple interest does in the accumulation of debt. The rise of profit operates like compound interest. Our merchants and master manufacturers complain much of the bad effects of high wages in raising the price, and thereby lessening the sale of their goods, both at home and abroad. They say nothing concerning the bad effects of high profits; they are silent with regard to the pernicious effects of their own gains; they complain only of those of other people.

CHAP. X. OF WAGES AND PROFIT IN THE DIFFERENT EMPLOYMENTS OF LABOUR AND STOCK.

The whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock, must, in the same neighbourhood, be either perfectly equal, or continually tending to equality. If, in the same neighbourhood, there was any employment evidently either more or less advantageous than the rest, so many people would crowd into it in the one case, and so many would desert it in the other, that its advantages would soon return to the level of other employments. This, at least, would be the case in a society where things were left to follow their natural course, where there was perfect liberty, and where every man was perfectly free both to choose what occupation he thought proper, and to change it as often as he thought proper. Every man's interest would prompt him to seek the advantageous, and to shun the disadvantageous employment.

Pecuniary wages and profit, indeed, are everywhere in Europe extremely different, according to the different employments of labour and stock. But this difference arises, partly from certain circumstances in the employments themselves, which, either really, or at least in the imagination of men, make up for a small pecuniary gain in some, and counterbalance a great one in others, and partly from the policy of Europe, which nowhere leaves things at perfect liberty.

The particular consideration of those circumstances, and of that policy, will divide this Chapter into two parts.

Part I. — *Inequalities arising from the nature of the employments themselves.*

The five following are the principal circumstances which, so far as I have been able to observe, make up for a small pecuniary gain in some employments, and counterbalance a great one in others. First, the agreeableness or disagreeableness of the employments themselves; secondly, the easiness and cheapness, or the difficulty and expense of learning them; thirdly, the constancy or inconstancy of employment in them; fourthly, the small or great trust which must be reposed in those

who exercise them; and, fifthly, the probability or improbability of success in them.

First, the wages of labour vary with the ease or hardship, the cleanliness or dirtiness, the honourableness or dishonourableness, of the employment. Thus in most places, take the year round, a journeyman tailor earns less than a journeyman weaver. His work is much easier. A journeyman weaver earns less than a journeyman smith. His work is not always easier, but it is much cleanlier. A journeyman blacksmith, though an artificer, seldom earns so much in twelve hours, as a collier, who is only a labourer, does in eight. His work is not quite so dirty, is less dangerous, and is carried on in day-light, and above ground. Honour makes a great part of the reward of all honourable professions. In point of pecuniary gain, all things considered, they are generally under-recompensed, as I shall endeavour to shew by and by. Disgrace has the contrary effect. The trade of a butcher is a brutal and an odious business; but it is in most places more profitable than the greater part of common trades. The most detestable of all employments, that of public executioner, is, in proportion to the quantity of work done, better paid than any common trade whatever.

Hunting and fishing, the most important employments of mankind in the rude state of society, become, in its advanced state, their most agreeable amusements, and they pursue for pleasure what they once followed from necessity. In the advanced state of society, therefore, they are all very poor people who follow as a trade, what other people pursue as a pastime. Fishermen have been so since the time of Theocritus[11*]. A poacher is everywhere a very poor man in Great Britain. In countries where the rigour of the law suffers no poachers, the licensed hunter is not in a much better condition. The natural taste for those employments makes more people follow them, than can live comfortably by them; and the produce of their labour, in proportion to its quantity, comes always too cheap to market, to afford any thing but the most scanty subsistence to the labourers.

Disagreeableness and disgrace affect the profits of stock in the same manner as the wages of labour. The keeper of an inn or tavern, who is never master of his own house, and who is exposed to the brutality of every drunkard, exercises neither a very agreeable nor a very creditable business. But there is scarce any common trade in which a small stock yields so great a profit.

Secondly, the wages of labour vary with the easiness and cheapness, or the difficulty and expense, of learning the business.

When any expensive machine is erected, the extraordinary work to be performed by it before it is worn out, it must be expected, will replace the capital laid out upon it, with at least the ordinary profits. A man educated at the expense of much labour and time to any of those employments which require extraordinary dexterity and skill, may be compared to one of those expensive machines. The work which he learns to perform, it must be expected, over and above the usual wages of common labour, will replace to him the whole expense of his education, with at least the ordinary profits of an equally valuable capital. It must do this too in a reasonable time, regard being had to the very uncertain duration of human life, in the same manner as to the more certain duration of the machine.

The difference between the wages of skilled labour and those of common labour, is founded upon this principle.

The policy of Europe considers the labour of all mechanics, artificers, and manufacturers, as skilled labour; and that of all country labourers as common labour. It seems to suppose that of the former to be of a more nice and delicate nature than that of the latter. It is so perhaps in some cases; but in the greater part it is quite otherwise, as I shall endeavour to shew by and by. The laws and customs of Europe, therefore, in order to qualify any person for exercising the one species of labour, impose the necessity of an apprenticeship, though with different degrees of rigour in different places. They leave the other free and open to every body. During the continuance of the apprenticeship, the whole labour of the apprentice belongs to the master. In the meantime he must, in many cases, be maintained by his parents or relations, and, in almost all cases, must be clothed by them. Some money, too, is commonly given to the master for teaching him his trade. They who cannot give money, give time, or become bound for more than the usual number of years; a consideration which, though it is not always advantageous to the master, on account of the usual idleness of apprentices, is always disadvantageous to the apprentice. In country labour, on the contrary, the labourer, while he is employed about the easier, learns the more difficult parts of his business, and his own labour maintains him through all the different stages of his employment. It is reasonable, therefore, that in Europe the wages of mechanics, artificers, and manufacturers, should be somewhat higher than those of common labourers. They are so accordingly, and their superior gains make them, in most places, be considered as a superior rank of people. This superiority, however, is generally very small: the daily or weekly earnings of journeymen in the

more common sorts of manufactures, such as those of plain linen and woollen cloth, computed at an average, are, in most places, very little more than the day-wages of common labourers. Their employment, indeed, is more steady and uniform, and the superiority of their earnings, taking the whole year together, may be somewhat greater. It seems evidently, however, to be no greater than what is sufficient to compensate the superior expense of their education.

Education in the ingenious arts, and in the liberal professions, is still more tedious and expensive. The pecuniary recompence, therefore, of painters and sculptors, of lawyers and physicians, ought to be much more liberal; and it is so accordingly.

The profits of stock seem to be very little affected by the easiness or difficulty of learning the trade in which it is employed. All the different ways in which stock is commonly employed in great towns seem, in reality, to be almost equally easy and equally difficult to learn. One branch, either of foreign or domestic trade, cannot well be a much more intricate business than another.

Thirdly, the wages of labour in different occupations vary with the constancy or inconstancy of employment.

Employment is much more constant in some trades than in others. In the greater part of manufactures, a journeyman may be pretty sure of employment almost every day in the year that he is able to work. A mason or bricklayer, on the contrary, can work neither in hard frost nor in foul weather, and his employment at all other times depends upon the occasional calls of his customers. He is liable, in consequence, to be frequently without any. What he earns, therefore, while he is employed, must not only maintain him while he is idle, but make him some compensation for those anxious and desponding moments which the thought of so precarious a situation must sometimes occasion. Where the computed earnings of the greater part of manufacturers, accordingly, are nearly upon a level with the day-wages of common labourers, those of masons and bricklayers are generally from one-half more to double those wages. Where common labourers earn four of five shillings a week, masons and bricklayers frequently earn seven and eight; where the former earn six, the latter often earn nine and ten; and where the former earn nine and ten, as in London, the latter commonly earn fifteen and eighteen. No species of skilled labour, however, seems more easy to learn than that of masons and bricklayers. Chairmen in London, during the summer season, are said sometimes to be employed as bricklayers. The high wages of those workmen, therefore, are not so much the

recompence of their skill, as the compensation for the inconstancy of their employment.

A house-carpenter seems to exercise rather a nicer and a more ingenious trade than a mason. In most places, however, for it is not universally so, his day-wages are somewhat lower. His employment, though it depends much, does not depend so entirely upon the occasional calls of his customers; and it is not liable to be interrupted by the weather.

When the trades which generally afford constant employment, happen in a particular place not to do so, the wages of the workmen always rise a good deal above their ordinary proportion to those of common labour. In London, almost all journeymen artificers are liable to be called upon and dismissed by their masters from day to day, and from week to week, in the same manner as day-labourers in other places. The lowest order of artificers, journeymen tailors, accordingly, earn their half-a-crown a-day, though eighteen pence may be reckoned the wages of common labour. In small towns and country villages, the wages of journeymen tailors frequently scarce equal those of common labour; but in London they are often many weeks without employment, particularly during the summer.

When the inconstancy of employment is combined with the hardship, disagreeableness, and dirtiness of the work, it sometimes raises the wages of the most common labour above those of the most skilful artificers. A collier working by the piece is supposed, at Newcastle, to earn commonly about double, and, in many parts of Scotland, about three times, the wages of common labour. His high wages arise altogether from the hardship, disagreeableness, and dirtiness of his work. His employment may, upon most occasions, be as constant as he pleases. The coal-heavers in London exercise a trade which, in hardship, dirtiness, and disagreeableness, almost equals that of colliers; and, from the unavoidable irregularity in the arrivals of coal-ships, the employment of the greater part of them is necessarily very inconstant. If colliers, therefore, commonly earn double and triple the wages of common labour, it ought not to seem unreasonable that coal-heavers should sometimes earn four and five times those wages. In the inquiry made into their condition a few years ago, it was found that, at the rate at which they were paid, they could earn from six to ten shillings a-day. Six shillings are about four times the wages of common labour in London; and, in every particular trade, the lowest common earnings may always be considered as those of the far greater number. How extravagant soever those earnings may appear, if they were more than sufficient to

compensate all the disagreeable circumstances of the business, there would soon be so great a number of competitors, as, in a a trade which has no exclusive privilege, would quickly reduce them to a lower rate.

The constancy or inconstancy of employment cannot affect the ordinary profits of stock in any particular trade. Whether the stock is or is not constantly employed, depends, not upon the trade, but the trader.

Fourthly, the wages of labour vary according to the small or great trust which must be reposed in the workmen.

The wages of goldsmiths and jewellers are everywhere superior to those of many other workmen, not only of equal, but of much superior ingenuity, on account of the precious materials with which they are entrusted.

We trust our health to the physician, our fortune, and sometimes our life and reputation, to the lawyer and attorney. Such confidence could not safely be reposed in people of a very mean or low condition. Their reward must be such, therefore, as may give them that rank in the society which so important a trust requires. The long time and the great expense which must be laid out in their education, when combined with this circumstance, necessarily enhance still further the price of their labour.

When a person employs only his own stock in trade, there is no trust; and the credit which he may get from other people, depends, not upon the nature of the trade, but upon their opinion of his fortune, probity and prudence. The different rates of profit, therefore, in the different branches of trade, cannot arise from the different degrees of trust reposed in the traders.

Fifthly, the wages of labour in different employments vary according to the probability or improbability of success in them.

The probability that any particular person shall ever be qualified for the employments to which he is educated, is very different in different occupations. In the greatest part of mechanic trades, success is almost certain; but very uncertain in the liberal professions. Put your son apprentice to a shoemaker, there is little doubt of his learning to make a pair of shoes; but send him to study the law, it as at least twenty to one if he ever makes such proficiency as will enable him to live by the business. In a perfectly fair lottery, those who draw the prizes ought to gain all that is lost by those who draw the blanks. In a profession, where twenty fail for one that succeeds, that one ought to gain all that should have been gained by the unsuccessful twenty. The counsellor at law, who, perhaps, at near forty years of age, begins to make something by his profession, ought to receive the retribution, not only of his own so

tedious and expensive education, but of that of more than twenty others, who are never likely to make any thing by it. How extravagant soever the fees of counsellors at law may sometimes appear, their real retribution is never equal to this. Compute, in any particular place, what is likely to be annually gained, and what is likely to be annually spent, by all the different workmen in any common trade, such as that of shoemakers or weavers, and you will find that the former sum will generally exceed the latter. But make the same computation with regard to all the counsellors and students of law, in all the different Inns of court, and you will find that their annual gains bear but a very small proportion to their annual expense, even though you rate the former as high, and the latter as low, as can well be done. The lottery of the law, therefore, is very far from being a perfectly fair lottery; and that, as well as many other liberal and honourable professions, is, in point of pecuniary gain, evidently under-recompensed.

Those professions keep their level, however, with other occupations; and, notwithstanding these discouragements, all the most generous and liberal spirits are eager to crowd into them. Two different causes contribute to recommend them. First, the desire of the reputation which attends upon superior excellence in any of them; and, secondly, the natural confidence which every man has, more or less, not only in his own abilities, but in his own good fortune.

To excel in any profession, in which but few arrive at mediocrity, it is the most decisive mark of what is called genius, or superior talents. The public admiration which attends upon such distinguished abilities makes always a part of their reward; a greater of smaller, in proportion as it is higher or lower in degree. It makes a considerable part of that reward in the profession of physic; a still greater, perhaps, in that of law; in poetry and philosophy it makes almost the whole.

There are some very agreeable and beautiful talents, of which the possession commands a certain sort of admiration, but of which the exercise, for the sake of gain, is considered, whether from reason or prejudice, as a sort of public prostitution. The pecuniary recompence, therefore, of those who exercise them in this manner, must be sufficient, not only to pay for the time, labour, and expense for acquiring the talents, but for the discredit which attends the employment of them as the means of subsistence. The exorbitant rewards of players, opera-singers, opera-dancers, &c. are founded upon those two principles; the rarity and beauty of the talent, and the discredit of employing them in this manner. It seems absurd at first sight, that we should despise their persons, and yet

reward their talents with the most profuse liberality. While we do the one, however, we must of necessity do the other. Should the public opinion of prejudice ever alter with regard to such occupations, their pecuniary recompence would quickly diminish. More people would apply to them, and the competition would quickly reduce the price of their labour. Such talents, though far from being common, are by no means so rare as imagined. Many people possess them in great perfection, who disdain to make this use of them; and many more are capable of acquiring them, if any thing could be made honourably by them.

The over-weening conceit which the great part of men have of their own abilities, is an ancient evil remarked by the philosophers and moralists of all ages. Their absurd presumption in their own good fortune has been less taken notice of. It is, however, if possible, still more universal. There is no man living, who, when in tolerable health and spirits, has not some share of it. The chance of gain is by every man more or less over-valued, and the chance of loss is by most men under-valued, and by scarce any man, who is in tolerable health and spirits, valued more than it is worth.

That the chance of gain is naturally over-valued, we may learn from the universal success of lotteries. The world neither ever saw, nor ever will see, a perfectly fair lottery, or one in which the whole gain compensated the whole loss; because the undertaker could make nothing by it. In the state lotteries, the tickets are really not worth the price which is paid by the original subscribers, and yet commonly sell in the market for twenty, thirty, and sometimes forty per cent. advance. The vain hopes of gaining some of the great prizes is the sole cause of this demand. The soberest people scarce look upon it as a folly to pay a small sum for the chance of gaining ten or twenty thousand pounds, though they know that even that small sum is perhaps twenty or thirty per cent. more than the chance is worth. In a lottery in which no prize exceeded twenty pounds, though in other respects it approached much nearer to a perfectly fair one than the common state lotteries, there would not be the same demand for tickets. In order to have a better chance for some of the great prizes, some people purchase several tickets; and others, small shares in a still greater number. There is not, however, a more certain proposition in mathematics, than that the more tickets you adventure upon, the more likely you are to be a loser. Adventure upon all the tickets in the lottery, and you lose for certain; and the greater the number of your tickets, the nearer your approach to this certainty.

That the chance of loss is frequently under-valued, and scarce ever valued more than it is worth, we may learn from the very moderate profit of insurers. In order to make insurance, either from fire or sea-risk, a trade at all, the common premium must be sufficient to compensate the common losses, to pay the expense of management, and to afford such a profit as might have been drawn from an equal capital employed in any common trade. The person who pays no more than this, evidently pays no more than the real value of the risk, or the lowest price at which he can reasonably expect to insure it. But though many people have made a little money by insurance, very few have made a great fortune; and, from this consideration alone, it seems evident enough that the ordinary balance of profit and loss is not more advantageous in this than in other common trades, by which so many people make fortunes. Moderate, however, as the premium of insurance commonly is, many people despise the risk too much to care to pay it. Taking the whole kingdom at an average, nineteen houses in twenty, or rather, perhaps, ninety-nine in a hundred, are not insured from fire. Sea-risk is more alarming to the greater part of people; and the proportion of ships insured to those not insured is much greater. Many sail, however, at all seasons, and even in time of war, without any insurance. This may sometimes, perhaps, be done without any imprudence. When a great company, or even a great merchant, has twenty or thirty ships at sea, they may, as it were, insure one another. The premium saved up on them all may more than compensate such losses as they are likely to meet with in the common course of chances. The neglect of insurance upon shipping, however, in the same manner as upon houses, is, in most cases, the effect of no such nice calculation, but of mere thoughtless rashness, and presumptuous contempt of the risk.

The contempt of risk, and the presumptuous hope of success, are in no period of life more active than at the age at which young people choose their professions. How little the fear of misfortune is then capable of balancing the hope of good luck, appears still more evidently in the readiness of the common people to enlist as soldiers, or to go to sea, than in the eagerness of those of better fashion to enter into what are called the liberal professions.

What a common soldier may lose is obvious enough. Without regarding the danger, however, young volunteers never enlist so readily as at the beginning of a new war; and though they have scarce any chance of preferment, they figure to themselves, in their youthful fancies, a thousand occasions of acquiring honour and distinction which never

occur. These romantic hopes make the whole price of their blood. Their pay is less than that of common labourers, and, in actual service, their fatigues are much greater.

The lottery of the sea is not altogether so disadvantageous as that of the army. The son of a creditable labourer or artificer may frequently go to sea with his father’s consent; but if he enlists as a soldier, it is always without it. Other people see some chance of his making something by the one trade; nobody but himself sees any of his making any thing by the other. The great admiral is less the object of public admiration than the great general; and the highest success in the sea service promises a less brilliant fortune and reputation than equal success in the land. The same difference runs through all the inferior degrees of preferment in both. By the rules of precedency, a captain in the navy ranks with a colonel in the army; but he does not rank with him in the common estimation. As the great prizes in the lottery are less, the smaller ones must be more numerous. Common sailors, therefore, more frequently get some fortune and preferment than common soldiers; and the hope of those prizes is what principally recommends the trade. Though their skill and dexterity are much superior to that of almost any artificers: and though their whole life is one continual scene of hardship and danger; yet for all this dexterity and skill, for all those hardships and dangers, while they remain in the condition of common sailors, they receive scarce any other recompence but the pleasure of exercising the one and of surmounting the other. Their wages are not greater than those of common labourers at the port which regulates the rate of seamen’s wages. As they are continually going from port to port, the monthly pay of those who sail from all the different ports of Great Britain, is more nearly upon a level than that of any other workmen in those different places; and the rate of the port to and from which the greatest number sail, that is, the port of London, regulates that of all the rest. At London, the wages of the greater part of the different classes of workmen are about double those of the same classes at Edinburgh. But the sailors who sail from the port of London, seldom earn above three or four shillings a-month more than those who sail from the port of Leith, and the difference is frequently not so great. In time of peace, and in the merchant-service, the London price is from a guinea to about seven-and-twenty shillings the calendar month. A common labourer in London, at the rate of nine or ten shillings a-week, may earn in the calendar month from forty to five-and-forty shillings. The sailor, indeed, over and above his pay, is supplied with provisions. Their value, however, may not perhaps always exceed the

difference between his pay and that of the common labourer; and though it sometimes should, the excess will not be clear gain to the sailor, because he cannot share it with his wife and family, whom he must maintain out of his wages at home.

The dangers and hair-breadth escapes of a life of adventures, instead of disheartening young people, seem frequently to recommend a trade to them. A tender mother, among the inferior ranks of people, is often afraid to send her son to school at a sea-port town, lest the sight of the ships, and the conversation and adventures of the sailors, should entice him to go to sea. The distant prospect of hazards, from which we can hope to extricate ourselves by courage and address, is not disagreeable to us, and does not raise the wages of labour in any employment. It is otherwise with those in which courage and address can be of no avail. In trades which are known to be very unwholesome, the wages of labour are always remarkably high. Unwholesomeness is a species of disagreeableness, and its effects upon the wages of labour are to be ranked under that general head.

In all the different employments of stock, the ordinary rate of profit varies more or less with the certainty or uncertainty of the returns. These are, in general, less uncertain in the inland than in the foreign trade, and in some branches of foreign trade than in others; in the trade to North America, for example, than in that to Jamaica. The ordinary rate of profit always rises more or less with the risk. It does not, however, seem to rise in proportion to it, or so as to compensate it completely. Bankruptcies are most frequent in the most hazardous trades. The most hazardous of all trades, that of a smuggler, though, when the adventure succeeds, it is likewise the most profitable, is the infallible road to bankruptcy. The presumptuous hope of success seems to act here as upon all other occasions, and to entice so many adventurers into those hazardous trades, that their competition reduces the profit below what is sufficient to compensate the risk. To compensate it completely, the common returns ought, over and above the ordinary profits of stock, not only to make up for all occasional losses, but to afford a surplus profit to the adventurers, of the same nature with the profit of insurers. But if the common returns were sufficient for all this, bankruptcies would not be more frequent in these than in other trades.

Of the five circumstances, therefore, which vary the wages of labour, two only affect the profits of stock; the agreeableness or disagreeableness of the business, and the risk or security with which it is attended. In point of agreeableness or disagreeableness, there is little or

no difference in the far greater part of the different employments of stock, but a great deal in those of labour; and the ordinary profit of stock, though it rises with the risk, does not always seem to rise in proportion to it. It should follow from all this, that, in the same society or neighbourhood, the average and ordinary rates of profit in the different employments of stock should be more nearly upon a level than the pecuniary wages of the different sorts of labour.

They are so accordingly. The difference between the earnings of a common labourer and those of a well employed lawyer or physician, is evidently much greater than that between the ordinary profits in any two different branches of trade. The apparent difference, besides, in the profits of different trades, is generally a deception arising from our not always distinguishing what ought to be considered as wages, from what ought to be considered as profit.

Apothecaries' profit is become a bye-word, denoting something uncommonly extravagant. This great apparent profit, however, is frequently no more than the reasonable wages of labour. The skill of an apothecary is a much nicer and more delicate matter than that of any artificer whatever; and the trust which is reposed in him is of much greater importance. He is the physician of the poor in all cases, and of the rich when the distress or danger is not very great. His reward, therefore, ought to be suitable to his skill and his trust; and it arises generally from the price at which he sells his drugs. But the whole drugs which the best employed apothecary in a large market-town, will sell in a year, may not perhaps cost him above thirty or forty pounds. Though he should sell them, therefore, for three or four hundred, or at a thousand per cent, profit, this may frequently be no more than the reasonable wages of his labour, charged, in the only way in which he can charge them, upon the price of his drugs. The greater part of the apparent profit is real wages disguised in the garb of profit.

In a small sea-port town, a little grocer will make forty or fifty per cent. upon a stock of a single hundred pounds, while a considerable wholesale merchant in the same place will scarce make eight or ten per cent. upon a stock of ten thousand. The trade of the grocer may be necessary for the conveniency of the inhabitants, and the narrowness of the market may not admit the employment of a larger capital in the business. The man, however, must not only live by his trade, but live by it suitably to the qualifications which it requires. Besides possessing a little capital, he must be able to read, write, and account, and must be a tolerable judge, too, of perhaps fifty or sixty different sorts of goods,

their prices, qualities, and the markets where they are to be had cheapest. He must have all the knowledge, in short, that is necessary for a great merchant, which nothing hinders him from becoming but the want of a sufficient capital. Thirty or forty pounds a-year cannot be considered as too great a recompence for the labour of a person so accomplished. Deduct this from the seemingly great profits of his capital, and little more will remain, perhaps, than the ordinary profits of stock. The greater part of the apparent profit is, in this case too, real wages.

The difference between the apparent profit of the retail and that of the wholesale trade, is much less in the capital than in small towns and country villages. Where ten thousand pounds can be employed in the grocery trade, the wages of the grocer's labour must be a very trifling addition to the real profits of so great a stock. The apparent profits of the wealthy retailer, therefore, are there more nearly upon a level with these of the wholesale merchant. It is upon this account that goods sold by retail are generally and frequently much cheaper, in the capital than in small towns and country villages. Grocery goods, for example, are generally much cheaper; bread and butchers' meat frequently as cheap. It costs no more to bring grocery goods to the great town than to the country village; but it costs a great deal more to bring corn and cattle, as the greater part of them must be brought from a much greater distance. The prime cost of grocery goods, therefore, being the same in both places, they are cheapest where the least profit is charged upon them. The prime cost of bread and butchers' meat is greater in the great town than in the country village; and though the profit is less, therefore they are not always cheaper there, but often equally cheap. In such articles as bread and butchers' meat, the the same cause which diminishes apparent profit, increases prime cost. The extent of the market, by giving employment to greater stocks, diminishes apparent profit; but by requiring supplies from a greater distance, it increases prime cost. This diminution of the one and increase of the other, seem, in most cases, nearly to counterbalance one another, which is probably the reason that, though the prices of corn and cattle are commonly very different in different parts of the kingdom, those of bread and butchers' meat are generally very nearly the same through the greater part of it.

Though the profits of stock, both in the wholesale and retail trade, are generally less in the capital than in small towns and country villages, yet great fortunes are frequently acquired from small beginnings in the former, and scarce ever in the latter. In small towns and country villages, on account of the narrowness of the market, trade cannot always be

extended as stock extends. In such places, therefore, though the rate of a particular person's profits may be very high, the sum or amount of them can never be very great, nor consequently that of his annual accumulation. In great towns, on the contrary, trade can be extended as stock increases, and the credit of a frugal and thriving man increases much faster than his stock. His trade is extended in proportion to the amount of both; and the sum or amount of his profits is in proportion to the extent of his trade, and his annual accumulation in proportion to the amount of his profits. It seldom happens, however, that great fortunes are made, even in great towns, by any one regular, established, and well-known branch of business, but in consequence of a long life of industry, frugality, and attention. Sudden fortunes, indeed, are sometimes made in such places, by what is called the trade of speculation. The speculative merchant exercises no one regular, established, or well-known branch of business. He is a corn merchant this year, and a wine merchant the next, and a sugar, tobacco, or tea merchant the year after. He enters into every trade, when he foresees that it is likely to be more than commonly profitable, and he quits it when he foresees that its profits are likely to return to the level of other trades. His profits and losses, therefore, can bear no regular proportion to those of any one established and well-known branch of business. A bold adventurer may sometimes acquire a considerable fortune by two or three successful speculations, but is just as likely to lose one by two or three unsuccessful ones. This trade can be carried on nowhere but in great towns. It is only in places of the most extensive commerce and correspondence that the intelligence requisite for it can he had.

The five circumstances above mentioned, though they occasion considerable inequalities in the wages of labour and profits of stock, occasion none in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages, real or imaginary, of the different employments of either. The nature of those circumstances is such, that they make up for a small pecuniary gain in some, and counterbalance a great one in others.

In order, however, that this equality may take place in the whole of their advantages or disadvantages, three things are requisite, even where there is the most perfect freedom. First, the employments must be well known and long established in the neighbourhood; secondly, they must be in their ordinary, or what may be called their natural state; and, thirdly, they must be the sole or principal employments of those who occupy them.

First, This equality can lake place only in those employments which are well known, and have been long established in the neighbourhood.

Where all other circumstances are equal, wages are generally higher in new than in old trades. When a projector attempts to establish a new manufacture, he must at first entice his workmen from other employments, by higher wages than they can either earn in their own trades, or than the nature of his work would otherwise require; and a considerable time must pass away before he can venture to reduce them to the common level. Manufactures for which the demand arises altogether from fashion and fancy, are continually changing, and seldom last long enough to be considered as old established manufactures. Those, on the contrary, for which the demand arises chiefly from use or necessity, are less liable to change, and the same form of fabric may continue in demand for whole centuries together. The wages of labour, therefore, are likely to be higher in manufactures of the former, than in those of the latter kind. Birmingham deals chiefly in manufactures of the former kind; Sheffield in those of the latter; and the wages of labour in those two different places are said to be suitable to this difference in the nature of their manufactures.

The establishment of any new manufacture, of any new branch of commerce, or of any new practice in agriculture, is always a speculation from which the projector promises himself extraordinary profits. These profits sometimes are very great, and sometimes, more frequently, perhaps, they are quite otherwise; but, in general, they bear no regular proportion to those of other old trades in the neighbourhood. If the project succeeds, they are commonly at first very high. When the trade or practice becomes thoroughly established and well known, the competition reduces them to the level of other trades.

Secondly, this equality in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock, can take place only in the ordinary, or what may be called the natural state of those employments.

The demand for almost every different species of labour is sometimes greater, and sometimes less than usual. In the one case, the advantages of the employment rise above, in the other they fall below the common level. The demand for country labour is greater at hay-time and harvest than during the greater part of the year; and wages rise with the demand. In time of war, when forty or fifty thousand sailors are forced from the merchant service into that of the king, the demand for sailors to merchant ships necessarily rises with their scarcity; and their wages, upon such

occasions, commonly rise from a guinea and seven-and-twenty shillings to forty shillings and three pounds a-month. In a decaying manufacture, on the contrary, many workmen, rather than quit their own trade, are contented with smaller wages than would be suitable to the nature of their employment.

The profits of stock vary with the price of the commodities in which it is employed. As the price of any commodity rises above the ordinary or average rate, the profits of at least some part of the stock that is employed in bringing it to market, rise above their proper level, and as it falls they sink below it. All commodities are more or less liable to variations of price, but some are much more so than others. In all commodities which are produced by human industry, the quantity of industry annually employed is necessarily regulated by the annual demand, in such a manner that the average annual produce may, as nearly as possible, be equal to the average annual consumption. In some employments, it has already been observed, the same quantity of industry will always produce the same, or very nearly the same quantity of commodities. In the linen or woollen manufactures, for example, the same number of hands will annually work up very nearly the same quantity of linen and woollen cloth. The variations in the market price of such commodities, therefore, can arise only from some accidental variation in the demand. A public mourning raises the price of black cloth. But as the demand for most sorts of plain linen and woollen cloth is pretty uniform, so is likewise the price. But there are other employments in which the same quantity of industry will not always produce the same quantity of commodities. The same quantity of industry, for example, will, in different years, produce very different quantities of corn, wine, hops, sugar, tobacco, &c. The price of such commodities, therefore, varies not only with the variations of demand, but with the much greater and more frequent variations of quantity, and is consequently extremely fluctuating; but the profit of some of the dealers must necessarily fluctuate with the price of the commodities. The operations of the speculative merchant are principally employed about such commodities. He endeavours to buy them up when he foresees that their price is likely to rise, and to sell them when it is likely to fall.

Thirdly, this equality in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock, can take place only in such as are the sole or principal employments of those who occupy them.

When a person derives his subsistence from one employment, which does not occupy the greater part of his time, in the intervals of his leisure he is often willing to work at another for less wages than would otherwise suit the nature of the employment.

There still subsists, in many parts of Scotland, a set of people called *cottars* or *cottagers*, though they were more frequent some years ago than they are now. They are a sort of out-servants of the landlords and farmers. The usual reward which they receive from their master is a house, a small garden for pot-herbs, as much grass as will feed a cow, and, perhaps, an acre or two of bad arable land. When their master has occasion for their labour, he gives them, besides, two pecks of oatmeal a-week, worth about sixteen pence sterling. During a great part of the year, he has little or no occasion for their labour, and the cultivation of their own little possession is not sufficient to occupy the time which is left at their own disposal. When such occupiers were more numerous than they are at present, they are said to have been willing to give their spare time for a very small recompence to any body, and to have wrought for less wages than other labourers. In ancient times, they seem to have been common all over Europe. In countries ill cultivated, and worse inhabited, the greater part of landlords and farmers could not otherwise provide themselves with the extraordinary number of hands which country labour requires at certain seasons. The daily or weekly recompence which such labourers occasionally received from their masters, was evidently not the whole price of their labour. Their small tenement made a considerable part of it. This daily or weekly recompence, however, seems to have been considered as the whole of it, by many writers who have collected the prices of labour and provisions in ancient times, and who have taken pleasure in representing both as wonderfully low.

The produce of such labour comes frequently cheaper to market than would otherwise be suitable to its nature. Stockings, in many parts of Scotland, are knit much cheaper than they can anywhere be wrought upon the loom. They are the work of servants and labourers, who derive the principal part of their subsistence from some other employment. More than a thousand pair of Shetland stockings are annually imported into Leith, of which the price is from fivepence to sevenpence a pair. At Lerwick, the small capital of the Shetland islands, tenpence a-day, I have been assured, is a common price of common labour. In the same islands, they knit worsted stockings to the value of a guinea a pair and upwards.

The spinning of linen yarn is carried on in Scotland nearly in the same way as the knitting of stockings, by servants, who are chiefly hired for

other purposes. They earn but a very scanty subsistence, who endeavour to get their livelihood by either of those trades. In most parts of Scotland, she is a good spinner who can earn twentypence a-week.

In opulent countries, the market is generally so extensive, that any one trade is sufficient to employ the whole labour and stock of those who occupy it. Instances of people living by one employment, and, at the same time, deriving some little advantage from another, occur chiefly in poor countries. The following instance, however, of something of the same kind, is to be found in the capital of a very rich one. There is no city in Europe, I believe, in which house-rent is dearer than in London, and yet I know no capital in which a furnished apartment can be hired so cheap. Lodging is not only much cheaper in London than in Paris; it is much cheaper than in Edinburgh, of the same degree of goodness; and, what may seem extraordinary, the dearness of house-rent is the cause of the cheapness of lodging. The dearness of house-rent in London arises, not only from those causes which render it dear in all great capitals, the dearness of labour, the dearness of all the materials of building, which must generally be brought from a great distance, and, above all, the dearness of ground-rent, every landlord acting the part of a monopolist, and frequently exacting a higher rent for a single acre of bad land in a town, than can be had for a hundred of the best in the country, but it arises in part from the peculiar manners and customs of the people, which oblige every master of a family to hire a whole house from top to bottom. A dwelling-house in England means every thing that is contained under the same roof. In France, Scotland, and many other parts of Europe, it frequently means no more than a single storey. A tradesman in London is obliged to hire a whole house in that part of the town where his customers live. His shop is upon the ground floor, and he and his family sleep in the garret; and he endeavours to pay a part of his house-rent by letting the two middle storeys to lodgers. He expects to maintain his family by his trade, and not by his lodgers. Whereas at Paris and Edinburgh, people who let lodgings have commonly no other means of subsistence; and the price of the lodging must pay, not only the rent of the house, but the whole expense of the family.

Part II. — *Inequalities occasioned by the Policy of Europe.*

Such are the inequalities in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock, which the defect of any of the three requisites above mentioned must occasion,

even where there is the most perfect liberty. But the policy of Europe, by not leaving things at perfect liberty, occasions other inequalities of much greater importance.

It does this chiefly in the three following ways. First, by restraining the competition in some employments to a smaller number than would otherwise be disposed to enter into them; secondly, by increasing it in others beyond what it naturally would be; and, thirdly, by obstructing the free circulation of labour and stock, both from employment to employment, and from place to place.

First, The policy of Europe occasions a very important inequality in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock, by restraining the competition in some employments to a smaller number than might otherwise be disposed to enter into them.

The exclusive privileges of corporations are the principal means it makes use of for this purpose.

The exclusive privilege of an incorporated trade necessarily restrains the competition, in the town where it is established, to those who are free of the trade. To have served an apprenticeship in the town, under a master properly qualified, is commonly the necessary requisite for obtaining this freedom. The bye-laws of the corporation regulate sometimes the number of apprentices which any master is allowed to have, and almost always the number of years which each apprentice is obliged to serve. The intention of both regulations is to restrain the competition to a much smaller number than might otherwise be disposed to enter into the trade. The limitation of the number of apprentices restrains it directly. A long term of apprenticeship restrains it more indirectly, but as effectually, by increasing the expense of education.

In Sheffield, no master cutler can have more than one apprentice at a time, by a bye-law of the corporation. In Norfolk and Norwich, no master weaver can have more than two apprentices, under pain of forfeiting five pounds a-month to the king. No master hatter can have more than two apprentices anywhere in England, or in the English plantations, under pain of forfeiting five pounds a-month, half to the king, and half to him who shall sue in any court of record. Both these regulations, though they have been confirmed by a public law of the kingdom, are evidently dictated by the same corporation-spirit which enacted the bye-law of Sheffield. The silk-weavers in London had scarce been incorporated a year, when they enacted a bye-law, restraining any

master from having more than two apprentices at a time. It required a particular act of parliament to rescind this bye-law.

Seven years seem anciently to have been, all over Europe, the usual term established for the duration of apprenticeships in the greater part of incorporated trades. All such incorporations were anciently called universities, which, indeed, is the proper Latin name for any incorporation whatever. The university of smiths, the university of tailors, &c. are expressions which we commonly meet with in the old charters of ancient towns. When those particular incorporations, which are now peculiarly called universities, were first established, the term of years which it was necessary to study, in order to obtain the degree of master of arts, appears evidently to have been copied from the term of apprenticeship in common trades, of which the incorporations were much more ancient. As to have wrought seven years under a master properly qualified, was necessary, in order to entitle any person to become a master, and to have himself apprentices in a common trade; so to have studied seven years under a master properly qualified, was necessary to entitle him to become a master, teacher, or doctor (words anciently synonymous), in the liberal arts, and to have scholars or apprentices (words likewise originally synonymous) to study under him.

By the 5th of Elizabeth, commonly called the Statute of Apprenticeship, it was enacted, that no person should, for the future, exercise any trade, craft, or mystery, at that time exercised in England, unless he had previously served to it an apprenticeship of seven years at least; and what before had been the bye-law of many particular corporations, became in England the general and public law of all trades carried on in market towns. For though the words of the statute are very general, and seem plainly to include the whole kingdom, by interpretation its operation has been limited to market towns; it having been held that, in country villages, a person may exercise several different trades, though he has not served a seven years apprenticeship to each, they being necessary for the conveniency of the inhabitants, and the number of people frequently not being sufficient to supply each with a particular set of hands.

By a strict interpretation of the words, too, the operation of this statute has been limited to those trades which were established in England before the 5th of Elizabeth, and has never been extended to such as have been introduced since that time. This limitation has given occasion to several distinctions, which, considered as rules of police, appear as foolish as can well be imagined. It has been adjudged, for example, that a

coachmaker can neither himself make nor employ journeymen to make his coach-wheels, but must buy them of a master wheel-wright; this latter trade having been exercised in England before the 5th of Elizabeth. But a wheel-wright, though he has never served an apprenticeship to a coachmaker, may either himself make or employ journeymen to make coaches; the trade of a coachmaker not being within the statute, because not exercised in England at the time when it was made. The manufactures of Manchester, Birmingham, and Wolverhampton, are many of them, upon this account, not within the statute, not having been exercised in England before the 5th of Elizabeth.

In France, the duration of apprenticeships is different in different towns and in different trades. In Paris, five years is the term required in a great number; but, before any person can be qualified to exercise the trade as a master, he must, in many of them, serve five years more as a journeyman. During this latter term, he is called the companion of his master, and the term itself is called his companionship.

In Scotland, there is no general law which regulates universally the duration of apprenticeships. The term is different in different corporations. Where it is long, a part of it may generally be redeemed by paying a small fine. In most towns, too, a very small fine is sufficient to purchase the freedom of any corporation. The weavers of linen and hempen cloth, the principal manufactures of the country, as well as all other artificers subservient to them, wheel-makers, reel-makers, &c. may exercise their trades in any town-corporate, without paying any fine. In all towns-corporate, all persons are free to sell butchers' meat upon any lawful day of the week. Three years is, in Scotland, a common term of apprenticeship, even in some very nice trades; and, in general, I know of no country in Europe, in which corporation laws are so little oppressive.

The property which every man has in his own labour, as it is the original foundation of all other property, so it is the most sacred and inviolable. The patrimony of a poor man lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands; and to hinder him from employing this strength and dexterity in what manner he thinks proper, without injury to his neighbour, is a plain violation of this most sacred property. It is a manifest encroachment upon the just liberty, both of the workman, and of those who might be disposed to employ him. As it hinders the one from working at what he thinks proper, so it hinders the others from employing whom they think proper. To judge whether he is fit to be employed, may surely be trusted to the discretion of the employers, whose interest it so much concerns. The affected anxiety of the lawgiver,

lest they should employ an improper person, is evidently as impertinent as it is oppressive.

The institution of long apprenticeships can give no security that insufficient workmanship shall not frequently be exposed to public sale. When this is done, it is generally the effect of fraud, and not of inability; and the longest apprenticeship can give no security against fraud. Quite different regulations are necessary to prevent this abuse. The sterling mark upon plate, and the stamps upon linen and woollen cloth, give the purchaser much greater security than any statute of apprenticeship. He generally looks at these, but never thinks it worth while to enquire whether the workman had served a seven years apprenticeship.

The institution of long apprenticeships has no tendency to form young people to industry. A journeyman who works by the piece is likely to be industrious, because he derives a benefit from every exertion of his industry. An apprentice is likely to be idle, and almost always is so, because he has no immediate interest to be otherwise. In the inferior employments, the sweets of labour consist altogether in the recompence of labour. They who are soonest in a condition to enjoy the sweets of it, are likely soonest to conceive a relish for it, and to acquire the early habit of industry. A young man naturally conceives an aversion to labour, when for a long time he receives no benefit from it. The boys who are put out apprentices from public charities are generally bound for more than the usual number of years, and they generally turn out very idle and worthless.

Apprenticeships were altogether unknown to the ancients. The reciprocal duties of master and apprentice make a considerable article in every modern code. The Roman law is perfectly silent with regard to them. I know no Greek or Latin word (I might venture, I believe, to assert that there is none) which expresses the idea we now annex to the word apprentice, a servant bound to work at a particular trade for the benefit of a master, during a term of years, upon condition that the master shall teach him that trade.

Long apprenticeships are altogether unnecessary. The arts, which are much superior to common trades, such as those of making clocks and watches, contain no such mystery as to require a long course of instruction. The first invention of such beautiful machines, indeed, and even that of some of the instruments employed in making them, must no no doubt have been the work of deep thought and long time, and may justly be considered as among the happiest efforts of human ingenuity. But when both have been fairly invented, and are well understood, to

explain to any young man, in the completest manner, how to apply the instruments, and how to construct the machines, cannot well require more than the lessons of a few weeks; perhaps those of a few days might be sufficient. In the common mechanic trades, those of a few days might certainly be sufficient. The dexterity of hand, indeed, even in common trades, cannot be acquired without much practice and experience. But a young man would practice with much more diligence and attention, if from the beginning he wrought as a journeyman, being paid in proportion to the little work which he could execute, and paying in his turn for the materials which he might sometimes spoil through awkwardness and inexperience. His education would generally in this way be more effectual, and always less tedious and expensive. The master, indeed, would be a loser. He would lose all the wages of the apprentice, which he now saves, for seven years together. In the end, perhaps, the apprentice himself would be a loser. In a trade so easily learnt he would have more competitors, and his wages, when he came to be a complete workman, would be much less than at present. The same increase of competition would reduce the profits of the masters, as well as the wages of workmen. The trades, the crafts, the mysteries, would all be losers. But the public would be a gainer, the work of all artificers coming in this way much cheaper to market.

It is to prevent this reduction of price, and consequently of wages and profit, by restraining that free competition which would most certainly occasion it, that all corporations, and the greater part of corporation laws, have been established. In order to erect a corporation, no other authority in ancient times was requisite, in many parts of Europe, but that of the town-corporate in which it was established. In England, indeed, a charter from the king was likewise necessary. But this prerogative of the crown seems to have been reserved rather for extorting money from the subject, than for the defence of the common liberty against such oppressive monopolies. Upon paying a fine to the king, the charter seems generally to have been readily granted; and when any particular class of artificers or traders thought proper to act as a corporation, without a charter, such adulterine guilds, as they were called, were not always disfranchised upon that account, but obliged to fine annually to the king, for permission to exercise their usurped privileges[12*]. The immediate inspection of all corporations, and of the bye-laws which they might think proper to enact for their own government, belonged to the town-corporate in which they were established; and whatever discipline was exercised over them, proceeded commonly, not from the king, but from

that greater incorporation of which those subordinate ones were only parts or members.

The government of towns-corporate was altogether in the hands of traders and artificers, and it was the manifest interest of every particular class of them, to prevent the market from being overstocked, as they commonly express it, with their own particular species of industry; which is in reality to keep it always understocked. Each class was eager to establish regulations proper for this purpose, and, provided it was allowed to do so, was willing to consent that every other class should do the same. In consequence of such regulations, indeed, each class was obliged to buy the goods they had occasion for from every other within the town, somewhat dearer than they otherwise might have done. But, in recompence, they were enabled to sell their own just as much dearer; so that, so far it was as broad as long, as they say; and in the dealings of the different classes within the town with one another, none of them were losers by these regulations. But in their dealings with the country they were all great gainers; and in these latter dealings consist the whole trade which supports and enriches every town.

Every town draws its whole subsistence, and all the materials of its industry, from the country. It pays for these chiefly in two ways. First, by sending back to the country a part of those materials wrought up and manufactured; in which case, their price is augmented by the wages of the workmen, and the profits of their masters or immediate employers; secondly, by sending to it a part both of the rude and manufactured produce, either of other countries, or of distant parts of the same country, imported into the town; in which case, too, the original price of those goods is augmented by the wages of the carriers or sailors, and by the profits of the merchants who employ them. In what is gained upon the first of those branches of commerce, consists the advantage which the town makes by its manufactures; in what is gained upon the second, the advantage of its inland and foreign trade. The wages of the workmen, and the profits of their different employers, make up the whole of what is gained upon both. Whatever regulations, therefore, tend to increase those wages and profits beyond what they otherwise would be, tend to enable the town to purchase, with a smaller quantity of its labour, the produce of a greater quantity of the labour of the country. They give the traders and artificers in the town an advantage over the landlords, farmers, and labourers, in the country, and break down that natural equality which would otherwise take place in the commerce which is carried on between them. The whole annual produce of the labour of the society is annually

divided between these two different sets of people. By means of those regulations, a greater share of it is given to the inhabitants of the town than would otherwise fall to them, and a less to those of the country.

The price which the town really pays for the provisions and materials annually imported into it, is the quantity of manufactures and other goods annually exported from it. The dearer the latter are sold, the cheaper the former are bought. The industry of the town becomes more, and that of the country less advantageous.

That the industry which is carried on in towns is, everywhere in Europe, more advantageous than that which is carried on in the country, without entering into any very nice computations, we may satisfy ourselves by one very simple and obvious observation. In every country of Europe, we find at least a hundred people who have acquired great fortunes, from small beginnings, by trade and manufactures, the industry which properly belongs to towns, for one who has done so by that which properly belongs to the country, the raising of rude produce by the improvement and cultivation of land. Industry, therefore, must be better rewarded, the wages of labour and the profits of stock must evidently be greater, in the one situation than in the other. But stock and labour naturally seek the most advantageous employment. They naturally, therefore, resort as much as they can to the town, and desert the country.

The inhabitants of a town being collected into one place, can easily combine together. The most insignificant trades carried on in towns have, accordingly, in some place or other, been incorporated; and even where they have never been incorporated, yet the corporation-spirit, the jealousy of strangers, the aversion to take apprentices, or to communicate the secret of their trade, generally prevail in them, and often teach them, by voluntary associations and agreements, to prevent that free competition which they cannot prohibit by bye-laws. The trades which employ but a small number of hands, run most easily into such combinations. Half-a-dozen wool-combers, perhaps, are necessary to keep a thousand spinners and weavers at work. By combining not to take apprentices, they can not only engross the employment, but reduce the whole manufacture into a sort of slavery to themselves, and raise the price of their labour much above what is due to the nature of their work.

The inhabitants of the country, dispersed in distant places, cannot easily combine together. They have not only never been incorporated, but the incorporation spirit never has prevailed among them. No apprenticeship has ever been thought necessary to qualify for husbandry, the great trade of the country. After what are called the fine arts, and the

liberal professions, however, there is perhaps no trade which requires so great a variety of knowledge and experience. The innumerable volumes which have been written upon it in all languages, may satisfy us, that among the wisest and most learned nations, it has never been regarded as a matter very easily understood. And from all those volumes we shall in vain attempt to collect that knowledge of its various and complicated operations which is commonly possessed even by the common farmer; how contemptuously soever the very contemptible authors of some of them may sometimes affect to speak of him. There is scarce any common mechanic trade, on the contrary, of which all the operations may not be as completely and distinctly explained in a pamphlet of a very few pages, as it is possible for words illustrated by figures to explain them. In the history of the arts, now publishing by the French Academy of Sciences, several of them are actually explained in this manner. The direction of operations, besides, which must be varied with every change of the weather, as well as with many other accidents, requires much more judgment and discretion, than that of those which are always the same, or very nearly the same.

Not only the art of the farmer, the general direction of the operations of husbandry, but many inferior branches of country labour require much more skill and experience than the greater part of mechanic trades. The man who works upon brass and iron, works with instruments, and upon materials of which the temper is always the same, or very nearly the same. But the man who ploughs the ground with a team of horses or oxen, works with instruments of which the health, strength, and temper, are very different upon different occasions. The condition of the materials which he works upon, too, is as variable as that of the instruments which he works with, and both require to be managed with much judgment and discretion. The common ploughman, though generally regarded as the pattern of stupidity and ignorance, is seldom defective in this judgment and discretion. He is less accustomed, indeed, to social intercourse, than the mechanic who lives in a town. His voice and language are more uncouth, and more difficult to be understood by those who are not used to them. His understanding, however, being accustomed to consider a greater variety of objects, is generally much superior to that of the other, whose whole attention, from morning till night is commonly occupied in performing one or two very simple operations. How much the lower ranks of people in the country are really superior to those of the town, is well known to every man whom either business or curiosity has led to converse much with both. In China and

Indostan, accordingly, both the rank and the wages of country labourers are said to be superior to those of the greater part of artificers and manufacturers. They would probably be so everywhere, if corporation laws and the corporation spirit did not prevent it.

The superiority which the industry of the towns has everywhere in Europe over that of the country, is not altogether owing to corporations and corporation laws. It is supported by many other regulations. The high duties upon foreign manufactures, and upon all goods imported by alien merchants, all tend to the same purpose. Corporation laws enable the inhabitants of towns to raise their prices, without fearing to be undersold by the free competition of their own countrymen. Those other regulations secure them equally against that of foreigners. The enhancement of price occasioned by both is everywhere finally paid by the landlords, farmers, and labourers, of the country, who have seldom opposed the establishment of such monopolies. They have commonly neither inclination nor fitness to enter into combinations; and the clamour and sophistry of merchants and manufacturers easily persuade them, that the private interest of a part, and of a subordinate part, of the society, is the general interest of the whole.

In Great Britain, the superiority of the industry of the towns over that of the country seems to have been greater formerly than in the present times. The wages of country labour approach nearer to those of manufacturing labour, and the profits of stock employed in agriculture to those of trading and manufacturing stock, than they are said to have done in the last century, or in the beginning of the present. This change may be regarded as the necessary, though very late consequence of the extraordinary encouragement given to the industry of the towns. The stocks accumulated in them come in time to be so great, that it can no longer be employed with the ancient profit in that species of industry which in peculiar to them. That industry has its limits like every other; and the increase of stock, by increasing the competition, necessarily reduces the profit. The lowering of profit in the town forces out stock to the country, where, by creating a new demand for country labour, it necessarily raises its wages. It then spreads itself, if I may say so, over the face of the land, and, by being employed in agriculture, is in part restored to the country, at the expense of which, in a great measure, it had originally been accumulated in the town. That everywhere in Europe the greatest improvements of the country have been owing to such overflowings of the stock originally accumulated in the towns, I shall endeavour to shew hereafter, and at the same time to demonstrate, that

though some countries have, by this course, attained to a considerable degree of opulence, it is in itself necessarily slow, uncertain, liable to be disturbed and interrupted by innumerable accidents, and, in every respect, contrary to the order of nature and reason. The interests, prejudices, laws, and customs, which have given occasion to it, I shall endeavour to explain as fully and distinctly as I can in the third and fourth books of this Inquiry.

People of the same trade seldom meet together, even for merriment and diversion, but the conversation ends in a conspiracy against the public, or in some contrivance to raise prices. It is impossible, indeed, to prevent such meetings, by any law which either could be executed, or would be consistent with liberty and justice. But though the law cannot hinder people of the same trade from sometimes assembling together, it ought to do nothing to facilitate such assemblies, much less to render them necessary.

A regulation which obliges all those of the same trade in a particular town to enter their names and places of abode in a public register, facilitates such assemblies. It connects individuals who might never otherwise be known to one another, and gives every man of the trade a direction where to find every other man of it.

A regulation which enables those of the same trade to tax themselves, in order to provide for their poor, their sick, their widows and orphans, by giving them a common interest to manage, renders such assemblies necessary.

An incorporation not only renders them necessary, but make the act of the majority binding upon the whole. In a free trade, an effectual combination cannot be established but by the unanimous consent of every single trader, and it cannot last longer than every single trader continues of the same mind. The majority of a corporation can enact a bye-law, with proper penalties, which will limit the competition more effectually and more durably than any voluntary combination whatever.

The pretence that corporations are necessary for the better government of the trade, is without any foundation. The real and effectual discipline which is exercised over a workman, is not that of his corporation, but that of his customers. It is the fear of losing their employment which restrains his frauds and corrects his negligence. An exclusive corporation necessarily weakens the force of this discipline. A particular set of workmen must then be employed, let them behave well or ill. It is upon this account that, in many large incorporated towns, no tolerable workmen are to be found, even in some of the most necessary

trades. If you would have your work tolerably executed, it must be done in the suburbs, where the workmen, having no exclusive privilege, have nothing but their character to depend upon, and you must then smuggle it into the town as well as you can.

It is in this manner that the policy of Europe, by restraining the competition in some employments to a smaller number than would otherwise be disposed to enter into them, occasions a very important inequality in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock.

Secondly, The policy of Europe, by increasing the competition in some employments beyond what it naturally would be, occasions another inequality, of an opposite kind, in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different employments of labour and stock.

It has been considered as of so much importance that a proper number of young people should be educated for certain professions, that sometimes the public, and sometimes the piety of private founders, have established many pensions, scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, &c. for this purpose, which draw many more people into those trades than could otherwise pretend to follow them. In all Christian countries, I believe, the education of the greater part of churchmen is paid for in this manner. Very few of them are educated altogether at their own expense. The long, tedious, and expensive education, therefore, of those who are, will not always procure them a suitable reward, the church being crowded with people, who, in order to get employment, are willing to accept of a much smaller recompence than what such an education would otherwise have entitled them to; and in this manner the competition of the poor takes away the reward of the rich. It would be indecent, no doubt, to compare either a curate or a chaplain with a journeyman in any common trade. The pay of a curate or chaplain, however, may very properly be considered as of the same nature with the wages of a journeyman. They are all three paid for their work according to the contract which they may happen to make with their respective superiors. Till after the middle of the fourteenth century, five merks, containing about as much silver as ten pounds of our present money, was in England the usual pay of a curate or a stipendiary parish priest, as we find it regulated by the decrees of several different national councils. At the same period, fourpence a-day, containing the same quantity of silver as a shilling of our present money, was declared to be the pay of a master mason; and threepence a-day, equal to ninepence of our present money, that of a journeyman mason[13*]. The wages of both these labourers, therefore, supposing them to have

been constantly employed, were much superior to those of the curate. The wages of the master mason, supposing him to have been without employment one-third of the year, would have fully equalled them. By the 12th of Queen Anne, c. 12. it is declared, ‘That whereas, for want of sufficient maintenance and encouragement to curates, the cures have, in several places, been meanly supplied, the bishop is, therefore, empowered to appoint, by writing under his hand and seal, a sufficient certain stipend or allowance, not exceeding fifty, and not less than twenty pounds a-year.’ Forty pounds a-year is reckoned at present very good pay for a curate; and, notwithstanding this act of parliament, there are many curacies under twenty pounds a-year. There are journeymen shoemakers in London who earn forty pounds a-year, and there is scarce an industrious workman of any kind in that metropolis who does not earn more than twenty. This last sum, indeed, does not exceed what is frequently earned by common labourers in many country parishes. Whenever the law has attempted to regulate the wages of workmen, it has always been rather to lower them than to raise them. But the law has, upon many occasions, attempted to raise the wages of curates, and, for the dignity of the church, to oblige the rectors of parishes to give them more than the wretched maintenance which they themselves might be willing to accept of. And, in both cases, the law seems to have been equally ineffectual, and has never either been able to raise the wages of curates, or to sink those of labourers to the degree that was intended; because it has never been able to hinder either the one from being willing to accept of less than the legal allowance, on account of the indigence of their situation and the multitude of their competitors, or the other from receiving more, on account of the contrary competition of those who expected to derive either profit or pleasure from employing them.

The great benefices and other ecclesiastical dignities support the honour of the church, notwithstanding the mean circumstances of some of its inferior members. The respect paid to the profession, too, makes some compensation even to them for the meanness of their pecuniary recompence. In England, and in all Roman catholic countries, the lottery of the church is in reality much more advantageous than is necessary. The example of the churches of Scotland, of Geneva, and of several other protestant churches, may satisfy us, that in so creditable a profession, in which education is so easily procured, the hopes of much more moderate benefices will draw a sufficient number of learned, decent, and respectable men into holy orders.

In professions in which there are no benefices, such as law and physic, if an equal proportion of people were educated at the public expense, the competition would soon be so great as to sink very much their pecuniary reward. It might then not be worth any man's while to educate his son to either of those professions at his own expense. They would be entirely abandoned to such as had been educated by those public charities, whose numbers and necessities would oblige them in general to content themselves with a very miserable recompence, to the entire degradation of the now respectable professions of law and physic.

That unprosperous race of men, commonly called men of letters, are pretty much in the situation which lawyers and physicians probably would be in, upon the foregoing supposition. In every part of Europe, the greater part of them have been educated for the church, but have been hindered by different reasons from entering into holy orders. They have generally, therefore, been educated at the public expense; and their numbers are everywhere so great, as commonly to reduce the price of their labour to a very paltry recompence.

Before the invention of the art of printing, the only employment by which a man of letters could make any thing by his talents, was that of a public or private teacher, or by communicating to other people the curious and useful knowledge which he had acquired himself; and this is still surely a more honourable, a more useful, and, in general, even a more profitable employment than that other of writing for a bookseller, to which the art of printing has given occasion. The time and study, the genius, knowledge, and application requisite to qualify an eminent teacher of the sciences, are at least equal to what is necessary for the greatest practitioners in law and physic. But the usual reward of the eminent teacher bears no proportion to that of the lawyer or physician, because the trade of the one is crowded with indigent people, who have been brought up to it at the public expense; whereas those of the other two are encumbered with very few who have not been educated at their own. The usual recompence, however, of public and private teachers, small as it may appear, would undoubtedly be less than it is, if the competition of those yet more indigent men of letters, who write for bread, was not taken out of the market. Before the invention of the art of printing, a scholar and a beggar seem to have been terms very nearly synonymous. The different governors of the universities, before that time, appear to have often granted licences to their scholars to beg.

In ancient times, before any charities of this kind had been established for the education of indigent people to the learned professions, the

rewards of eminent teachers appear to have been much more considerable. Isocrates, in what is called his discourse against the sophists, reproaches the teachers of his own times with inconsistency. “They make the most magnificent promises to their scholars,” says he, “and undertake to teach them to be wise, to be happy, and to be just; and, in return for so important a service, they stipulate the paltry reward of four or five minæ.” “They who teach wisdom,” continues he, “ought certainly to be wise themselves; but if any man were to sell such a bargain for such a price, he would be convicted of the most evident folly.” He certainly does not mean here to exaggerate the reward, and we may be assured that it was not less than he represents it. Four minæ were equal to thirteen pounds six shillings and eightpence; five minæ to sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence. — Something not less than the largest of those two sums, therefore, must at that time have been usually paid to the most eminent teachers at Athens. Isocrates himself demanded ten minæ, or L.33 : 6 : 8 from each scholar. When he taught at Athens, he is said to have had a hundred scholars. I understand this to be the number whom he taught at one time, or who attended what we would call one course of lectures; a number which will not appear extraordinary from so great a city to so famous a teacher, who taught, too, what was at that time the most fashionable of all sciences, rhetoric. He must have made, therefore, by each course of lectures, a thousand minæ, or L.3333 : 6 : 8. A thousand minæ, accordingly, is said by Plutarch, in another place, to have been his didactron, or usual price of teaching. Many other eminent teachers in those times appear to have acquired great fortunes. Georgias made a present to the temple of Delphi of his own statue in solid gold. We must not, I presume, suppose that it was as large as the life. His way of living, as well as that of Hippias and Protagoras, two other eminent teachers of those times, is represented by Plato as splendid, even to ostentation. Plato himself is said to have lived with a good deal of magnificence. Aristotle, after having been tutor to Alexander, and most munificently rewarded, as it is universally agreed, both by him and his father, Philip, thought it worth while, notwithstanding, to return to Athens, in order to resume the teaching of his school. Teachers of the sciences were probably in those times less common than they came to be in an age or two afterwards, when the competition had probably somewhat reduced both the price of their labour and the admiration for their persons. The most eminent of them, however, appear always to have enjoyed a degree of consideration much superior to any of the like profession in the present times. The Athenians

sent Carneades the academic, and Diogenes the stoic, upon a solemn embassy to Rome; and though their city had then declined from its former grandeur, it was still an independent and considerable republic. Carneades, too, was a Babylonian by birth; and as there never was a people more jealous of admitting foreigners to public offices than the Athenians, their consideration for him must have been very great.

This inequality is, upon the whole, perhaps rather advantageous than hurtful to the public. It may somewhat degrade the profession of a public teacher; but the cheapness of literary education is surely an advantage which greatly overbalances this trifling inconveniency. The public, too, might derive still greater benefit from it, if the constitution of those schools and colleges, in which education is carried on, was more reasonable than it is at present through the greater part of Europe.

Thirdly, the policy of Europe, by obstructing the free circulation of labour and stock, both from employment to employment, and from place to place, occasions, in some cases, a very inconvenient inequality in the whole of the advantages and disadvantages of their different employments.

The statute of apprenticeship obstructs the free circulation of labour from one employment to another, even in the same place. The exclusive privileges of corporations obstruct it from one place to another, even in the same employment.

It frequently happens, that while high wages are given to the workmen in one manufacture, those in another are obliged to content themselves with bare subsistence. The one is in an advancing state, and has therefore a continual demand for new hands; the other is in a declining state, and the superabundance of hands is continually increasing. Those two manufactures may sometimes be in the same town, and sometimes in the same neighbourhood, without being able to lend the least assistance to one another. The statute of apprenticeship may oppose it in the one case, and both that and an exclusive corporation in the other. In many different manufactures, however, the operations are so much alike, that the workmen could easily change trades with one another, if those absurd laws did not hinder them. The arts of weaving plain linen and plain silk, for example, are almost entirely the same. That of weaving plain woollen is somewhat different; but the difference is so insignificant, that either a linen or a silk weaver might become a tolerable workman in a very few days. If any of those three capital manufactures, therefore, were decaying, the workmen might find a resource in one of the other two which was in a more prosperous

condition; and their wages would neither rise too high in the thriving, nor sink too low in the decaying manufacture. The linen manufacture, indeed, is in England, by a particular statute, open to every body; but as it is not much cultivated through the greater part of the country, it can afford no general resource to the workmen of other decaying manufactures, who, wherever the statute of apprenticeship takes place, have no other choice, but either to come upon the parish, or to work as common labourers; for which, by their habits, they are much worse qualified than for any sort of manufacture that bears any resemblance to their own. They generally, therefore, chuse to come upon the parish.

Whatever obstructs the free circulation of labour from one employment to another, obstructs that of stock likewise; the quantity of stock which can be employed in any branch of business depending very much upon that of the labour which can be employed in it. Corporation laws, however, give less obstruction to the free circulation of stock from one place to another, than to that of labour. It is everywhere much easier for a wealthy merchant to obtain the privilege of trading in a town-corporate, than for a poor artificer to obtain that of working in it.

The obstruction which corporation laws give to the free circulation of labour is common, I believe, to every part of Europe. That which is given to it by the poor laws is, so far as I know, peculiar to England. It consists in the difficulty which a poor man finds in obtaining a settlement, or even in being allowed to exercise his industry in any parish but that to which he belongs. It is the labour of artificers and manufacturers only of which the free circulation is obstructed by corporation laws. The difficulty of obtaining settlements obstructs even that of common labour. It may be worth while to give some account of the rise, progress, and present state of this disorder, the greatest, perhaps, of any in the police of England.

When, by the destruction of monasteries, the poor had been deprived of the charity of those religious houses, after some other ineffectual attempts for their relief, it was enacted, by the 43d of Elizabeth, c. 2. that every parish should be bound to provide for its own poor, and that overseers of the poor should be annually appointed, who, with the church-wardens, should raise, by a parish rate, competent sums for this purpose.

By this statute, the necessity of providing for their own poor was indispensably imposed upon every parish. Who were to be considered as the poor of each parish became, therefore, a question of some importance. This question, after some variation, was at last determined

by the 13th and 14th of Charles II. when it was enacted, that forty days undisturbed residence should gain any person a settlement in any parish; but that within that time it should be lawful for two justices of the peace, upon complaint made by the church-wardens or overseers of the poor, to remove any new inhabitant to the parish where he was last legally settled; unless he either rented a tenement of ten pounds a-year, or could give such security for the discharge of the parish where he was then living, as those justices should judge sufficient.

Some frauds, it is said, were committed in consequence of this statute; parish officers sometimes bribing their own poor to go clandestinely to another parish, and, by keeping themselves concealed for forty days, to gain a settlement there, to the discharge of that to which they properly belonged. It was enacted, therefore, by the 1st of James II. that the forty days undisturbed residence of any person necessary to gain a settlement, should be accounted only from the time of his delivering notice, in writing, of the place of his abode and the number of his family, to one of the church-wardens or overseers of the parish where he came to dwell.

But parish officers, it seems, were not always more honest with regard to their own than they had been with regard to other parishes, and sometimes connived at such intrusions, receiving the notice, and taking no proper steps in consequence of it. As every person in a parish, therefore, was supposed to have an interest to prevent as much as possible their being burdened by such intruders, it was further enacted by the 3d of William III. that the forty days residence should be accounted only from the publication of such notice in writing on Sunday in the church, immediately after divine service.

“After all,” says Doctor Burn, “this kind of settlement, by continuing forty days after publication of notice in writing, is very seldom obtained; and the design of the acts is not so much for gaining of settlements, as for the avoiding of them by persons coming into a parish clandestinely, for the giving of notice is only putting a force upon the parish to remove. But if a person’s situation is such, that it is doubtful whether he is actually removable or not, he shall, by giving of notice, compel the parish either to allow him a settlement uncontested, by suffering him to continue forty days, or by removing him to try the right.”

This statute, therefore, rendered it almost impracticable for a poor man to gain a new settlement in the old way, by forty days inhabitancy. But that it might not appear to preclude altogether the common people of one parish from ever establishing themselves with security in another, it appointed four other ways by which a settlement might be gained

without any notice delivered or published. The first was, by being taxed to parish rates and paying them; the second, by being elected into an annual parish office, and serving in it a year; the third, by serving an apprenticeship in the parish; the fourth, by being hired into service there for a year, and continuing in the same service during the whole of it.

Nobody can gain a settlement by either of the first two ways, but by the public deed of the whole parish, who are too well aware of the consequences to adopt any new-comer, who has nothing but his labour to support him, either by taxing him to parish rates, or by electing him into a parish office.

No married man can well gain any settlement in either of the two last ways. An apprentice is scarce ever married; and it is expressly enacted, that no married servant shall gain any settlement by being hired for a year. The principal effect of introducing settlement by service, has been to put out in a great measure the old fashion of hiring for a year; which before had been so customary in England, that even at this day, if no particular term is agreed upon, the law intends that every servant is hired for a year. But masters are not always willing to give their servants a settlement by hiring them in this manner; and servants are not always willing to be so hired, because, as every last settlement discharges all the foregoing, they might thereby lose their original settlement in the places of their nativity, the habitation of their parents and relations.

No independent workman, it is evident, whether labourer or artificer, is likely to gain any new settlement, either by apprenticeship or by service. When such a person, therefore, carried his industry to a new parish, he was liable to be removed, how healthy and industrious soever, at the caprice of any church-warden or overseer, unless he either rented a tenement of ten pounds a-year, a thing impossible for one who has nothing but his labour to live by, or could give such security for the discharge of the parish as two justices of the peace should judge sufficient.

What security they shall require, indeed, is left altogether to their discretion; but they cannot well require less than thirty pounds, it having been enacted, that the purchase even of a freehold estate of less than thirty pounds value, shall not gain any person a settlement, as not being sufficient for the discharge of the parish. But this is a security which scarce any man who lives by labour can give; and much greater security is frequently demanded.

In order to restore, in some measure, that free circulation of labour which those different statutes had almost entirely taken away, the

invention of certificates was fallen upon. By the 8th and 9th of William III. it was enacted that if any person should bring a certificate from the parish where he was last legally settled, subscribed by the church-wardens and overseers of the poor, and allowed by two justices of the peace, that every other parish should be obliged to receive him; that he should not be removable merely upon account of his being likely to become chargeable, but only upon his becoming actually chargeable; and that then the parish which granted the certificate should be obliged to pay the expense both of his maintenance, and of his removal. And in order to give the most perfect security to the parish where such certificated man should come to reside, it was further enacted by the same statute, that he should gain no settlement there by any means whatever, except either by renting a tenement of ten pounds a-year, or by serving upon his account in an annual parish office for one whole year; and consequently neither by notice nor by service, nor by apprenticeship, nor by paying parish rates. By the 12th of Queen Anne, too, stat. 1, c. 18, it was further enacted, that neither the servants nor apprentices of such certificated man should gain any settlement in the parish where he resided under such certificate.

How far this invention has restored that free circulation of labour, which the preceding statutes had almost entirely taken away, we may learn from the following very judicious observation of Doctor Burn. “It is obvious,” says he, “that there are divers good reasons for requiring certificates with persons coming to settle in any place; namely, that persons residing under them can gain no settlement, neither by apprenticeship, nor by service, nor by giving notice, nor by paying parish rates; that they can settle neither apprentices nor servants; that if they become chargeable, it is certainly known whither to remove them, and the parish shall be paid for the removal, and for their maintenance in the mean time; and that, if they fall sick, and cannot be removed, the parish which gave the certificate must maintain them, none of all which can be without a certificate. Which reasons will hold proportionably for parishes not granting certificates in ordinary cases; for it is far more than an equal chance, but that they will have the certificated persons again, and in a worse condition.” The moral of this observation seems to be, that certificates ought always to be required by the parish where any poor man comes to reside, and that they ought very seldom to be granted by that which he purposes to leave. “There is somewhat of hardship in this matter of certificates,” says the same very intelligent author, in his History of the Poor Laws, “by putting it in the power of a parish officer

to imprison a man as it were for life, however inconvenient it may be for him to continue at that place where he has had the misfortune to acquire what is called a settlement, or whatever advantage he may propose to himself by living elsewhere.”

Though a certificate carries along with it no testimonial of good behaviour, and certifies nothing but that the person belongs to the parish to which he really does belong, it is altogether discretionary in the parish officers either to grant or to refuse it. A mandamus was once moved for, says Doctor Burn, to compel the church-wardens and overseers to sign a certificate; but the Court of King’s Bench rejected the motion as a very strange attempt.

The very unequal price of labour which we frequently find in England, in places at no great distance from one another, is probably owing to the obstruction which the law of settlements gives to a poor man who would carry his industry from one parish to another without a certificate. A single man, indeed, who is healthy and industrious, may sometimes reside by sufferance without one, but a man with a wife and family who should attempt to do so, would, in most parishes, be sure of being removed; and, if the single man should afterwards marry, he would generally be removed likewise. The scarcity of hands in one parish, therefore, cannot always be relieved by their superabundance in another, as it is constantly in Scotland, and, I believe, in all other countries where there is no difficulty of settlement. In such countries, though wages may sometimes rise a little in the neighbourhood of a great town, or wherever else there is an extraordinary demand for labour, and sink gradually as the distance from such places increases, till they fall back to the common rate of the country; yet we never meet with those sudden and unaccountable differences in the wages of neighbouring places which we sometimes find in England, where it is often more difficult for a poor man to pass the artificial boundary of a parish, than an arm of the sea, or a ridge of high mountains, natural boundaries which sometimes separate very distinctly different rates of wages in other countries.

To remove a man who has committed no misdemeanour, from the parish where he chooses to reside, is an evident violation of natural liberty and justice. The common people of England, however, so jealous of their liberty, but like the common people of most other countries, never rightly understanding wherein it consists, have now, for more than a century together, suffered themselves to be exposed to this oppression without a remedy. Though men of reflection, too, have sometimes complained of the law of settlements as a public grievance; yet it has

never been the object of any general popular clamour, such as that against general warrants, an abusive practice undoubtedly, but such a one as was not likely to occasion any general oppression. There is scarce a poor man in England, of forty years of age, I will venture to say, who has not, in some part of his life, felt himself most cruelly oppressed by this ill-contrived law of settlements.

I shall conclude this long chapter with observing, that though anciently it was usual to rate wages, first by general laws extending over the whole kingdom, and afterwards by particular orders of the justices of peace in every particular county, both these practices have now gone entirely into disuse “By the experience of above four hundred years,” says Doctor Burn, “it seems time to lay aside all endeavours to bring under strict regulations, what in its own nature seems incapable of minute limitation; for if all persons in the same kind of work were to receive equal wages, there would be no emulation, and no room left for industry or ingenuity.”

Particular acts of parliament, however, still attempt sometimes to regulate wages in particular trades, and in particular places. Thus the 8th of George III. prohibits, under heavy penalties, all master tailors in London, and five miles round it, from giving, and their workmen from accepting, more than two shillings and sevenpence halfpenny a-day, except in the case of a general mourning. Whenever the legislature attempts to regulate the differences between masters and their workmen, its counsellors are always the masters. When the regulation, therefore, is in favour of the workmen, it is always just and equitable; but it is sometimes otherwise when in favour of the masters. Thus the law which obliges the masters in several different trades to pay their workmen in money, and not in goods, is quite just and equitable. It imposes no real hardship upon the masters. It only obliges them to pay that value in money, which they pretended to pay, but did not always really pay, in goods. This law is in favour of the workmen; but the 8th of George III. is in favour of the masters. When masters combine together, in order to reduce the wages of their workmen, they commonly enter into a private bond or agreement, not to give more than a certain wage, under a certain penalty. Were the workmen to enter into a contrary combination of the same kind, not to accept of a certain wage, under a certain penalty, the law would punish them very severely, and, if it dealt impartially, it would treat the masters in the same manner. But the 8th of George III. enforces by law that very regulation which masters sometimes attempt to establish by such combinations. The complaint of the workmen, that it puts the

ablest and most industrious upon the same footing with an ordinary workman, seems perfectly well founded.

In ancient times, too, it was usual to attempt to regulate the profits of merchants and other dealers, by regulating the price of provisions and other goods. The assize of bread is, so far as I know, the only remnant of this ancient usage. Where there is an exclusive corporation, it may, perhaps, he proper to regulate the price of the first necessary of life; but, where there is none, the competition will regulate it much better than any assize. The method of fixing the assize of bread, established by the 81st of George II. could not be put in practice in Scotland, on account of a defect in the law, its execution depending upon the office of clerk of the market, which does not exist there. This defect was not remedied till the third of George III. The want of an assize occasioned no sensible inconveniency; and the establishment of one in the few places where it has yet taken place has produced no sensible advantage. In the greater part of the towns in Scotland, however, there is an incorporation of bakers, who claim exclusive privileges, though they are not very strictly guarded.

The proportion between the different rates, both of wages and profit, in the different employments of labour and stock, seems not to be much affected, as has already been observed, by the riches or poverty, the advancing, stationary, or declining state of the society. Such revolutions in the public welfare, though they affect the general rates both of wages and profit, must, in the end, affect them equally in all different employments. The proportion between them, therefore, must remain the same, and cannot well be altered, as least for any considerable time, by any such revolutions.

CHAP. XI. OF THE RENT OF LAND.

Rent, considered as the price paid for the use of land, is naturally the highest which the tenant can afford to pay in the actual circumstances of the land. In adjusting the terms of the lease, the landlord endeavours to leave him no greater share of the produce than what is sufficient to keep up the stock from which he furnishes the seed, pays the labour, and purchases and maintains the cattle and other instruments of husbandry, together with the ordinary profits of farming stock in the neighbourhood. This is evidently the smallest share with which the tenant can content himself, without being a loser, and the landlord seldom means to leave him any more. Whatever part of the produce, or, what is the same thing, whatever part of its price, is over and above this share, he naturally endeavours to reserve to himself as the rent of his land, which is evidently the highest the tenant can afford to pay in the actual circumstances of the land. Sometimes, indeed, the liberality, more frequently the ignorance, of the landlord, makes him accept of somewhat less than this portion; and sometimes, too, though more rarely, the ignorance of the tenant makes him undertake to pay somewhat more, or to content himself with somewhat less, than the ordinary profits of farming stock in the neighbourhood. This portion, however, may still be considered as the natural rent of land, or the rent at which it is naturally meant that land should, for the most part, be let.

The rent of land, it may be thought, is frequently no more than a reasonable profit or interest for the stock laid out by the landlord upon its improvement. This, no doubt, may be partly the case upon some occasions; for it can scarce ever be more than partly the case. The landlord demands a rent even for unimproved land, and the supposed interest or profit upon the expense of improvement is generally an addition to this original rent. Those improvements, besides, are not always made by the stock of the landlord, but sometimes by that of the tenant. When the lease comes to be renewed, however, the landlord commonly demands the same augmentation of rent as if they had been all made by his own.

He sometimes demands rent for what is altogether incapable of human improvements. Kelp is a species of sea-weed, which, when burnt, yields an alkaline salt, useful for making glass, soup, and for several other purposes. It grows in several parts of Great Britain, particularly in

Scotland, upon such rocks only as lie within the high-water mark, which are twice every day covered with the sea, and of which the produce, therefore, was never augmented by human industry. The landlord, however, whose estate is bounded by a kelp shore of this kind, demands a rent for it as much as for his corn-fields.

The sea in the neighbourhood of the islands of Shetland is more than commonly abundant in fish, which makes a great part of the subsistence of their inhabitants. But, in order to profit by the produce of the water, they must have a habitation upon the neighbouring land. The rent of the landlord is in proportion, not to what the farmer can make by the land, but to what he can make both by the land and the water. It is partly paid in sea-fish; and one of the very few instances in which rent makes a part of the price of that commodity, is to be found in that country.

The rent of land, therefore, considered as the price paid for the use of the land, is naturally a monopoly price. It is not at all proportioned to what the landlord may have laid out upon the improvement of the land, or to what he can afford to take, but to what the farmer can afford to give.

Such parts only of the produce of land can commonly be brought to market, of which the ordinary price is sufficient to replace the stock which must be employed in bringing them thither, together with its ordinary profits. If the ordinary price is more than this, the surplus part of it will naturally go to the rent of the land. If it is not more, though the commodity may be brought to market, it can afford no rent to the landlord. Whether the price is, or is not more, depends upon the demand.

There are some parts of the produce of land, for which the demand must always be such as to afford a greater price than what is sufficient to bring them to market, and there are others for which it either may or may not be such as to afford this greater price. The former must always afford a rent to the landlord. The latter sometimes may and sometimes may not, according to different circumstances.

Rent, it is to be observed, therefore, enters into the composition of the price of commodities in a different way from wages and profit. High or low wages and profit are the causes of high or low price; high or low rent is the effect of it. It is because high or low wages and profit must be paid, in order to bring a particular commodity to market, that its price is high or low. But it is because its price is high or low, a great deal more, or very little more, or no more, than what is sufficient to pay those wages and profit, that it affords a high rent, or a low rent, or no rent at all.

The particular consideration, first, of those parts of the produce of land which always afford some rent; secondly, of those which sometimes may and sometimes may not afford rent; and, thirdly, of the variations which, in the different periods of improvement, naturally take place in the relative value of those two different sorts of rude produce, when compared both with one another and with manufactured commodities, will divide this chapter into three parts.

Part I. — *Of the Produce of Land which always affords Rent.*

As men, like all other animals, naturally multiply in proportion to the means of their subsistence, food is always more or less in demand. It can always purchase or command a greater or smaller quantity of labour, and somebody can always be found who is willing to do something in order to obtain it. The quantity of labour, indeed, which it can purchase, is not always equal to what it could maintain, if managed in the most economical manner, on account of the high wages which are sometimes given to labour; but it can always purchase such a quantity of labour as it can maintain, according to the rate at which that sort of labour is commonly maintained in the neighbourhood.

But land, in almost any situation, produces a greater quantity of food than what is sufficient to maintain all the labour necessary for bringing it to market, in the most liberal way in which that labour is ever maintained. The surplus, too, is always more than sufficient to replace the stock which employed that labour, together with its profit. Something, therefore, always remains for a rent to the landlord.

The most desert moors in Norway and Scotland produce some sort of pasture for cattle, of which the milk and the increase are always more than sufficient, not only to maintain all the labour necessary for tending them, and to pay the ordinary profit to the farmer or the owner of the herd or flock, but to afford some small rent to the landlord. The rent increases in proportion to the goodness of the pasture. The same extent of ground not only maintains a greater number of cattle, but as they are brought within a smaller compass, less labour becomes requisite to tend them, and to collect their produce. The landlord gains both ways; by the increase of the produce, and by the diminution of the labour which must be maintained out of it.

The rent of land not only varies with its fertility, whatever be its produce, but with its situation, whatever be its fertility. Land in the neighbourhood of a town gives a greater rent than land equally fertile in

a distant part of the country. Though it may cost no more labour to cultivate the one than the other, it must always cost more to bring the produce of the distant land to market. A greater quantity of labour, therefore, must be maintained out of it; and the surplus, from which are drawn both the profit of the farmer and the rent of the landlord, must be diminished. But in remote parts of the country, the rate of profit, as has already been shewn, is generally higher than in the neighbourhood of a large town. A smaller proportion of this diminished surplus, therefore, must belong to the landlord.

Good roads, canals, and navigable rivers, by diminishing the expense of carriage, put the remote parts of the country more nearly upon a level with those in the neighbourhood of the town. They are upon that account the greatest of all improvements. They encourage the cultivation of the remote, which must always be the most extensive circle of the country. They are advantageous to the town by breaking down the monopoly of the country in its neighbourhood. They are advantageous even to that part of the country. Though they introduce some rival commodities into the old market, they open many new markets to its produce. Monopoly, besides, is a great enemy to good management, which can never be universally established, but in consequence of that free and universal competition which forces every body to have recourse to it for the sake of self-defence. It is not more than fifty years ago, that some of the counties in the neighbourhood of London petitioned the parliament against the extension of the turnpike roads into the remoter counties. Those remoter counties, they pretended, from the cheapness of labour, would be able to sell their grass and corn cheaper in the London market than themselves, and would thereby reduce their rents, and ruin their cultivation. Their rents, however, have risen, and their cultivation has been improved since that time.

A corn field of moderate fertility produces a much greater quantity of food for man, than the best pasture of equal extent. Though its cultivation requires much more labour, yet the surplus which remains after replacing the seed and maintaining all that labour, is likewise much greater. If a pound of butcher’s meat, therefore, was never supposed to be worth more than a pound of bread, this greater surplus would everywhere be of greater value and constitute a greater fund, both for the profit of the farmer and the rent of the landlord. It seems to have done so universally in the rude beginnings of agriculture.

But the relative values of those two different species of food, bread and butcher’s meat, are very different in the different periods of

agriculture. In its rude beginnings, the unimproved wilds, which then occupy the far greater part of the country, are all abandoned to cattle. There is more butcher’s meat than bread; and bread, therefore, is the food for which there is the greatest competition, and and which consequently brings the greatest price. At Buenos Ayres, we are told by Ulloa, four reals, one-and-twenty pence halfpenny sterling, was, forty or fifty years ago, the ordinary price of an ox, chosen from a herd of two or three hundred. He says nothing of the price of bread, probably because he found nothing remarkable about it. An ox there, he says, costs little more than the labour of catching him. But corn can nowhere be raised without a great deal of labour; and in a country which lies upon the river Plate, at that time the direct road from Europe to the silver mines of Potosi, the money-price of labour could be very cheap. It is otherwise when cultivation is extended over the greater part of the country. There is then more bread than butcher’s meat. The competition changes its direction, and the price of butcher’s meat becomes greater than the price of bread.

By the extension, besides, of cultivation, the unimproved wilds become insufficient to supply the demand for butcher’s meat. A great part of the cultivated lands must be employed in rearing and fattening cattle; of which the price, therefore, must be sufficient to pay, not only the labour necessary for tending them, but the rent, which the landlord, and the profit which the farmer, could have drawn from such land employed in tillage. The cattle bred upon the most uncultivated moors, when brought to the same market, are, in proportion to their weight or goodness, sold at the same price as these which are reared upon the most improved land. The proprietors of those moors profit by it, and raise the rent of their land in proportion to the price of their cattle. It is not more than a century ago, that in many parts of the Highlands of Scotland, butcher’s meat was as cheap or cheaper than even bread made of oatmeal. The Union opened the market of England to the Highland cattle. Their ordinary price, at present, is about three times greater than at the beginning of the century, and the rents of many Highland estates have been tripled and quadrupled in the same time. In almost every part of Great Britain, a pound of the best butcher’s meat is, in the present times generally worth more than two pounds of the best white bread; and in plentiful years it is sometimes worth three or four pounds.

It is thus that, in the progress of improvement, the rent and profit of unimproved pasture come to be regulated in some measure by the rent and profit of what is improved, and these again by the rent and profit of

corn. Corn is an annual crop; butcher's meat, a crop which requires four or five years to grow. As an acre of land, therefore, will produce a much smaller quantity of the one species of food than of the other, the inferiority of the quantity must be compensated by the superiority of the price. If it was more than compensated, more corn-land would be turned into pasture; and if it was not compensated, part of what was in pasture would be brought back into corn.

This equality, however, between the rent and profit of grass and those of corn; of the land of which the immediate produce is food for cattle, and of that of which the immediate produce is food for men, must be understood to take place only through the greater part of the improved lands of a great country. In some particular local situations it is quite otherwise, and the rent and profit of grass are much superior to what can be made by corn.

Thus, in the neighbourhood of a great town, the demand for milk, and for forage to horses, frequently contribute, together with the high price of butcher's meat, to raise the value of grass above what may be called its natural proportion to that of corn. This local advantage, it is evident, cannot be communicated to the lands at a distance.

Particular circumstances have sometimes rendered some countries so populous, that the whole territory, like the lands in the neighbourhood of a great town, has not been sufficient to produce both the grass and the corn necessary for the subsistence of their inhabitants. Their lands, therefore, have been principally employed in the production of grass, the more bulky commodity, and which cannot be so easily brought from a great distance; and corn, the food of the great body of the people, has been chiefly imported from foreign countries. Holland is at present in this situation; and a considerable part of ancient Italy seems to have been so during the prosperity of the Romans. To feed well, old Cato said, as we are told by Cicero, was the first and most profitable thing in the management of a private estate; to feed tolerably well, the second; and to feed ill, the third. To plough, he ranked only in the fourth place of profit and advantage. Tillage, indeed, in that part of ancient Italy which lay in the neighbourhood of Rome, must have been very much discouraged by the distributions of corn which were frequently made to the people, either gratuitously, or at a very low price. This corn was brought from the conquered provinces, of which several, instead of taxes, were obliged to furnish a tenth part of their produce at a stated price, about sixpence a-peck, to the republic. The low price at which this corn was distributed to the people, must necessarily have sunk the price of what could be

brought to the Roman market from Latium, or the ancient territory of Rome, and must have discouraged its cultivation in that country.

In an open country, too, of which the principal produce is corn, a well-inclosed piece of grass will frequently rent higher than any corn field in its neighbourhood. It is convenient for the maintenance of the cattle employed in the cultivation of the corn; and its high rent is, in this case, not so properly paid from the value of its own produce, as from that of the corn lands which are cultivated by means of it. It is likely to fall, if ever the neighbouring lands are completely inclosed. The present high rent of inclosed land in Scotland seems owing to the scarcity of inclosure, and will probably last no longer than that scarcity. The advantage of inclosure is greater for pasture than for corn. It saves the labour of guarding the cattle, which feed better, too, when they are not liable to be disturbed by their keeper or his dog.

But where these is no local advantage of this kind, the rent and profit of corn, or whatever else is the common vegetable food of the people, must naturally regulate upon the land which is fit for producing it, the rent and profit of pasture.

The use of the artificial grasses, of turnips, carrots, cabbages, and the other expedients which have been fallen upon to make an equal quantity of land feed a greater number of cattle than when in natural grass, should somewhat reduce, it might be expected, the superiority which, in an improved country, the price of butcher’s meat naturally has over that of bread. It seems accordingly to have done so, and there is some reason for believing that, at least in the London market, the price of butcher’s meat, in proportion to the price of bread, is a good deal lower in the present times than it was in the beginning of the last century.

In the Appendix to the life of Prince Henry, Doctor Birch has given us an account of the prices of butcher’s meat as commonly paid by that prince. It is there said, that the four quarters of an ox, weighing six hundred pounds, usually cost him nine pounds ten shillings, or thereabouts; that is thirty-one shillings and eight-pence per hundred pounds weight. Prince Henry died on the 6th of November 1612, in the nineteenth year of his age.

In March 1764, there was a parliamentary inquiry into the causes of the high price of provisions at that time. It was then, among other proof to the same purpose, given in evidence by a Virginia merchant, that in March 1763, he had victualled his ships for twenty-four or twenty-five shillings the hundred weight of beef, which he considered as the ordinary price; whereas, in that dear year, he had paid twenty-seven shillings for

the same weight and sort. This high price in 1764 is, however, four shillings and eight-pence cheaper than the ordinary price paid by Prince Henry; and it is the best beef only, it must be observed, which is fit to be salted for those distant voyages.

The price paid by Prince Henry amounts to 3d. 4-5ths per pound weight of the whole carcase, coarse and choice pieces taken together; and at that rate the choice pieces could not have been sold by retail for less than 4½d. or 5d. the pound.

In the parliamentary inquiry in 1764, the witnesses stated the price of the choice pieces of the best beef to be to the consumer 4d. and 4½d. the pound; and the coarse pieces in general to be from seven farthings to 2½d. and 2¾d.; and this, they said, was in general one halfpenny dearer than the same sort of pieces had usually been sold in the month of March. But even this high price is still a good deal cheaper than what we can well suppose the ordinary retail price to have been in the time of Prince Henry.

During the first twelve years of the last century, the average price of the best wheat at the Windsor market was L.1 : 18 : 3½d. the quarter of nine Winchester bushels.

But in the twelve years preceding 1764, including that year, the average price of the same measure of the best wheat at the same market was L.2 : 1 : 9½d.

In the first twelve years of the last century, therefore, wheat appears to have been a good deal cheaper, and butcher’s meat a good deal dearer, than in the twelve years preceding 1764, including that year.

In all great countries, the greater part of the cultivated lands are employed in producing either food for men or food for cattle. The rent and profit of these regulate the rent and profit of all other cultivated land. If any particular produce afforded less, the land would soon be turned into corn or pasture; and if any afforded more, some part of the lands in corn or pasture would soon be turned to that produce.

Those productions, indeed, which require either a greater original expense of improvement, or a greater annual expense of cultivation in order to fit the land for them, appear commonly to afford, the one a greater rent, the other a greater profit, than corn pasture. This superiority, however, will seldom be found to amount to more than a reasonable interest or compensation for this superior expense.

In a hop garden, a fruit garden, a kitchen garden, both the rent of the landlord, and the profit of the farmer, are generally greater than in a corn or grass field. But to bring the ground into this condition requires more

expense. Hence a greater rent becomes due to the landlord. It requires, too, a more attentive and skilful management. Hence a greater profit becomes due to the farmer. The crop, too, at least in the hop and fruit garden, is more precarious. Its price, therefore, besides compensating all occasional losses, must afford something like the profit of insurance. The circumstances of gardeners, generally mean, and always moderate, may satisfy us that their great ingenuity is not commonly over-recompensed. Their delightful art is practised by so many rich people for amusement, that little advantage is to be made by these who practise it for profit; because the persons who should naturally be their best customers, supply themselves with all their most precious productions.

The advantage which the landlord derives from such improvements, seems at no time to have been greater than what was sufficient to compensate the original expense of making them. In the ancient husbandry, after the vineyard, a well-watered kitchen garden seems to have been the part of the farm which was supposed to yield the most valuable produce. But Democritus, who wrote upon husbandry about two thousand years ago, and who was regarded by the ancients as one of the fathers the of the art, thought they did not act wisely who inclosed a kitchen garden. The profit, he said, would not compensate the expense of a stone-wall: and bricks (he meant, I suppose, bricks baked in the sun) mouldered with the rain and the winter-storm, and required continual repairs. Columella, who reports this judgment of Democritus, does not controvert it, but proposes a very frugal method of inclosing with a hedge of brambles and briars, which he says he had found by experience to be both a lasting and an impenetrable fence; but which, it seems, was not commonly known in the time of Democritus. Palladius adopts the opinion of Columella, which had before been recommended by Varro. In the judgment of these ancient improvers, the produce of a kitchen garden had, it seems, been little more than sufficient to pay the extraordinary culture and the expense of watering; for in countries so near the sun, it was thought proper, in those times as in the present, to have the command of a stream of water, which could be conducted to every bed in the garden. Through the greater part of Europe, a kitchen garden is not at present supposed to deserve a better inclosure than that recommended by Columella. In Great Britain, and some other northern countries, the finer fruits cannot be brought to perfection but by the assistance of a wall. Their price, therefore, in such countries, must be sufficient to pay the expense of building and maintaining what they cannot be had without. The fruit-wall frequently surrounds the kitchen garden, which thus

enjoys the benefit of an inclosure which its own produce could seldom pay for.

That the vineyard, when properly planted and brought to perfection, was the most valuable part of the farm, seems to have been an undoubted maxim in the ancient agriculture, as it is in the modern, through all the wine countries. But whether it was advantageous to plant a new vineyard, was a matter of dispute among the ancient Italian husbandmen, as we learn from Columella. He decides, like a true lover of all curious cultivation, in favour of the vineyard; and endeavours to shew, by a comparison of the profit and expense, that it was a most advantageous improvement. Such comparisons, however, between the profit and expense of new projects are commonly very fallacious; and in nothing more so than in agriculture. Had the gain actually made by such plantations been commonly as great as he imagined it might have been, there could have been no dispute about it. The same point is frequently at this day a matter of controversy in the wine countries. Their writers on agriculture, indeed, the lovers and promoters of high cultivation, seem generally disposed to decide with Columella in favour of the vineyard. In France, the anxiety of the proprietors of the old vineyards to prevent the planting of any new ones, seems to favour their opinion, and to indicate a consciousness in those who must have the experience, that this species of cultivation is at present in that country more profitable than any other. It seems, at the same time, however, to indicate another opinion, that this superior profit can last no longer than the laws which at present restrain the free cultivation of the vine. In 1731, they obtained an order of council, prohibiting both the planting of new vineyards, and the renewal of these old ones, of which the cultivation had been interrupted for two years, without a particular permission from the king, to be granted only in consequence of an information from the intendant of the province, certifying that he had examined the land, and that it was incapable of any other culture. The pretence of this order was the scarcity of corn and pasture, and the superabundance of wine. But had this superabundance been real, it would, without any order of council, have effectually prevented the plantation of new vineyards, by reducing the profits of this species of cultivation below their natural proportion to those of corn and pasture. With regard to the supposed scarcity of corn occasioned by the multiplication of vineyards, corn is nowhere in France more carefully cultivated than in the wine provinces, where the land is fit for producing it: as in Burgundy, Guienne, and the Upper Languedoc. The numerous hands employed in the one species of cultivation necessarily encourage

the other, by affording a ready market for its produce. To diminish the number of those who are capable of paying it, is surely a most unpromising expedient for encouraging the cultivation of corn. It is like the policy which would promote agriculture, by discouraging manufactures.

The rent and profit of those productions, therefore, which require either a greater original expense of improvement in order to fit the land for them, or a greater annual expense of cultivation, though often much superior to those of corn and pasture, yet when they do no more than compensate such extraordinary expense, are in reality regulated by the rent and profit of those common crops.

It sometimes happens, indeed, that the quantity of land which can be fitted for some particular produce, is too small to supply the effectual demand. The whole produce can be disposed of to those who are willing to give somewhat more than what is sufficient to pay the whole rent, wages, and profit, necessary for raising and bringing it to market, according to their natural rates, or according to the rates at which they are paid in the greater part of other cultivated land. The surplus part of the price which remains after defraying the whole expense of improvement and cultivation, may commonly, in this case, and in this case only, bear no regular proportion to the like surplus in corn or pasture, but may exceed it in almost any degree; and the greater part of this excess naturally goes to the rent of the landlord.

The usual and natural proportion, for example, between the rent and profit of wine, and those of corn and pasture, must be understood to take place only with regard to those vineyards which produce nothing but good common wine, such as can be raised almost anywhere, upon any light, gravelly, or sandy soil, and which has nothing to recommend it but its strength and wholesomeness. It is with such vineyards only, that the common land of the country can be brought into competition; for with those of a peculiar quality it is evident that it cannot.

The vine is more affected by the difference of soils than any other fruit-tree. From some it derives a flavour which no culture or management can equal, it is supposed, upon any other. This flavour, real or imaginary, is sometimes peculiar to the produce of a few vineyards; sometimes it extends through the greater part of a small district, and sometimes through a considerable part of a large province. The whole quantity of such wines that is brought to market falls short of the effectual demand, or the demand of those who would be willing to pay the whole rent, profit, and wages, necessary for preparing and bringing

them thither, according to the ordinary rate, or according to the rate at which they are paid in common vineyards. The whole quantity, therefore, can be disposed of to those who are willing to pay more, which necessarily raises their price above that of common wine. The difference is greater or less, according as the fashionableness and scarcity of the wine render the competition of the buyers more or less eager. Whatever it be, the greater part of it goes to the rent of the landlord. For though such vineyards are in general more carefully cultivated than most others, the high price of the wine seems to be, not so much the effect, as the cause of this careful cultivation. In so valuable a produce, the loss occasioned by negligence is so great, as to force even the most careless to attention. A small part of this high price, therefore, is sufficient to pay the wages of the extraordinary labour bestowed upon their cultivation, and the profits of the extraordinary stock which puts that labour into motion.

The sugar colonies possessed by the European nations in the West Indies may be compared to those precious vineyards. Their whole produce falls short of the effectual demand of Europe, and can be disposed of to those who are willing to give more than what is sufficient to pay the whole rent, profit, and wages, necessary for preparing and bringing it to market, according to the rate at which they are commonly paid by any other produce. In Cochin China, the finest white sugar generally sells for three piastres the quintal, about thirteen shillings and sixpence of our money, as we are told by Mr Poivre[14*], a very careful observer of the agriculture of that country. What is there called the quintal, weighs from a hundred and fifty to two hundred Paris pounds, or a hundred and seventy-five Paris pounds at a medium, which reduces the price of the hundred weight English to about eight shillings sterling; not a fourth part of what is commonly paid for the brown or muscovada sugars imported from our colonies, and not a sixth part of what is paid for the finest white sugar. The greater part of the cultivated lands in Cochin China are employed in producing corn and rice, the food of the great body of the people. The respective prices of corn, rice, and sugar, are there probably in the natural proportion, or in that which naturally takes place in the different crops of the greater part of cultivated land, and which recompenses the landlord and farmer, as nearly as can be computed, according to what is usually the original expense of improvement, and the annual expense of cultivation. But in our sugar colonies, the price of sugar bears no such proportion to that of the produce of a rice or corn field either in Europe or America. It is commonly said that a sugar planter expects that the rum and the molasses

should defray the whole expense of his cultivation, and that his sugar should be all clear profit. If this be true, for I pretend not to affirm it, it is as if a corn farmer expected to defray the expense of his cultivation with the chaff and the straw, and that the grain should be all clear profit. We see frequently societies of merchants in London, and other trading towns, purchase waste lands in our sugar colonies, which they expect to improve and cultivate with profit, by means of factors and agents, notwithstanding the great distance and the uncertain returns, from the defective administration of justice in those countries. Nobody will attempt to improve and cultivate in the same manner the most fertile lands of Scotland, Ireland, or the corn provinces of North America, though, from the more exact administration of justice in these countries, more regular returns might be expected.

In Virginia and Maryland, the cultivation of tobacco is preferred, as most profitable, to that of corn. Tobacco might be cultivated with advantage through the greater part of Europe; but, in almost every part of Europe, it has become a principal subject of taxation; and to collect a tax from every different farm in the country where this plant might happen to be cultivated, would be more difficult, it has been supposed, than to levy one upon its importation at the custom-house. The cultivation of tobacco has, upon this account, been most absurdly prohibited through the greater part of Europe, which necessarily gives a sort of monopoly to the countries where it is allowed; and as Virginia and Maryland produce the greatest quantity of it, they share largely, though with some competitors, in the advantage of this monopoly. The cultivation of tobacco, however, seems not to be so advantageous as that of sugar. I have never even heard of any tobacco plantation that was improved and cultivated by the capital of merchants who resided in Great Britain; and our tobacco colonies send us home no such wealthy planters as we see frequently arrive from our sugar islands. Though, from the preference given in those colonies to the cultivation of tobacco above that of corn, it would appear that the effectual demand of Europe for tobacco is not completely supplied, it probably is more nearly so than that for sugar; and though the present price of tobacco is probably more than sufficient to pay the whole rent, wages, and profit, necessary for preparing and bringing it to market, according to the rate at which they are commonly paid in corn land, it must not be so much more as the present price of sugar. Our tobacco planters, accordingly, have shewn the same fear of the superabundance of tobacco, which the proprietors of the old vineyards in France have of the superabundance of wine. By act of

assembly, they have restrained its cultivation to six thousand plants, supposed to yield a thousand weight of tobacco, for every negro between sixteen and sixty years of age. Such a negro, over and above this quantity of tobacco, can manage, they reckon, four acres of Indian corn. To prevent the market from being overstocked, too, they have sometimes, in plentiful years, we are told by Dr Douglas[15*] (I suspect he has been ill informed), burnt a certain quantity of tobacco for every negro, in the same manner as the Dutch are said to do of spices. If such violent methods are necessary to keep up the present price of tobacco, the superior advantage of its culture over that of corn, if it still has any, will not probably be of long continuance.

It is in this manner that the rent of the cultivated land, of which the produce is human food, regulates the rent of the greater part of other cultivated land. No particular produce can long afford less, because the land would immediately be turned to another use; and if any particular produce commonly affords more, it is because the quantity of land which can be fitted for it is too small to supply the effectual demand.

In Europe, corn is the principal produce of land, which serves immediately for human food. Except in particular situations, therefore, the rent of corn land regulates in Europe that of all other cultivated land. Britain need envy neither the vineyards of France, nor the olive plantations of Italy. Except in particular situations, the value of these is regulated by that of corn, in which the fertility of Britain is not much inferior to that of either of those two countries.

If, in any country, the common and favourite vegetable food of the people should be drawn from a plant, of which the most common land, with the same, or nearly the same culture, produced a much greater quantity than the most fertile does of corn; the rent of the landlord, or the surplus quantity of food which would remain to him, after paying the labour, and replacing the stock of the farmer, together with its ordinary profits, would necessarily be much greater. Whatever was the rate at which labour was commonly maintained in that country, this greater surplus could always maintain a greater quantity of it, and, consequently, enable the landlord to purchase or command a greater quantity of it. The real value of his rent, his real power and authority, his command of the necessaries and conveniencies of life with which the labour of other people could supply him, would necessarily be much greater.

A rice field produces a much greater quantity of food than the most fertile corn field. Two crops in the year, from thirty to sixty bushels each, are said to be the ordinary produce of an acre. Though its cultivation,

therefore, requires more labour, a much greater surplus remains after maintaining all that labour. In those rice countries, therefore, where rice is the common and favourite vegetable food of the people, and where the cultivators are chiefly maintained with it, a greater share of this greater surplus should belong to the landlord than in corn countries. In Carolina, where the planters, as in other British colonies, are generally both farmers and landlords, and where rent, consequently, is confounded with profit, the cultivation of rice is found to be more profitable than that of corn, though their fields produce only one crop in the year, and though, from the prevalence of the customs of Europe, rice is not there the common and favourite vegetable food of the people.

A good rice field is a bog at all seasons, and at one season a bog covered with water. It is unfit either for corn, or pasture, or vineyard, or, indeed, for any other vegetable produce that is very useful to men; and the lands which are fit for those purposes are not fit for rice. Even in the rice countries, therefore, the rent of rice lands cannot regulate the rent of the other cultivated land which can never be turned to that produce.

The food produced by a field of potatoes is not inferior in quantity to that produced by a field of rice, and much superior to what is produced by a field of wheat. Twelve thousand weight of potatoes from an acre of land is not a greater produce than two thousand weight of wheat. The food or solid nourishment, indeed, which can be drawn from each of those two plants, is not altogether in proportion to their weight, on account of the watery nature of potatoes. Allowing, however, half the weight of this root to go to water, a very large allowance, such an acre of potatoes will still produce six thousand weight of solid nourishment, three times the quantity produced by the acre of wheat. An acre of potatoes is cultivated with less expense than an acre of wheat; the fallow, which generally precedes the sowing of wheat, more than compensating the hoeing and other extraordinary culture which is always given to potatoes. Should this root ever become in any part of Europe, like rice in some rice countries, the common and favourite vegetable food of the people, so as to occupy the same proportion of the lands in tillage, which wheat and other sorts of grain for human food do at present, the same quantity of cultivated land would maintain a much greater number of people; and the labourers being generally fed with potatoes, a greater surplus would remain after replacing all the stock, and maintaining all the labour employed in cultivation. A greater share of this surplus, too, would belong to the landlord. Population would increase, and rents would rise much beyond what they are at present.

The land which is fit for potatoes, is fit for almost every other useful vegetable. If they occupied the same proportion of cultivated land which corn does at present, they would regulate, in the same manner, the rent of the greater part of other cultivated land.

In some parts of Lancashire, it is pretended, I have been told, that bread of oatmeal is a heartier food for labouring people than wheaten bread, and I have frequently heard the same doctrine held in Scotland. I am, however, somewhat doubtful of the truth of it. The common people in Scotland, who are fed with oatmeal, are in general neither so strong nor so handsome as the same rank of people in England, who are fed with wheaten bread. They neither work so well, nor look so well; and as there is not the same difference between the people of fashion in the two countries, experience would seem to shew, that the food of the common people in Scotland is not so suitable to the human constitution as that of their neighbours of the same rank in England. But it seems to be otherwise with potatoes. The chairmen, porters, and coal-heavers in London, and those unfortunate women who live by prostitution, the strongest men and the most beautiful women perhaps in the British dominions, are said to be, the greater part of them, from the lowest rank of people in Ireland, who are generally fed with this root. No food can afford a more decisive proof of its nourishing quality, or of its being peculiarly suitable to the health of the human constitution.

It is difficult to preserve potatoes through the year, and impossible to store them like corn, for two or three years together. The fear of not being able to sell them before they rot, discourages their cultivation, and is, perhaps, the chief obstacle to their ever becoming in any great country, like bread, the principal vegetable food of all the different ranks of the people.

Part II. — *Of the Produce of Land, which sometimes does, and sometimes does not, afford Rent.*

Human food seems to be the only produce of land, which always and necessarily affords some rent to the landlord. Other sorts of produce sometimes may, and sometimes may not, according to different circumstances.

After food, clothing and lodging are the two great wants of mankind.

Land, in its original rude state, can afford the materials of clothing and lodging to a much greater number of people than it can feed. In its improved state, it can sometimes feed a greater number of people than it

can supply with those materials; at least in the way in which they require them, and are willing to pay for them. In the one state, therefore, there is always a superabundance of those materials, which are frequently, upon that account, of little or no value. In the other, there is often a scarcity, which necessarily augments their value. In the one state, a great part of them is thrown away as useless; and the price of what is used is considered as equal only to the labour and expense of fitting it for use, and can, therefore, afford no rent to the landlord. In the other, they are all made use of, and there is frequently a demand for more than can be had. Somebody is always willing to give more for every part of them, than what is sufficient to pay the expense of bringing them to market. Their price, therefore, can always afford some rent to the landlord.

The skins of the larger animals were the original materials of clothing. Among nations of hunters and shepherds, therefore, whose food consists chiefly in the flesh of those animals, every man, by providing himself with food, provides himself with the materials of more clothing than he can wear. If there was no foreign commerce, the greater part of them would be thrown away as things of no value. This was probably the case among the hunting nations of North America, before their country was discovered by the Europeans, with whom they now exchange their surplus peltry, for blankets, fire-arms, and brandy, which gives it some value. In the present commercial state of the known world, the most barbarous nations, I believe, among whom land property is established, have some foreign commerce of this kind, and find among their wealthier neighbours such a demand for all the materials of clothing, which their land produces, and which can neither be wrought up nor consumed at home, as raises their price above what it costs to send them to those wealthier neighbors. It affords, therefore, some rent to the landlord. When the greater part of the Highland cattle were consumed on their own hills, the exportation of their hides made the most considerable article of the commerce of that country, and what they were exchanged for afforded some addition to the rent of the Highland estates. The wool of England, which in old times, could neither be consumed nor wrought up at home, found a market in the then wealthier and more industrious country of Flanders, and its price afforded something to the rent of the land which produced it. In countries not better cultivated than England was then, or than the Highlands of Scotland are now, and which had no foreign commerce, the materials of clothing would evidently be so superabundant, that a great part of them would be thrown away as useless, and no part could afford any rent to the landlord.

The materials of lodging cannot always be transported to so great a distance as those of clothing, and do not so readily become an object of foreign commerce. When they are superabundant in the country which produces them, it frequently happens, even in the present commercial state of the world, that they are of no value to the landlord. A good stone quarry in the neighbourhood of London would afford a considerable rent. In many parts of Scotland and Wales it affords none. Barren timber for building is of great value in a populous and well-cultivated country, and the land which produces it affords a considerable rent. But in many parts of North America, the landlord would be much obliged to any body who would carry away the greater part of his large trees. In some parts of the Highlands of Scotland, the bark is the only part of the wood which, for want of roads and water-carriage, can be sent to market; the timber is left to rot upon the ground. When the materials of lodging are so superabundant, the part made use of is worth only the labour and expense of fitting it for that use. It affords no rent to the landlord, who generally grants the use of it to whoever takes the trouble of asking it. The demand of wealthier nations, however, sometimes enables him to get a rent for it. The paving of the streets of London has enabled the owners of some barren rocks on the coast of Scotland to draw a rent from what never afforded any before. The woods of Norway, and of the coasts of the Baltic, find a market in many parts of Great Britain, which they could not find at home, and thereby afford some rent to their proprietors.

Countries are populous, not in proportion to the number of people whom their produce can clothe and lodge, but in proportion to that of those whom it can feed. When food is provided, it is easy to find the necessary clothing and lodging. But though these are at hand, it may often be difficult to find food. In some parts of the British dominions, what is called a house may be built by one day’s labour of one man. The simplest species of clothing, the skins of animals, require somewhat more labour to dress and prepare them for use. They do not, however, require a great deal. Among savage or barbarous nations, a hundredth, or little more than a hundredth part of the labour of the whole year, will be sufficient to provide them with such clothing and lodging as satisfy the greater part of the people. All the other ninety-nine parts are frequently no more than enough to provide them with food.

But when, by the improvement and cultivation of land, the labour of one family can provide food for two, the labour of half the society becomes sufficient to provide food for the whole. The other half, therefore, or at least the greater part of them, can be employed in

providing other things, or in satisfying the other wants and fancies of mankind. Clothing and lodging, household furniture, and what is called equipage, are the principal objects of the greater part of those wants and fancies. The rich man consumes no more food than his poor neighbour. In quality it may be very different, and to select and prepare it may require more labour and art; but in quantity it is very nearly the same. But compare the spacious palace and great wardrobe of the one, with the hovel and the few rags of the other, and you will be sensible that the difference between their clothing, lodging, and household furniture, is almost as great in quantity as it is in quality. The desire of food is limited in every man by the narrow capacity of the human stomach; but the desire of the conveniencies and ornaments of building, dress, equipage, and household furniture, seems to have no limit or certain boundary. Those, therefore, who have the command of more food than they themselves can consume, are always willing to exchange the surplus, or, what is the same thing, the price of it, for gratifications of this other kind. What is over and above satisfying the limited desire, is given for the amusement of those desires which cannot be satisfied, but seem to be altogether endless. The poor, in order to obtain food, exert themselves to gratify those fancies of the rich; and to obtain it more certainly, they vie with one another in the cheapness and perfection of their work. The number of workmen increases with the increasing quantity of food, or with the growing improvement and cultivation of the lands; and as the nature of their business admits of the utmost subdivisions of labour, the quantity of materials which they can work up, increases in a much greater proportion than their numbers. Hence arises a demand for every sort of material which human invention can employ, either usefully or ornamentally, in building, dress, equipage, or household furniture; for the fossils and minerals contained in the bowels of the earth, the precious metals, and the precious stones.

Food is, in this manner, not only the original source of rent, but every other part of the produce of land which afterwards affords rent, derives that part of its value from the improvement of the powers of labour in producing food, by means of the improvement and cultivation of land.

Those other parts of the produce of land, however, which afterwards afford rent, do not afford it always. Even in improved and cultivated countries, the demand for them is not always such as to afford a greater price than what is sufficient to pay the labour, and replace, together with its ordinary profits, the stock which must be employed in bringing them

to market. Whether it is or is not such, depends upon different circumstances.

Whether a coal mine, for example, can afford any rent, depends partly upon its fertility, and partly upon its situation.

A mine of any kind may be said to be either fertile or barren, according as the quantity of mineral which can be brought from it by a certain quantity of labour, as greater or less than what can be brought by an equal quantity from the greater part of other mines of the same kind.

Some coal mines, advantageously situated, cannot be wrought on account of their barrenness. The produce does not pay the expense. They can afford neither profit nor rent.

There are some, of which the produce is barely sufficient to pay the labour, and replace, together with its ordinary profits, the stock employed in working them. They afford some profit to the undertaker of the work, but no rent to the landlord. They can be wrought advantageously by nobody but the landlord, who, being himself the undertaker of the work, gets the ordinary profit of the capital which he employs in it. Many coal mines in Scotland are wrought in this manner, and can be wrought in no other. The landlord will allow nobody else to work them without paying some rent, and nobody can afford to pay any.

Other coal mines in the same country, sufficiently fertile, cannot be wrought on account of their situation. A quantity of mineral, sufficient to defray the expense of working, could be brought from the mine by the ordinary, or even less than the ordinary quantity of labour: but in an inland country, thinly inhabited, and without either good roads or water-carriage, this quantity could not be sold.

Coals are a less agreeable fuel than wood: they are said too to be less wholesome. The expense of coals, therefore, at the place where they are consumed, must generally be somewhat less than that of wood.

The price of wood, again, varies with the state of agriculture, nearly in the same manner, and exactly for the same reason, as the price of cattle. In its rude beginnings, the greater part of every country is covered with wood, which is then a mere incumbrance, of no value to the landlord, who would gladly give it to any body for the cutting. As agriculture advances, the woods are partly cleared by the progress of tillage, and partly go to decay in consequence of the increased number of cattle. These, though they do not increase in the same proportion as corn, which is altogether the acquisition of human industry, yet multiply under the care and protection of men, who store up in the season of plenty what may maintain them in that of scarcity; who, through the whole year,

furnish them with a greater quantity of food than uncultivated nature provides for them; and who, by destroying and extirpating their enemies, secure them in the free enjoyment of all that she provides. Numerous herds of cattle, when allowed to wander through the woods, though they do not destroy the old trees, hinder any young ones from coming up; so that, in the course of a century or two, the whole forest goes to ruin. The scarcity of wood then raises its price. It affords a good rent; and the landlord sometimes finds that he can scarce employ his best lands more advantageously than in growing barren timber, of which the greatness of the profit often compensates the lateness of the returns. This seems, in the present times, to be nearly the state of things in several parts of Great Britain, where the profit of planting is found to be equal to that of either corn or pasture. The advantage which the landlord derives from planting can nowhere exceed, at least for any considerable time, the rent which these could afford him; and in an inland country, which is highly cultivated, it will frequently not fall much short of this rent. Upon the sea-coast of a well-improved country, indeed, if coals can conveniently be had for fuel, it may sometimes be cheaper to bring barren timber for building from less cultivated foreign countries than to raise it at home. In the new town of Edinburgh, built within these few years, there is not, perhaps, a single stick of Scotch timber.

Whatever may be the price of wood, if that of coals is such that the expense of a coal fire is nearly equal to that of a wood one, we may be assured, that at that place, and in these circumstances, the price of coals is as high as it can be. It seems to be so in some of the inland parts of England, particularly in Oxfordshire, where it is usual, even in the fires of the common people, to mix coals and wood together, and where the difference in the expense of those two sorts of fuel cannot, therefore, be very great. Coals, in the coal countries, are everywhere much below this highest price. If they were not, they could not bear the expense of a distant carriage, either by land or by water. A small quantity only could be sold; and the coal masters and the coal proprietors find it more for their interest to sell a great quantity at a price somewhat above the lowest, than a small quantity at the highest. The most fertile coal mine, too, regulates the price of coals at all the other mines in its neighbourhood. Both the proprietor and the undertaker of the work find, the one that he can get a greater rent, the other that he can get a greater profit, by somewhat underselling all their neighbours. Their neighbours are soon obliged to sell at the same price, though they cannot so well afford it, and though it always diminishes, and sometimes takes away

altogether, both their rent and their profit. Some works are abandoned altogether; others can afford no rent, and can be wrought only by the proprietor.

The lowest price at which coals can be sold for any considerable time, is, like that of all other commodities, the price which is barely sufficient to replace, together with its ordinary profits, the stock which must be employed in bringing them to market. At a coal mine for which the landlord can get no rent, but which he must either work himself or let it alone altogether, the price of coals must generally be nearly about this price.

Rent, even where coals afford one, has generally a smaller share in their price than in that of most other parts of the rude produce of land. The rent of an estate above ground, commonly amounts to what is supposed to be a third of the gross produce; and it is generally a rent certain and independent of the occasional variations in the crop. In coal mines, a fifth of the gross produce is a very great rent, a tenth the common rent; and it is seldom a rent certain, but depends upon the occasional variations in the produce. These are so great, that in a country where thirty years purchase is considered as a moderate price for the property of a landed estate, ten years purchase is regarded as a good price for that of a coal mine.

The value of a coal mine to the proprietor, frequently depends as much upon its situation as upon its fertility. That of a metallic mine depends more upon its fertility, and less upon its situation. The coarse, and still more the precious metals, when separated from the ore, are so valuable, that they can generally bear the expense of a very long land, and of the most distant sea carriage. Their market is not confined to the countries in the neighbourhood of the mine, but extends to the whole world. The copper of Japan makes an article of commerce in Europe; the iron of Spain in that of Chili and Peru. The silver of Peru finds its way, not only to Europe, but from Europe to China.

The price of coals in Westmoreland or Shropshire can have little effect on their price at Newcastle; and their price in the Lionnois can have none at all. The productions of such distant coal mines can never be brought into competition with one another. But the productions of the most distant metallic mines frequently may, and in fact commonly are.

The price, therefore, of the coarse, and still more that of the precious metals, at the most fertile mines in the world, must necessarily more or less affect their price at every other in it. The price of copper in Japan must have some influence upon its price at the copper mines in Europe.

The price of silver in Peru, or the quantity either of labour or of other goods which it will purchase there, must have some influence on its price, not only at the silver mines of Europe, but at those of China. After the discovery of the mines of Peru, the silver mines of Europe were, the greater part of them, abandoned. The value of silver was so much reduced, that their produce could no longer pay the expense of working them, or replace, with a profit, the food, clothes, lodging, and other necessaries which were consumed in that operation. This was the case, too, with the mines of Cuba and St. Domingo, and even with the ancient mines of Peru, after the discovery of those of Potosi.

The price of every metal, at every mine, therefore, being regulated in some measure by its price at the most fertile mine in the world that is actually wrought, it can, at the greater part of mines, do very little more than pay the expense of working, and can seldom afford a very high rent to the landlord. Rent accordingly, seems at the greater part of mines to have but a small share in the price of the coarse, and a still smaller in that of the precious metals. Labour and profit make up the greater part of both.

A sixth part of the gross produce may be reckoned the average rent of the tin mines of Cornwall, the most fertile that are known in the world, as we are told by the Rev. Mr. Borlace, vice-warden of the stannaries. Some, he says, afford more, and some do not afford so much. A sixth part of the gross produce is the rent, too, of several very fertile lead mines in Scotland.

In the silver mines of Peru, we are told by Frezier and Ulloa, the proprietor frequently exacts no other acknowledgment from the undertaker of the mine, but that he will grind the ore at his mill, paying him the ordinary multure or price of grinding. Till 1736, indeed, the tax of the king of Spain amounted to one fifth of the standard silver, which till then might be considered as the real rent of the greater part of the silver mines of Peru, the richest which have been known in the world. If there had been no tax, this fifth would naturally have belonged to the landlord, and many mines might have been wrought which could not then be wrought, because they could not afford this tax. The tax of the duke of Cornwall upon tin is supposed to amount to more than five per cent. or one twentieth part of the value; and whatever may be his proportion, it would naturally, too, belong to the proprietor of the mine, if tin was duty free. But if you add one twentieth to one sixth, you will find that the whole average rent of the tin mines of Cornwall, was to the whole average rent of the silver mines of Peru, as thirteen to twelve. But

the silver mines of Peru are not now able to pay even this low rent; and the tax upon silver was, in 1736, reduced from one fifth to one tenth. Even this tax upon silver, too, gives more temptation to smuggling than the tax of one twentieth upon tin; and smuggling must be much easier in the precious than in the bulky commodity. The tax of the king of Spain, accordingly, is said to be very ill paid, and that of the duke of Cornwall very well. Rent, therefore, it is probable, makes a greater part of the price of tin at the must fertile tin mines than it does of silver at the most fertile silver mines in the world. After replacing the stock employed in working those different mines, together with its ordinary profits, the residue which remains to the proprietor is greater, it seems, in the coarse, than in the precious metal.

Neither are the profits of the undertakers of silver mines commonly very great in Peru. The same most respectable and well-informed authors acquaint us, that when any person undertakes to work a new mine in Peru, he is universally looked upon as a man destined to bankruptcy and ruin, and is upon that account shunned and avoided by every body. — Mining, it seems, is considered there in the same light as here, as a lottery, in which the prizes do not compensate the blanks, though the greatness of some tempts many adventurers to throw away their fortunes in such unprosperous projects.

As the sovereign, however, derives a considerable part of his revenue from the produce of silver mines, the law in Peru gives every possible encouragement to the discovery and working of new ones. Whoever discovers a new mine, is entitled to measure off two hundred and forty-six feet in length, according to what he supposes to be the direction of the vein, and half as much in breadth. He becomes proprietor of this portion of the mine, and can work it without paying any acknowledgment to the landlord. The interest of the duke of Cornwall has given occasion to a regulation nearly of the same kind in that ancient dutchy. In waste and uninclosed lands, any person who discovers a tin mine may mark out its limits to a certain extent, which is called bounding a mine. The bounder becomes the real proprietor of the mine, and may either work it himself, or give it in lease to another, without the consent of the owner of the land, to whom, however, a very small acknowledgment must be paid upon working it. In both regulations, the sacred rights of private property are sacrificed to the supposed interests of public revenue.

The same encouragement is given in Peru to the discovery and working of new gold mines; and in gold the king’s tax amounts only to a

twentieth part of the standard rental. It was once a fifth, and afterwards a tenth, as in silver; but it was found that the work could not bear even the lowest of these two taxes. If it is rare, however, say the same authors, Frezier and Ulloa, to find a person who has made his fortune by a silver, it is still much rarer to find one who has done so by a gold mine. This twentieth part seems to be the whole rent which is paid by the greater part of the gold mines of Chili and Peru. Gold, too, is much more liable to be smuggled than even silver; not only on account of the superior value of the metal in proportion to its bulk, but on account of the peculiar way in which nature produces it. Silver is very seldom found virgin, but, like most other metals, is generally mineralized with some other body, from which it is impossible to separate it in such quantities as will pay for the expense, but by a very laborious and tedious operation, which cannot well be carried on but in work-houses erected for the purpose, and, therefore, exposed to the inspection of the king's officers. Gold, on the contrary, is almost always found virgin. It is sometimes found in pieces of some bulk; and, even when mixed, in small and almost insensible particles, with sand, earth, and other extraneous bodies, it can be separated from them by a very short and simple operation, which can be carried on in any private house by any body who is possessed of a small quantity of mercury. If the king's tax, therefore, is but ill paid upon silver, it is likely to be much worse paid upon gold; and rent must make a much smaller part of the price of gold than that of silver.

The lowest price at which the precious metals can be sold, or the smallest quantity of other goods for which they can be exchanged, during any considerable time, is regulated by the same principles which fix the lowest ordinary price of all other goods. The stock which must commonly be employed, the food, clothes, and lodging, which must commonly be consumed in bringing them from the mine to the market, determine it. It must at least be sufficient to replace that stock, with the ordinary profits.

Their highest price, however, seems not to be necessarily determined by any thing but the actual scarcity or plenty of these metals themselves. It is not determined by that of any other commodity, in the same manner as the price of coals is by that of wood, beyond which no scarcity can ever raise it. Increase the scarcity of gold to a certain degree, and the smallest bit of it may become more precious than a diamond, and exchange for a greater quantity of other goods.

The demand for those metals arises partly from their utility, and partly from their beauty. If you except iron, they are more useful than, perhaps,

any other metal. As they are less liable to rust and impurity, they can more easily be kept clean; and the utensils, either of the table or the kitchen, are often, upon that account, more agreeable when made of them. A silver boiler is more cleanly than a lead, copper, or tin one; and the same quality would render a gold boiler still better than a silver one. Their principal merit, however, arises from their beauty, which renders them peculiarly fit for the ornaments of dress and furniture. No paint or dye can give so splendid a colour as gilding. The merit of their beauty is greatly enhanced by their scarcity. With the greater part of rich people, the chief enjoyment of riches consists in the parade of riches; which, in their eye, is never so complete as when they appear to possess those decisive marks of opulence which nobody can possess but themselves. In their eyes, the merit of an object, which is in any degree either useful or beautiful, is greatly enhanced by its scarcity, or by the great labour which it requires to collect any considerable quantity of it; a labour which nobody can afford to pay but themselves. Such objects they are willing to purchase at a higher price than things much more beautiful and useful, but more common. These qualities of utility, beauty, and scarcity, are the original foundation of the high price of those metals, or of the great quantity of other goods for which they can everywhere be exchanged. This value was antecedent to, and independent of their being employed as coin, and was the quality which fitted them for that employment. That employment, however, by occasioning a new demand, and by diminishing the quantity which could be employed in any other way, may have afterwards contributed to keep up or increase their value.

The demand for the precious stones arises altogether from their beauty. They are of no use but as ornaments; and the merit of their beauty is greatly enhanced by their scarcity, or by the difficulty and expense of getting them from the mine. Wages and profit accordingly make up, upon most occasions, almost the whole of the high price. Rent comes in but for a very small share, frequently for no share; and the most fertile mines only afford any considerable rent. When Tavernier, a jeweller, visited the diamond mines of Golconda and Visiapour, he was informed that the sovereign of the country, for whose benefit they were wrought, had ordered all of them to be shut up except those which yielded the largest and finest stones. The other, it seems, were to the proprietor not worth the working.

As the prices, both of the precious metals and of the precious stones, is regulated all over the world by their price at the most fertile mine in it, the rent which a mine of either can afford to its proprietor is in

proportion, not to its absolute, but to what may be called its relative fertility, or to its superiority over other mines of the same kind. If new mines were discovered, as much superior to those of Potosi, as they were superior to those of Europe, the value of silver might be so much degraded as to render even the mines of Potosi not worth the working. Before the discovery of the Spanish West Indies, the most fertile mines in Europe may have afforded as great a rent to their proprietors as the richest mines in Peru do at present. Though the quantity of silver was much less, it might have exchanged for an equal quantity of other goods, and the proprietor's share might have enabled him to purchase or command an equal quantity either of labour or of commodities.

The value, both of the product and of the rent, the real revenue which they afforded, both to the public and to the proprietor, might have been the same.

The most abundant mines, either of the precious metals, or of the precious stones, could add little to the wealth of the world. A produce, of which the value is principally derived from its scarcity, is necessarily degraded by its abundance. A service of plate, and the other frivolous ornaments of dress and furniture, could be purchased for a smaller quantity of labour, or for a smaller quantity of commodities; and in this would consist the sole advantage which the world could derive from that abundance.

It is otherwise in estates above ground. The value, both of their produce and of their rent, is in proportion to their absolute, and not to their relative fertility. The land which produces certain quantity of food, clothes, and lodging, can always feed, clothe, and lodge, a certain number of people; and whatever may be the proportion of the landlord, it will always give him a proportionable command of the labour of those people, and of the commodities with which that labour can supply him. The value of the most barren land is not diminished by the neighbourhood of the most fertile. On the contrary, it is generally increased by it. The great number of people maintained by the fertile lands afford a market to many parts of the produce of the barren, which they could never have found among those whom their own produce could maintain.

Whatever increases the fertility of land in producing food, increases not only the value of the lands upon which the improvement is bestowed, but contributes likewise to increase that or many other lands, by creating a new demand for their produce. That abundance of food, of which, in consequence of the improvement of land, many people have the disposal

beyond what they themselves can consume, is the great cause of the demand, both for the precious metals and the precious stones, as well as for every other conveniency and ornament of dress, lodging, household furniture, and equipage. Food not only constitutes the principal part of the riches of the world, but it is the abundance of food which gives the principal part of their value to many other sorts of riches. The poor inhabitants of Cuba and St. Domingo, when they were first discovered by the Spaniards, used to wear little bits of gold as ornaments in their hair and other parts of their dress. They seemed to value them as we would do any little pebbles of somewhat more than ordinary beauty, and to consider them as just worth the picking up, but not worth the refusing to any body who asked them. They gave them to their new guests at the first request, without seeming to think that they had made them any very valuable present. They were astonished to observe the rage of the Spaniards to obtain them; and had no notion that there could anywhere be a country in which many people had the disposal of so great a superfluity of food; so scanty always among themselves, that, for a very small quantity of those glittering baubles, they would willingly give as much as might maintain a whole family for many years. Could they have been made to understand this, the passion of the Spaniards would not have surprised them.

Part III. — *Of the variations in the Proportion between the respective Values of that sort of Produce which always affords Rent, and of that which sometimes does, and sometimes does not, afford Rent.*

The increasing abundance of food, in consequence of the increasing improvement and cultivation, must necessarily increase the demand for every part of the produce of land which is not food, and which can be applied either to use or to ornament. In the whole progress of improvement, it might, therefore, be expected there should be only one variation in the comparative values of those two different sorts of produce. The value of that sort which sometimes does, and sometimes does not afford rent, should constantly rise in proportion to that which always affords some rent. As art and industry advance, the materials of clothing and lodging, the useful fossils and materials of the earth, the precious metals and the precious stones, should gradually come to be more and more in demand, should gradually exchange for a greater and a greater quantity of food; or, in other words, should gradually become dearer and dearer. This, accordingly, has been the case with most of these

things upon most occasions, and would have been the case with all of them upon all occasions, if particular accidents had not, upon some occasions, increased the supply of some of them in a still greater proportion than the demand.

The value of a free-stone quarry, for example, will necessarily increase with the increasing improvement and population of the country round about it, especially if it should be the only one in the neighbourhood. But the value of a silver mine, even though there should not be another within a thousand miles of it, will not necessarily increase with the improvement of the country in which it is situated. The market for the produce of a free-stone quarry can seldom extend more than a few miles round about it, and the demand must generally be in proportion to the improvement and population of that small district; but the market for the produce of a silver mine may extend over the whole known world. Unless the world in general, therefore, be advancing in improvement and population, the demand for silver might not be at all increased by the improvement even of a large country in the neighbourhood of the mine. Even though the world in general were improving, yet if, in the course of its improvements, new mines should be discovered, much more fertile than any which had been known before, though the demand for silver would necessarily increase, yet the supply might increase in so much a greater proportion, that the real price of that metal might gradually fall; that is, any given quantity, a pound weight of it, for example, might gradually purchase or command a smaller and a smaller quantity of labour, or exchange for a smaller and a smaller quantity of corn, the principal part of the subsistence of the labourer.

The great market for silver is the commercial and civilized part of the world.

If, by the general progress of improvement, the demand of this market should increase, while, at the same time, the supply did not increase in the same proportion, the value of silver would gradually rise in proportion to that of corn. Any given quantity of silver would exchange for a greater and a greater quantity of corn; or, in other words, the average money price of corn would gradually become cheaper and cheaper.

If, on the contrary, the supply, by some accident, should increase, for many years together, in a greater proportion than the demand, that metal would gradually become cheaper and cheaper; or, in other words, the average money price of corn would, in spite of all improvements, gradually become dearer and dearer.

But if, on the other hand, the supply of that metal should increase nearly in the same proportion as the demand, it would continue to purchase or exchange for nearly the same quantity of corn; and the average money price of corn would, in spite of all improvements, continue very nearly the same.

These three seem to exhaust all the possible combinations of events which can happen in the progress of improvement; and during the course of the four centuries preceding the present, if we may judge by what has happened both in France and Great Britain, each of those three different combinations seems to have taken place in the European market, and nearly in the same order, too, in which I have here set them down.

Digression concerning the Variations in the value of Silver during the Course of the Four last Centuries.

First Period. — In 1350, and for some time before, the average price of the quarter of wheat in England seems not to have been estimated lower than four ounces of silver, Tower weight, equal to about twenty shillings of our present money. From this price it seems to have fallen gradually to two ounces of silver, equal to about ten shillings of our present money, the price at which we find it estimated in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and at which it seems to have continued to be estimated till about 1570.

In 1350, being the 25th of Edward III. was enacted what is called the Statute of Labourers. In the preamble, it complains much of the insolence of servants, who endeavoured to raise their wages upon their masters. It therefore ordains, that all servants and labourers should, for the future, be contented with the same wages and liveries (liveries in those times signified not only clothes, but provisions) which they had been accustomed to receive in the 20th year of the king, and the four preceding years; that, upon this account, their livery-wheat should nowhere be estimated higher than tenpence a-bushel, and that it should always be in the option of the master to deliver them either the wheat or the money. Tenpence a-bushel, therefore, had, in the 25th of Edward III. been reckoned a very moderate price of wheat, since it required a particular statute to oblige servants to accept of it in exchange for their usual livery of provisions; and it had been reckoned a reasonable price ten years before that, or in the 16th year of the king, the term to which the statute refers. But in the 16th year of Edward III. tenpence contained about half an ounce of silver, Tower weight, and was nearly equal to

half-a-crown of our present money. Four ounces of silver, Tower weight, therefore, equal to six shillings and eightpence of the money of those times, and to near twenty shillings of that of the present, must have been reckoned a moderate price for the quarter of eight bushels.

This statute is surely a better evidence of what was reckoned, in those times, a moderate price of grain, than the prices of some particular years, which have generally been recorded by historians and other writers, on account of their extraordinary dearness or cheapness, and from which, therefore, it is difficult to form any judgment concerning what may have been the ordinary price. There are, besides, other reasons for believing that, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and for some time before, the common price of wheat was not less than four ounces of silver the quarter, and that of other grain in proportion.

In 1309, Ralph de Born, prior of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, gave a feast upon his installation-day, of which William Thorn has preserved, not only the bill of fare, but the prices of many particulars. In that feast were consumed, 1st, fifty-three quarters of wheat, which cost nineteen pounds, or seven shillings and twopence a-quarter, equal to about one-and-twenty shillings and sixpence of our present money; 2dly, fifty-eight quarters of malt, which cost seventeen pounds ten shillings, or six shillings a-quarter, equal to about eighteen shillings of our present money; 3dly, twenty quarters of oats, which cost four pounds, or four shillings a-quarter, equal to about twelve shillings of our present money. The prices of malt and oats seem here to be higher than their ordinary proportion to the price of wheat.

These prices are not recorded, on account of their extraordinary dearness or cheapness, but are mentioned accidentally, as the prices actually paid for large quantities of grain consumed at a feast, which was famous for its magnificence.

In 1262, being the 51st of Henry III. was revived an ancient statute, called *the assize of bread and ale*, which, the king says in the preamble, had been made in the times of his progenitors, some time kings of England. It is probably, therefore, as old at least as the time of his grandfather, Henry II. and may have been as old as the Conquest. It regulates the price of bread according as the prices of wheat may happen to be, from one shilling to twenty shillings the quarter of the money of those times. But statutes of this kind are generally presumed to provide with equal care for all deviations from the middle price, for those below it, as well as for those above it. Ten shillings, therefore, containing six ounces of silver, Tower weight, and equal to about thirty shillings of our

present money, must, upon this supposition, have been reckoned the middle price of the quarter of wheat when this statute was first enacted, and must have continued to be so in the 51st of Henry III. We cannot, therefore, be very wrong in supposing that the middle price was not less than one-third of the highest price at which this statute regulates the price of bread, or than six shillings and eightpence of the money of those times, containing four ounces of silver, Tower weight.

From these different facts, therefore, we seem to have some reason to conclude that, about the middle of the fourteenth century, and for a considerable time before, the average or ordinary price of the quarter of wheat was not supposed to be less than four ounces of silver, Tower weight.

From about the middle of the fourteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century, what was reckoned the reasonable and moderate, that is, the ordinary or average price of wheat, seems to have sunk gradually to about one half of this price; so as at last to have fallen to about two ounces of silver, Tower weight, equal to about ten shillings of our present money. It continued to be estimated at this price till about 1570.

In the household book of Henry, the fifth earl of Northumberland, drawn up in 1512, there are two different estimations of wheat. In one of them it is computed at six shillings and eightpence the quarter, in the other at five shillings and eightpence only. In 1512, six shillings and eightpence contained only two ounces of silver, Tower weight, and were equal to about ten shillings of our present money.

From the 25th of Edward III. to the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, during the space of more than two hundred years, six shillings and eightpence, it appears from several different statutes, had continued to be considered as what is called the moderate and reasonable, that is, the ordinary or average price of wheat. The quantity of silver, however, contained in that nominal sum was, during the course of this period, continually diminishing, in consequence of some alterations which were made in the coin. But the increase of the value of silver had, it seems, so far compensated the diminution of the quantity of it contained in the same nominal sum, that the legislature did not think it worth while to attend to this circumstance.

Thus, in 1436, it was enacted, that wheat might be exported without a licence when the price was so low as six shillings and eightpence: and in 1463, it was enacted, that no wheat should be imported if the price was not above six shillings and eightpence the quarter. The legislature had imagined, that when the price was so low, there could be no

inconveniency in exportation, but that when it rose higher, it became prudent to allow of importation. Six shillings and eightpence, therefore, containing about the same quantity of silver as thirteen shillings and fourpence of our present money (one-third part less than the same nominal sum contained in the time of Edward III.), had, in those times, been considered as what is called the moderate and reasonable price of wheat.

In 1554, by the 1st and 2d of Philip and Mary, and in 1558, by the 1st of Elizabeth, the exportation of wheat was in the same manner prohibited, whenever the price of the quarter should exceed six shillings and eightpence, which did not then contain two penny worth more silver than the same nominal sum does at present. But it had soon been found, that to restrain the exportation of wheat till the price was so very low, was, in reality, to prohibit it altogether. In 1562, therefore, by the 5th of Elizabeth, the exportation of wheat was allowed from certain ports, whenever the price of the quarter should not exceed ten shillings, containing nearly the same quantity of silver as the like nominal sum does at present. This price had at this time, therefore, been considered as what is called the moderate and reasonable price of wheat. It agrees nearly with the estimation of the Northumberland book in 1512.

That in France the average price of grain was, in the same manner, much lower in the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, than in the two centuries preceding, has been observed both by Mr Dupré de St Maur, and by the elegant author of the Essay on the Policy of Grain. Its price, during the same period, had probably sunk in the same manner through the greater part of Europe.

This rise in the value of silver, in proportion to that of corn, may either have been owing altogether to the increase of the demand for that metal, in consequence of increasing improvement and cultivation, the supply, in the mean time, continuing the same as before; or, the demand continuing the same as before, it may have been owing altogether to the gradual diminution of the supply: the greater part of the mines which were then known in the world being much exhausted, and, consequently, the expense of working them much increased; or it may have been owing partly to the one, and partly to the other of those two circumstances. In the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, the greater part of Europe was approaching towards a more settled form of government than it had enjoyed for several ages before. The increase of security would naturally increase industry and improvement; and the demand for the precious metals, as well as for every other luxury and

ornament, would naturally increase with the increase of riches. A greater annual produce would require a greater quantity of coin to circulate it; and a greater number of rich people would require a greater quantity of plate and other ornaments of silver. It is natural to suppose, too, that the greater part of the mines which then supplied the European market with silver might be a good deal exhausted, and have become more expensive in the working. They had been wrought, many of them, from the time of the Romans.

It has been the opinion, however, of the greater part of those who have written upon the prices of commodities in ancient times, that, from the Conquest, perhaps from the invasion of Julius Cæsar, till the discovery of the mines of America, the value of silver was continually diminishing. This opinion they seem to have been led into, partly by the observations which they had occasion to make upon the prices both of corn and of some other parts of the rude produce of land, and partly by the popular notion, that as the quantity of silver naturally increases in every country with the increase of wealth, so its value diminishes as its quantity increases.

In their observations upon the prices of corn, three different circumstances seem frequently to have misled them.

First, in ancient times, almost all rents were paid in kind; in a certain quantity of corn, cattle, poultry, &c. It sometimes happened, however, that the landlord would stipulate, that he should be at liberty to demand of the tenant, either the annual payment in kind or a certain sum of money instead of it. The price at which the payment in kind was in this manner exchanged for a certain sum of money, is in Scotland called the conversion price. As the option is always in the landlord to take either the substance or the price, it is necessary, for the safety of the tenant, that the conversion price should rather be below than above the average market price. In many places, accordingly, it is not much above one half of this price. Through the greater part of Scotland this custom still continues with regard to poultry, and in some places with regard to cattle. It might probably have continued to take place, too, with regard to corn, had not the institution of the public fiars put an end to it. These are annual valuations, according to the judgment of an assize, of the average price of all the different sorts of grain, and of all the different qualities of each, according to the actual market price in every different county. This institution rendered it sufficiently safe for the tenant, and much more convenient for the landlord, to convert, as they call it, the corn rent, rather at what should happen to be the price of the fiars of each year, than

at any certain fixed price. But the writers who have collected the prices of corn in ancient times seem frequently to have mistaken what is called in Scotland the conversion price for the actual market price. Fleetwood acknowledges, upon one occasion, that he had made this mistake. As he wrote his book, however, for a particular purpose, he does not think proper to make this acknowledgment till after transcribing this conversion price fifteen times. The price is eight shillings the quarter of wheat. This sum in 1423, the year at which he begins with it, contained the same quantity of silver as sixteen shillings of our present money. But in 1562, the year at which he ends with it, it contained no more than the same nominal sum does at present.

Secondly, they have been misled by the slovenly manner in which some ancient statutes of assize had been sometimes transcribed by lazy copiers, and sometimes, perhaps, actually composed by the legislature.

The ancient statutes of assize seem to have begun always with determining what ought to be the price of bread and ale when the price of wheat and barley were at the lowest; and to have proceeded gradually to determine what it ought to be, according as the prices of those two sorts of grain should gradually rise above this lowest price. But the transcribers of those statutes seem frequently to have thought it sufficient to copy the regulation as far as the three or four first and lowest prices; saving in this manner their own labour, and judging, I suppose, that this was enough to show what proportion ought to be observed in all higher prices.

Thus, in the assize of bread and ale, of the 51st of Henry III. the price of bread was regulated according to the different prices of wheat, from one shilling to twenty shillings the quarter of the money of those times. But in the manuscripts from which all the different editions of the statutes, preceding that of Mr Ruffhead, were printed, the copiers had never transcribed this regulation beyond the price of twelve shillings. Several writers, therefore, being misled by this faulty transcription, very naturally conclude that the middle price, or six shillings the quarter, equal to about eighteen shillings of our present money, was the ordinary or average price of wheat at that time.

In the statute of Tumbrel and Pillory, enacted nearly about the same time, the price of ale is regulated according to every sixpence rise in the price of barley, from two shillings, to four shillings the quarter. That four shillings, however, was not considered as the highest price to which barley might frequently rise in those times and that these prices were only given as an example of the proportion which ought to be observed

in all other prices, whether higher or lower, we may infer from the last words of the statute: "*Et sic deinceps crescetur vel diminuetur per sex denarios.*" The expression is very slovenly, but the meaning is plain enough, "that the price of ale is in this manner to be increased or diminished according to every sixpence rise or fall in the price of barley." In the composition of this statute, the legislature itself seems to have been as negligent as the copiers were in the transcription of the other.

In an ancient manuscript of the Regiam Majestatem, an old Scotch law book, there is a statute of assize, in which the price of bread is regulated according to all the different prices of wheat, from tenpence to three shillings the Scotch boll, equal to about half an English quarter. Three shillings Scotch, at the time when this assize is supposed to have been enacted, were equal to about nine shillings sterling of our present money. Mr Ruddiman seems[16]* to conclude from this, that three shillings was the highest price to which wheat ever rose in those times, and that tenpence, a shilling, or at most two shillings, were the ordinary prices. Upon consulting the manuscript, however, it appears evidently, that all these prices are only set down as examples of the proportion which ought to be observed between the respective prices of wheat and bread. The last words of the statute are "*reliqua judicabis secundum præscripta, habendo respectum ad pretium bladi*."— "You shall judge of the remaining cases, according to what is above written, having respect to the price of corn."

Thirdly, they seem to have been misled too, by the very low price at which wheat was sometimes sold in very ancient times; and to have imagined, that as its lowest price was then much lower than in later times its ordinary price must likewise have been much lower. They might have found, however, that in those ancient times its highest price was fully as much above, as its lowest price was below any thing that had ever been known in later times. Thus, in 1270, Fleetwood gives us two prices of the quarter of wheat. The one is four pounds sixteen shillings of the money of those times, equal to fourteen pounds eight shillings of that of the present; the other is six pounds eight shillings, equal to nineteen pounds four shillings of our present money. No price can be found in the end of the fifteenth, or beginning of the sixteenth century, which approaches to the extravagance of these. The price of corn, though at all times liable to variation, varies most in those turbulent and disorderly societies, in which the interruption of all commerce and communication hinders the plenty of one part of the country from relieving the scarcity of another. In

the disorderly state of England under the Plantagenets, who governed it from about the middle of the twelfth till towards the end of the fifteenth century, one district might be in plenty, while another, at no great distance, by having its crop destroyed, either by some accident of the seasons, or by the incursion of some neighbouring baron, might be suffering all the horrors of a famine; and yet if the lands of some hostile lord were interposed between them, the one might not be able to give the least assistance to the other. Under the vigorous administration of the Tudors, who governed England during the latter part of the fifteenth, and through the whole of the sixteenth century, no baron was powerful enough to dare to disturb the public security.

The reader will find at the end of this chapter all the prices of wheat which have been collected by Fleetwood, from 1202 to 1597, both inclusive, reduced to the money of the present times, and digested, according to the order of time, into seven divisions of twelve years each. At the end of each division, too, he will find the average price of the twelve years of which it consists. In that long period of time, Fleetwood has been able to collect the prices of no more than eighty years; so that four years are wanting to make out the last twelve years. I have added, therefore, from the accounts of Eton college, the prices of 1598, 1599, 1600, and 1601. It is the only addition which I have made. The reader will see, that from the beginning of the thirteenth till after the middle of the sixteenth century, the average price of each twelve years grows gradually lower and lower; and that towards the and of the sixteenth century it begins to rise again. The prices, indeed, which Fleetwood has been able to collect, seem to have been those chiefly which were remarkable for extraordinary dearness or cheapness; and I do not pretend that any very certain conclusion can be drawn from them. So far, however, as they prove any thing at all, they confirm the account which I have been endeavouring to give. Fleetwood himself, however, seems, with most other writers, to have believed, that, during all this period, the value of silver, in consequence of its increasing abundance, was continually diminishing. The prices of corn, which he himself has collected, certainly do not agree with this opinion. They agree perfectly with that of Mr Dupré de St Maur, and with that which I have been endeavouring to explain. Bishop Fleetwood and Mr Dupré de St Maur are the two authors who seem to have collected, with the greatest diligence and fidelity, the prices of things in ancient times. It is somewhat curious that, though their opinions are so very different, their

facts, so far as they relate to the price of corn at least, should coincide so very exactly.

It is not, however, so much from the low price of corn, as from that of some other parts of the rude produce of land, that the most judicious writers have inferred the great value of silver in those very ancient times. Corn, it has been said, being a sort of manufacture, was, in those rude ages, much dearer in proportion than the greater part of other commodities; it is meant, I suppose, than the greater part of unmanufactured commodities, such as cattle, poultry, game of all kinds, &c. That in those times of poverty and barbarism these were proportionably much cheaper than corn, is undoubtedly true. But this cheapness was not the effect of the high value of silver, but of the low value of those commodities. It was not because silver would in such time purchase or represent a greater quantity of labour, but because such commodities would purchase or represent a much smaller quantity than in times of more opulence and improvement. Silver must certainly be cheaper in Spanish America than in Europe; in the country where it is produced, than in the country to which it is brought, at the expense of a long carriage both by land and by sea, of a freight, and an insurance. One-and-twenty pence halfpenny sterling, however, we are told by Ulloa, was, not many years ago, at Buenos Ayres, the price of an ox chosen from a herd of three or four hundred. Sixteen shillings sterling, we are told by Mr Byron, was the price of a good horse in the capital of Chili. In a country naturally fertile, but of which the far greater part is altogether uncultivated, cattle, poultry, game of all kinds, &c. as they can be acquired with a very small quantity of labour, so they will purchase or command but a very small quantity. The low money price for which they may be sold, is no proof that the real value of silver is there very high, but that the real value of those commodities is very low.

Labour, it must always be remembered, and not any particular commodity, or set of commodities, is the real measure of the value both of silver and of all other commodities.

But in countries almost waste, or but thinly inhabited, cattle, poultry, game of all kinds, &c. as they are the spontaneous productions of Nature, so she frequently produces them in much greater quantities than the consumption of the inhabitants requires. In such a state of things, the supply commonly exceeds the demand. In different states of society, in different states of improvement, therefore, such commodities will represent, or be equivalent, to very different quantities of labour.

In every state of society, in every stage of improvement, corn is the production of human industry. But the average produce of every sort of industry is always suited, more or less exactly, to the average consumption; the average supply to the average demand. In every different stage of improvement, besides, the raising of equal quantities of corn in the same soil and climate, will, at an average, require nearly equal quantities of labour; or, what comes to the same thing, the price of nearly equal quantities; the continual increase of the productive powers of labour, in an improved state of cultivation, being more or less counterbalanced by the continual increasing price of cattle, the principal instruments of agriculture. Upon all these accounts, therefore, we may rest assured, that equal quantities of corn will, in every state of society, in every stage of improvement, more nearly represent, or be equivalent to, equal quantities of labour, than equal quantities of any other part of the rude produce of land. Corn, accordingly, it has already been observed, is, in all the different stages of wealth and improvement, a more accurate measure of value than any other commodity or set of commodities. In all those different stages, therefore, we can judge better of the real value of silver, by comparing it with corn, than by comparing it with any other commodity or set of commodities.

Corn, besides, or whatever else is the common and favourite vegetable food of the people, constitutes, in every civilized country, the principal part of the subsistence of the labourer. In consequence of the extension of agriculture, the land of every country produces a much greater quantity of vegetable than of animal food, and the labourer everywhere lives chiefly upon the wholesome food that is cheapest and most abundant. Butcher’s meat, except in the most thriving countries, or where labour is most highly rewarded, makes but an insignificant part of his subsistence; poultry makes a still smaller part of it, and game no part of it. In France, and even in Scotland, where labour is somewhat better rewarded than in France, the labouring poor seldom eat butcher’s meat, except upon holidays, and other extraordinary occasions. The money price of labour, therefore, depends much more upon the average money price of corn, the subsistence of the labourer, than upon that of butcher’s meat, or of any other part of the rude produce of land. The real value of gold and silver, therefore, the real quantity of labour which they can purchase or command, depends much more upon the quantity of corn which they can purchase or command, than upon that of butcher’s meat, or any other part of the rude produce of land.

Such slight observations, however, upon the prices either of corn or of other commodities, would not probably have misled so many intelligent authors, had they not been influenced at the same time by the popular notion, that as the quantity of silver naturally increases in every country with the increase of wealth, so its value diminishes as its quantity increases. This notion, however, seems to be altogether groundless.

The quantity of the precious metals may increase in any country from two different causes; either, first, from the increased abundance of the mines which supply it; or, secondly, from the increased wealth of the people, from the increased produce of their annual labour. The first of these causes is no doubt necessarily connected with the diminution of the value of the precious metals; but the second is not.

When more abundant mines are discovered, a greater quantity of the precious metals is brought to market; and the quantity of the necessaries and conveniencies of life for which they must be exchanged being the same as before, equal quantities of the metals must be exchanged for smaller quantities of commodities. So far, therefore, as the increase of the quantity of the precious metals in any country arises from the increased abundance of the mines, it is necessarily connected with some diminution of their value.

When, on the contrary, the wealth of any country increases, when the annual produce of its labour becomes gradually greater and greater, a greater quantity of coin becomes necessary in order to circulate a greater quantity of commodities: and the people, as they can afford it, as they have more commodities to give for it, will naturally purchase a greater and a greater quantity of plate. The quantity of their coin will increase from necessity; the quantity of their plate from vanity and ostentation, or from the same reason that the quantity of fine statues, pictures, and of every other luxury and curiosity, is likely to increase among them. But as statuaries and painters are not likely to be worse rewarded in times of wealth and prosperity, than in times of poverty and depression, so gold and silver are not likely to be worse paid for.

The price of gold and silver, when the accidental discovery of more abundant mines does not keep it down, as it naturally rises with the wealth of every country; so, whatever be the state of the mines, it is at all times naturally higher in a rich than in a poor country. Gold and silver, like all other commodities, naturally seek the market where the best price is given for them, and the best price is commonly given for every thing in the country which can best afford it. Labour, it must be remembered, is the ultimate price which is paid for every thing; and in countries where

labour is equally well rewarded, the money price of labour will be in proportion to that of the subsistence of the labourer. But gold and silver will naturally exchange for a greater quantity of subsistence in a rich than in a poor country; in a country which abounds with subsistence, than in one which is but indifferently supplied with it. If the two countries are at a great distance, the difference may be very great; because, though the metals naturally fly from the worse to the better market, yet it may be difficult to transport them in such quantities as to bring their price nearly to a level in both. If the countries are near, the difference will be smaller, and may sometimes be scarce perceptible; because in this case the transportation will be easy. China is a much richer country than any part of Europe, and the difference between the price of subsistence in China and in Europe is very great. Rice in China is much cheaper than wheat is anywhere in Europe. England is a much richer country than Scotland, but the difference between the money price of corn in those two countries is much smaller, and is but just perceptible. In proportion to the quantity or measure, Scotch corn generally appears to be a good deal cheaper than English; but, in proportion to its quality, it is certainly somewhat dearer. Scotland receives almost every year very large supplies from England, and every commodity must commonly be somewhat dearer in the country to which it is brought than in that from which it comes. English corn, therefore, must be dearer in Scotland than in England; and yet in proportion to its quality, or to the quantity and goodness of the flour or meal which can be made from it, it cannot commonly be sold higher there than the Scotch corn which comes to market in competition with it.

The difference between the money price of labour in China and in Europe, is still greater than that between the money price of subsistence; because the real recompence of labour is higher in Europe than in China, the greater part of Europe being in an improving state, while China seems to be standing still. The money price of labour is lower in Scotland than in England, because the real recompence of labour is much lower: Scotland, though advancing to greater wealth, advances much more slowly than England. The frequency of emigration from Scotland, and the rarity of it from England, sufficiently prove that the demand for labour is very different in the two countries. The proportion between the real recompence of labour in different countries, it must be remembered, is naturally regulated, not by their actual wealth or poverty, but by their advancing, stationary, or declining condition.

Gold and silver, as they are naturally of the greatest value among the richest, so they are naturally of the least value among the poorest nations. Among savages, the poorest of all nations, they are scarce of any value.

In great towns, corn is always dearer than in remote parts of the country. This, however, is the effect, not of the real cheapness of silver, but of the real dearness of corn. It does not cost less labour to bring silver to the great town than to the remote parts of the country; but it costs a great deal more to bring corn.

In some very rich and commercial countries, such as Holland and the territory of Genoa, corn is dear for the same reason that it is dear in great towns. They do not produce enough to maintain their inhabitants. They are rich in the industry and skill of their artificers and manufacturers, in every sort of machinery which can facilitate and abridge labour; in shipping, and in all the other instruments and means of carriage and commerce: but they are poor in corn, which, as it must be brought to them from distant countries, must, by an addition to its price, pay for the carriage from these countries. It does not cost less labour to bring silver to Amsterdam than to Dantzic; but it costs a great deal more to bring corn. The real cast of silver must be nearly the same in both places; but that of corn must be very different. Diminish the real opulence either of Holland or of the territory of Genoa, while the number of their inhabitants remains the same; diminish their power of supplying themselves from distant countries; and the price of corn, instead of sinking with that diminution in the quantity of their silver, which must necessarily accompany this declension, either as its cause or as its effect, will rise to the price of a famine. When we are in want of necessaries, we must part with all superfluities, of which the value, as it rises in times of opulence and prosperity, so it sinks in times of poverty and distress. It is otherwise with necessaries. Their real price, the quantity of labour which they can purchase or command, rises in times of poverty and distress, and sinks in times of opulence and prosperity, which are always times of great abundance; for they could not otherwise be times of opulence and prosperity Corn is a necessary, silver is only a superfluity.

Whatever, therefore, may have been the increase in the quantity of the precious metals, which, during the period between the middle of the fourteenth and that of the sixteenth century, arose from the increase of wealth and improvement, it could have no tendency to diminish their value, either in Great Britain, or in any other part of Europe. If those who have collected the prices of things in ancient times, therefore, had, during this period, no reason to infer the diminution of the value of silver from

any observations which they had made upon the prices either of corn, or of other commodities, they had still less reason to infer it from any supposed increase of wealth and improvement.

Second Period. — But how various soever may have been the opinions of the learned concerning the progress of the value of silver during the first period, they are unanimous concerning it during the second.

From about 1570 to about 1640, during a period of about seventy years, the variation in the proportion between the value of silver and that of corn held a quite opposite course. Silver sunk in its real value, or would exchange for a smaller quantity of labour than before; and corn rose in its nominal price, and, instead of being commonly sold for about two ounces of silver the quarter, or about ten shillings of our present money, came to be sold for six and eight ounces of silver the quarter, or about thirty and forty shillings of our present money.

The discovery of the abundant mines of America seems to have been the sole cause of this diminution in the value of silver, in proportion to that of corn. It is accounted for, accordingly, in the same manner by every body; and there never has been any dispute, either about the fact, or about the cause of it. The greater part of Europe was, during this period, advancing in industry and improvement, and the demand for silver must consequently have been increasing; but the increase of the supply had, it seems, so far exceeded that of the demand, that the value of that metal sunk considerably. The discovery of the mines of America, it is to be observed, does not seem to have had any very sensible effect upon the prices of things in England, till after 1570; even though the mines of Potosi had been discovered more than twenty years before.

From 1595 to 1620, both inclusive, the average price of the quarter of nine bushels of the best wheat, at Windsor market, appears, from the accounts of Eton college, to have been L.2 : 1 : $6\frac{9}{13}$. From which sum, neglecting the fraction, and deducting a ninth, or 4s. $7\frac{1}{3}$d., the price of the quarter of eight bushels comes out to have been L.1 : 16 : $10\frac{2}{3}$. And from this sum, neglecting likewise the fraction, and deducting a ninth, or 4s. $1\frac{1}{9}$d., for the difference between the price of the best wheat and that of the middle wheat, the price of the middle wheat comes out to have been about L.1 : 12 : $8\frac{8}{9}$, or about six ounces and one-third of an ounce of silver.

From 1621 to 1636, both inclusive, the average price of the same measure of the best wheat, at the same market, appears, from the same accounts, to have been L.2 : 10s.; from which, making the like deductions as in the foregoing case, the average price of the quarter of eight bushels of middle wheat comes out to have been L.1 : 19 : 6, or about seven ounces and two-thirds of an ounce of silver.

Third Period. — Between 1630 and 1640, or about 1636, the effect of the discovery of the mines of America, is reducing the value of silver, appears to have been completed, and the value of that metal seems never to have sunk lower in proportion to that of corn than it was about that time. It seems to have risen somewhat in the course of the present century, and it had probably begun to do so, even some time before the end of the last.

From 1637 to 1700, both inclusive, being the sixty-four last years of the last century, the average price of the quarter of nine bushels of the best wheat, at Windsor market, appears, from the same accounts, to have been L.2 : 11 : 0⅓, which is only 1s. 0⅓d. dearer than it had been during the sixteen years before. But, in the course of these sixty-four years, there happened two events, which must have produced a much greater scarcity of corn than what the course of the seasons would otherwise have occasioned, and which, therefore, without supposing any further reduction in the value of silver, will much more than account for this very small enhancement of price.

The first of these events was the civil war, which, by discouraging tillage and interrupting commerce, must have raised the price of corn much above what the course of the seasons would otherwise have occasioned. It must have had this effect, more or less, at all the different markets in the kingdom, but particularly at those in the neighborhood of London, which require to be supplied from the greatest distance. In 1648, accordingly, the price of the best wheat, at Windsor market, appears, from the same accounts, to have been L.4 : 5s., and, in 1649, to have been L.4, the quarter of nine bushels. The excess of those two years above L.2 10s. (the average price of the sixteen years preceding 1637) is L.3 5s., which, divided among the sixty-four last years of the last century, will alone very nearly account for that small enhancement of price which seems to have taken place in them. These, however, though the highest, are by no means the only high prices which seem to have been occasioned by the civil wars.

The second event was the bounty upon the exportation of corn, granted in 1688. The bounty, it has been thought by many people, by encouraging tillage, may, in a long course of years, have occasioned a greater abundance, and, consequently, a greater cheapness of corn in the home market, than what would otherwise have taken place there. How far the bounty could produce this effect at any time I shall examine hereafter: I shall only observe at present, that between 1688 and 1700, it had not time to produce any such effect. During this short period, its only effect must have been, by encouraging the exportation of the surplus produce of every year, and thereby hindering the abundance of one year from compensating the scarcity of another, to raise the price in the home market. The scarcity which prevailed in England, from 1693 to 1699, both inclusive, though no doubt principally owing to the badness of the seasons, and, therefore, extending through a considerable part of Europe, must have been somewhat enhanced by the bounty. In 1699, accordingly, the further exportation of corn was prohibited for nine months.

There was a third event which occurred in the course of the same period, and which, though it could not occasion any scarcity of corn, nor, perhaps, any augmentation in the real quantity of silver which was usually paid for it, must necessarily have occasioned some augmentation in the nominal sum. This event was the great debasement of the silver coin, by clipping and wearing. This evil had begun in the reign of Charles II. and had gone on continually increasing till 1695; at which time, as we may learn from Mr Lowndes, the current silver coin was, at an average, near five-and-twenty per cent. below its standard value. But the nominal sum which constitutes the market price of every commodity is necessarily regulated, not so much by the quantity of silver, which, according to the standard, ought to be contained in it, as by that which, it is found by experience, actually is contained in it. This nominal sum, therefore, is necessarily higher when the coin is much debased by clipping and wearing, than when near to its standard value.

In the course of the present century, the silver coin has not at any time been more below its standard weight than it is at present. But though very much defaced, its value has been kept up by that of the gold coin, for which it is exchanged. For though, before the late recoinage, the gold coin was a good deal defaced too, it was less so than the silver. In 1695, on the contrary, the value of the silver coin was not kept up by the gold coin; a guinea then commonly exchanging for thirty shillings of the worn and clipt silver. Before the late recoinage of the gold, the price of silver bullion was seldom higher than five shillings and sevenpence an ounce,

which is but fivepence above the mint price. But in 1695, the common price of silver bullion was six shillings and fivepence an ounce,[17*] which is fifteen pence above the mint price. Even before the late recoinage of the gold, therefore, the coin, gold and silver together, when compared with silver bullion, was not supposed to be more than eight per cent below its standard value. In 1695, on the contrary, it had been supposed to be near five-and-twenty per cent. below that value. But in the beginning of the present century, that is, immediately after the great recoinage in King William's time, the greater part of the current silver coin must have been still nearer to its standard weight than it is at present. In the course of the present century, too, there has been no great public calamity, such as a civil war, which could rather discourage, or interrupt the interior commerce of the country. And though the bounty which has taken place through the greater part of this century, must always raise the price of corn somewhat higher than it otherwise would be in the actual state of tillage; yet, as in the course of this century, the bounty has had full time to produce all the good effects commonly imputed to it to encourage tillage, and thereby to increase the quantity of corn in the home market, it may, open the principles of a system which I shall explain and examine hereafter, be supposed to have done something to lower the price of that commodity the one way, as well as to raise it the other. It is by many people supposed to have done more. In the sixty-four years of the present century, accordingly, the average price of the quarter of nine bushels of the best wheat, at Windsor market, appears, by the accounts of Eton college, to have been L.2 : 0 : $6^{10}/_{32}$, which is about ten shillings and sixpence, or more than five-and-twenty per cent. cheaper than it had been during the sixty-four last years of the last century; and about nine shillings and sixpence cheaper than is had been during the sixteen years preceding 1636, when the discovery of the abundant mines of America may be supposed to have produced its full effect; and about one shilling cheaper than it had been in the twenty-six years preceding 1620, before that discovery can well be supposed to have produced its full effect. According to this account, the average price of middle wheat, during these sixty-four first years of the present century, comes out to have been about thirty-two shillings the quarter of eight bushels.

The value of silver, therefore, seems to have risen somewhat in proportion to that of corn during the course of the present century, and it had probably begun to do so even some time before the end of the last.

In 1687, the price of the quarter of nine bushels of the best wheat, at Windsor market, was L.1 : 5 : 2, the lowest price at which it had ever been from 1595.

In 1688, Mr Gregory King, a man famous for his knowledge in matters of this kind, estimated the average price of wheat, in years of moderate plenty, to be to the grower 3s. 6d. the bushel, or eight-and-twenty shillings the quarter. The grower's price I understand to be the same with what is sometimes called the contract price, or the price at which a farmer contracts for a certain number of years to deliver a certain quantity of corn to a dealer. As a contract of this kind saves the farmer the expense and trouble of marketing, the contract price is generally lower than what is supposed to be the average market price. Mr King had judged eight-and-twenty shillings the quarter to be at that time the ordinary contract price in years of moderate plenty. Before the scarcity occasioned by the late extraordinary course of bad seasons, it was, I have been assured, the ordinary contract price in all common years.

In 1688 was granted the parliamentary bounty upon the exportation of corn. The country gentlemen, who then composed a still greater proportion of the legislature than they do at present, had felt that the money price of corn was falling. The bounty was an expedient to raise it artificially to the high price at which it had frequently been sold in times of Charles I. and II. It was to take place, therefore, till wheat was so high as forty-eight shillings the quarter; that is, twenty shillings, or 5-7ths dearer than Mr King had, in that very year, estimated the grower's price to be in times of moderate plenty. If his calculations deserve any part of the reputation which they have obtained very universally, eight-and-forty shillings the quarter was a price which, without some such expedient as the bounty, could not at that time be expected, except in years of extraordinary scarcity. But the government of King William was not then fully settled. It was in no condition to refuse any thing to the country gentlemen, from whom it was, at that very time, soliciting the first establishment of the annual land-tax.

The value of silver, therefore, in proportion to that of corn, had probably risen somewhat before the end of the last century, and it seems to have continued to do so during the course of the greater part of the present, though the necessary operation of the bounty must have hindered that time from being so sensible as it otherwise would have been in the actual state of tillage.

In plentiful years, the bounty, by occasioning an extraordinary exportation, necessarily raises the price of corn above what it otherwise would be in those years. To encourage tillage, by keeping up the price of corn, even in the most plentiful years, was the avowed end of the institution.

In years of great scarcity, indeed, the bounty has generally been suspended. It must, however, have had some effect upon the prices of many of these years. By the extraordinary exportation which it occasions in years of plenty, it must frequently hinder the plenty of one year from compensating the scarcity of another.

Both in years of plenty and in years of scarcity, therefore, the bounty raises the price of corn above what it naturally would be in the actual state of tillage. If during the sixty-four first years of the present century, therefore, the average price has been lower than during the sixty-four last years of the last century, it must, in the same state of tillage, have been much more so, had it not been for this operation of the bounty.

But, without the bounty, it maybe said the state of tillage would not have been the same. What may have been the effects of this institution upon the agriculture of the country, I shall endeavour to explain hereafter, when I come to treat particularly of bounties. I shall only observe at present, that this rise in the value of silver, in proportion to that of corn, has not been peculiar to England. It has been observed to have taken place in France during the same period, and nearly in the same proportion, too, by three very faithful, diligent, and laborious collectors of the prices of corn, Mr Dupré de St Maur, Mr Messance, and the author of the Essay on the Police of Grain. But in France, till 1764, the exportation of grain was by law prohibited; and it is somewhat difficult to suppose, that nearly the same diminution of price which took place in one country, notwithstanding this prohibition, should, in another, be owing to the extraordinary encouragement given to exportation.

It would be more proper, perhaps, to consider this variation in the average money price of corn as the effect rather of some gradual rise in the real value of silver in the European market, than of any fall in the real average value of corn. Corn, it has already been observed, is, at distant periods of time, a more accurate measure of value than either silver or, perhaps, any other commodity. When, after the discovery of the abundant mines of America, corn rose to three and four times its former money price, this change was universally ascribed, not to any rise in the real value of corn, but to a fall in the real value of silver. If, during the sixty-four first years of the present century, therefore, the average money price

of corn has fallen somewhat below what it had been during the greater part of the last century, we should, in the same manner, impute this change, not to any fall in the real value of corn, but to some rise in the real value of silver in the European market.

The high price of corn during these ten or twelve years past, indeed, has occasioned a suspicion that the real value of silver still continues to fall in the European market. This high price of corn, however, seems evidently to have been the effect of the extraordinary unfavourableness of the seasons, and ought, therefore, to be regarded, not as a permanent, but as a transitory and occasional event. The seasons, for these ten or twelve years past, have been unfavourable through the greater part of Europe; and the disorders of Poland have very much increased the scarcity in all those countries, which, in dear years, used to be supplied from that market. So long a course of bad seasons, though not a very common event, is by no means a singular one; and whoever has inquired much into the history of the prices of corn in former times, will be at no loss to recollect several other examples of the same kind. Ten years of extraordinary scarcity, besides, are not more wonderful than ten years of extraordinary plenty. The low price of corn, from 1741 to 1750, both inclusive, may very well be set in opposition to its high price during these last eight or ten years. From 1741 to 1750, the average price of the quarter of nine bushels of the best wheat, at Windsor market, it appears from the accounts of Eton College, was only L.1 : 13 : 9⅘, which is nearly 6s. 3d. below the average price of the sixty-four first years of the present century. The average price of the quarter of eight bushels of middle wheat comes out, according to this account, to have been, during these ten years, only L.1 : 6 : 8.

Between 1741 and 1750, however, the bounty must have hindered the price of corn from falling so low in the home market as it naturally would have done. During these ten years, the quantity of all sorts of grain exported, it appears from the custom-house books, amounted to no less than 8,029,156 quarters, one bushel. The bounty paid for this amounted to L.1,514,962 : 17 : 4½. In 1749, accordingly, Mr Pelham, at that time prime minister, observed to the house of commons, that, for the three years preceding, a very extraordinary sum had been paid as bounty for the exportation of corn. He had good reason to make this observation, and in the following year he might have had still better. In that single year, the bounty paid amounted to no less than L.324,176 : 10 : 6.[18*] It is unnecessary to observe how much this forced exportation must have

raised the price of corn above what it otherwise would have been in the home market.

At the end of the accounts annexed to this chapter the reader will find the particular account of those ten years separated from the rest. He will find there, too, the particular account of the preceding ten years, of which the average is likewise below, though not so much below, the general average of the sixty-four first years of the century. The year 1740, however, was a year of extraordinary scarcity. These twenty years preceding 1750 may very well be set in opposition to the twenty preceding 1770. As the former were a good deal below the general average of the century, notwithstanding the intervention of one or two dear years; so the latter have been a good deal above it, notwithstanding the intervention of one or two cheap ones, of 1759, for example. If the former have not been as much below the general average as the latter have been above it, we ought probably to impute it to the bounty. The change has evidently been too sudden to be ascribed to any change in the value of silver, which is always slow and gradual. The suddenness of the effect can be accounted for only by a cause which can operate suddenly, the accidental variations of the seasons.

The money price of labour in Great Britain has, indeed, risen during the course of the present century. This, however, seems to be the effect, not so much of any diminution in the value of silver in the European market, as of an increase in the demand for labour in Great Britain, arising from the great, and almost universal prosperity of the country. In France, a country not altogether so prosperous, the money price of labour has, since the middle of the last century, been observed to sink gradually with the average money price of corn. Both in the last century and in the present, the day wages of common labour are there said to have been pretty uniformly about the twentieth part of the average price of the septier of wheat; a measure which contains a little more than four Winchester bushels. In Great Britain, the real recompence of labour, it has already been shewn, the real quantities of the necessaries and conveniencies of life which are given to the labourer, has increased considerably during the course of the present century. The rise in its money price seems to have been the effect, not of any diminution of the value of silver in the general market of Europe, but of a rise in the real price of labour, in the particular market of Great Britain, owing to the peculiarly happy circumstances of the country.

For some time after the first discovery of America, silver would continue to sell at its former, or not much below its former price. The

profits of mining would for some time be very great, and much above their natural rate. Those who imported that metal into Europe, however, would soon find that the whole annual importation could not be disposed of at this high price. Silver would gradually exchange for a smaller and a smaller quantity of goods. Its price would sink gradually lower and lower, till it fell to its natural price; or to what was just sufficient to pay, according to their natural rates, the wages of the labour, the profits of the stock, and the rent of the land, which must be paid in order to bring it from the mine to the market. In the greater part of the silver mines of Peru, the tax of the king of Spain, amounting to a tenth of the gross produce, eats up, it has already been observed, the whole rent of the land. This tax was originally a half; it soon afterwards fell to a third, then to a fifth, and at last to a tenth, at which rate it still continues. In the greater part of the silver mines of Peru, this, it seems, is all that remains, after replacing the stock of the undertaker of the work, together with its ordinary profits; and it seems to be universally acknowledged that these profits, which were once very high, are now as low as they can well be, consistently with carrying on the works.

The tax of the king of Spain was reduced to a fifth of the registered silver in 1504[19*], one-and-forty years before 1545, the date of the the discovery of the mines of Potosi. In the course of ninety years, or before 1636, these mines, the most fertile in all America, had time sufficient to produce their full effect, or to reduce the value of silver in the European market as low as it could well fall, while it continued to pay this tax to the king of Spain. Ninety years is time sufficient to reduce any commodity, of which there is no monopoly, to its natural price, or to the lowest price at which, while it pays a particular tax, it can continue to be sold for any considerable time together.

The price of silver in the European market might, perhaps, have fallen still lower, and it might have become necessary either to reduce the tax upon it, not only to one-tenth, as in 1736, but to one twentieth, in the same manner as that upon gold, or to give up working the greater part of the American mines which are now wrought. The gradual increase of the demand for silver, or the gradual enlargement of the market for the produce of the silver mines of America, is probably the cause which has prevented this from happening, and which has not only kept up the value of silver in the European market, but has perhaps even raised it somewhat higher than it was about the middle of the last century.

Since the first discovery of America, the market for the produce of its silver mines has been growing gradually more and more extensive.

First, the market of Europe has become gradually more and more extensive. Since the discovery of America, the greater part of Europe has been much improved. England, Holland, France, and Germany; even Sweden, Denmark, and Russia, have all advanced considerably, both in agriculture and in manufactures. Italy seems not to have gone backwards. The fall of Italy preceded the conquest of Peru. Since that time it seems rather to have recovered a little. Spain and Portugal, indeed, are supposed to have gone backwards. Portugal, however, is but a very small part of Europe, and the declension of Spain is not, perhaps, so great as is commonly imagined. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, Spain was a very poor country, even in comparison with France, which has been so much improved since that time. It was the well known remark of the emperor Charles V. who had travelled so frequently through both countries, that every thing abounded in France, but that every thing was wanting in Spain. The increasing produce of the agriculture and manufactures of Europe must necessarily have required a gradual increase in the quantity of silver coin to circulate it; and the increasing number of wealthy individuals must have required the like increase in the quantity of their plate and other ornaments of silver.

Secondly, America is itself a new market, for the produce of its own silver mines; and as its advances in agriculture, industry, and population, are much more rapid than those of the most thriving countries in Europe, its demand must increase much more rapidly. The English colonies are altogether a new market, which, partly for coin, and partly for plate, requires a continual augmenting supply of silver through a great continent where there never was any demand before. The greater part, too, of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, are altogether new markets. New Granada, the Yucatan, Paraguay, and the Brazils, were, before discovered by the Europeans, inhabited by savage nations, who had neither arts nor agriculture. A considerable degree of both has now been introduced into all of them. Even Mexico and Peru, though they cannot be considered as altogether new markets, are certainly much more extensive ones than they ever were before. After all the wonderful tales which have been published concerning the splendid state of those countries in ancient times, whoever reads, with any degree of sober judgment, the history of their first discovery and conquest, will evidently discern that, in arts, agriculture, and commerce, their inhabitants were much more ignorant than the Tartars of the Ukraine are at present. Even the Peruvians, the more civilized nation of the two, though they made use of gold and silver as ornaments, had no coined money of any kind.

Their whole commerce was carried on by barter, and there was accordingly scarce any division of labour among them. Those who cultivated the ground, were obliged to build their own houses, to make their own household furniture, their own clothes, shoes, and instruments of agriculture. The few artificers among them are said to have been all maintained by the sovereign, the nobles, and the priests, and were probably their servants or slaves. All the ancient arts of Mexico and Peru have never furnished one single manufacture to Europe. The Spanish armies, though they scarce ever exceeded five hundred men, and frequently did not amount to half that number, found almost everywhere great difficulty in procuring subsistence. The famines which they are said to have occasioned almost wherever they went, in countries, too, which at the same time are represented as very populous and well cultivated, sufficiently demonstrate that the story of this populousness and high cultivation is in a great measure fabulous. The Spanish colonies are under a government in many respects less favourable to agriculture, improvement, and population, than that of the English colonies. They seem, however, to be advancing in all those much more rapidly than any country in Europe. In a fertile soil and happy climate, the great abundance and cheapness of land, a circumstance common to all new colonies, is, it seems, so great an advantage, as to compensate many defects in civil government. Frezier, who visited Peru in 1713, represents Lima as containing between twenty-five and twenty-eight thousand inhabitants. Ulloa, who resided in the same country between 1740 and 1746, represents it as containing more than fifty thousand. The difference in their accounts of the populousness of several other principal towns of Chili and Peru is nearly the same; and as there seems to be no reason to doubt of the good information of either, it marks an increase which is scarce inferior to that of the English colonies. America, therefore, is a new market for the produce of its own silver mines, of which the demand must increase much more rapidly than that of the most thriving country in Europe.

Thirdly, the East Indies is another market for the produce of the silver mines of America, and a market which, from the time of the first discovery of those mines, has been continually taking off a greater and a greater quantity of silver. Since that time, the direct trade between America and the East Indies, which is carried on by means of the Acapulco ships, has been continually augmenting, and the indirect intercourse by the way of Europe has been augmenting in a still greater proportion. During the sixteenth century, the Portuguese were the only

European nation who carried on any regular trade to the East Indies. In the last years of that century, the Dutch began to encroach upon this monopoly, and in a few years expelled them from their principal settlements in India. During the greater part of the last century, those two nations divided the most considerable part of the East India trade between them; the trade of the Dutch continually augmenting in a still greater proportion than that of the Portuguese declined. The English and French carried on some trade with India in the last century, but it has been greatly augmented in the course of the present. The East India trade of the Swedes and Danes began in the course of the present century. Even the Muscovites now trade regularly with China, by a sort of caravans which go over land through Siberia and Tartary to Pekin. The East India trade of all these nations, if we except that of the French, which the last war had well nigh annihilated, has been almost continually augmenting. The increasing consumptions of East India goods in Europe is, it seems, so great, as to afford a gradual increase of employment to them all. Tea, for example, was a drug very little used in Europe, before the middle of the last century. At present, the value of the tea annually imported by the English East India company, for the use of their own countrymen, amounts to more than a million and a half a year; and even this is not enough; a great deal more being constantly smuggled into the country from the ports of Holland, from Gottenburgh in Sweden, and from the coast of France, too, as long as the French East India company was in prosperity. The consumption of the porcelain of China, of the spiceries of the Moluccas, of the piece goods of Bengal, and of innumerable other articles, has increased very nearly in a like proportion. The tonnage, accordingly, of all the European shipping employed in the East India trade, at any one time during the last century, was not, perhaps, much greater than that of the English East India company before the late reduction of their shipping.

But in the East Indies, particularly in China and Indostan, the value of the precious metals, when the Europeans first began to trade to those countries, was much higher than in Europe; and it still continues to be so. In rice countries, which generally yield two, sometimes three crops in the year, each of them more plentiful than any common crop of corn, the abundance of food must be much greater than in any corn country of equal extent. Such countries are accordingly much more populous. In them, too, the rich, having a greater superabundance of food to dispose of beyond what they themselves can consume, have the means of purchasing a much greater quantity of the labour of other people. The

retinue of a grandee in China or Indostan accordingly is, by all accounts, much more numerous and splendid than that of the richest subjects in Europe. The same superabundance of food, of which they have the disposal, enables them to give a greater quantity of it for all those singular and rare productions which nature furnishes but in very small quantities; such as the precious metals and the precious stones, the great objects of the competition of the rich. Though the mines, therefore, which supplied the Indian market, had been as abundant as those which supplied the European, such commodities would naturally exchange for a greater quantity of food in India than in Europe. But the mines which supplied the Indian market with the precious metals seem to have been a good deal less abundant, and those which supplied it with the precious stones a good deal more so, than the mines which supplied the European. The precious metals, therefore, would naturally exchange in India for a somewhat greater quantity of the precious stones, and for a much greater quantity of food than in Europe. The money price of diamonds, the greatest of all superfluities, would be somewhat lower, and that of food, the first of all necessaries, a great deal lower in the one country than in the other. But the real price of labour, the real quantity of the necessaries of life which is given to the labourer, it has already been observed, is lower both in China and Indostan, the two great markets of India, than it is through the greater part of Europe. The wages of the labourer will there purchase a smaller quantity of food: and as the money price of food is much lower in India than in Europe, the money price of labour is there lower upon a double account; upon account both of the small quantity of food which it will purchase, and of the low price of that food. But in countries of equal art and industry, the money price of the greater part of manufactures will be in proportion to the money price of labour; and in manufacturing art and industry, China and Indostan, though inferior, seem not to be much inferior to any part of Europe. The money price of the the greater part of manufactures, therefore, will naturally be much lower in those great empires than it is anywhere in Europe. Through the greater part of Europe, too, the expense of land-carriage increases very much both the and real and nominal price of most manufactures. It costs more labour, and therefore more money, to bring first the materials, and afterwards the complete manufacture to market. In China and Indostan, the extent and variety of inland navigations save the greater part of this labour, and consequently of this money, and thereby reduce still lower both the real and the nominal price of the greater part of their manufactures. Upon all these accounts, the precious metals are a

commodity which it always has been, and still continues to be, extremely advantageous to carry from Europe to India. There is scarce any commodity which brings a better price there; or which, in proportion to the quantity of labour and commodities which it costs in Europe, will purchase or command a greater quantity of labour and commodities in India. It is more advantageous, too, to carry silver thither than gold; because in China, and the greater part of the other markets of India, the proportion between fine silver and fine gold is but as ten, or at most as twelve to one; whereas in Europe it is as fourteen or fifteen to one. In China, and the greater part of the other markets of India, ten, or at most twelve ounces of silver, will purchase an ounce of gold; in Europe, it requires from fourteen to fifteen ounces. In the cargoes, therefore, of the greater part of European ships which sail to India, silver has generally been one of the most valuable articles. It is the most valuable article in the Acapulco ships which sail to Manilla. The silver of the new continent seems, in this manner, to be one of the principal commodities by which the commerce between the two extremities of the old one is carried on; and it is by means of it, in a great measure, that those distant parts of the world are connected with one another.

In order to supply so very widely extended a market, the quantity of silver annually brought from the mines must not only be sufficient to support that continued increase, both of coin and of plate, which is required in all thriving countries; but to repair that continual waste and consumption of silver which takes place in all countries where that metal is used.

The continual consumption of the precious metals in coin by wearing, and in plate both by wearing and cleaning, is very sensible; and in commodities of which the use is so very widely extended, would alone require a very great annual supply. The consumption of those metals in some particular manufactures, though it may not perhaps be greater upon the whole than this gradual consumption, is, however, much more sensible, as it is much more rapid. In the manufactures of Birmingham alone, the quantity of gold and silver annually employed in gilding and plating, and thereby disqualified from ever afterwards appearing in the shape of those metals, is said to amount to more than fifty thousand pounds sterling. We may from thence form some notion how great must be the annual consumption in all the different parts of the world, either in manufactures of the same kind with those of Birmingham, or in laces, embroideries, gold and silver stuffs, the gilding of books, furniture, &c. A considerable quantity, too, must be annually lost in transporting those

metals from one place to another both by sea and by land. In the greater part of the governments of Asia, besides, the almost universal custom of concealing treasures in the bowels of the earth, of which the knowledge frequently dies with the person who makes the concealment, must occasion the loss of a still greater quantity.

The quantity of gold and silver imported at both Cadiz and Lisbon (including not only what comes under register, but what may be supposed to be smuggled) amounts, according to the best accounts, to about six millions sterling a-year.

According to Mr Meggens[20*], the annual importation of the precious metals into Spain, at an average of six years, viz. from 1748 to 1753, both inclusive, and into Portugal, at an average of seven years, viz. from 1747 to 1753, both inclusive, amounted in silver to 1,101,107 pounds weight, and in gold to 49,940 pounds weight. The silver, at sixty-two shillings the pound troy, amounts to L.3,413,431 : 10s. sterling. The gold, at forty-four guineas and a half the pound troy, amounts to L.2,333,446 : 14s. sterling. Both together amount to L.5,746,878 : 4s. sterling. The account of what was imported under register, he assures us, is exact. He gives us the detail of the particular places from which the gold and silver were brought, and of the particular quantity of each metal, which, according to the register, each of them afforded. He makes an allowance, too, for the quantity of each metal which, he supposes, may have been smuggled. The great experience of this judicious merchant renders his opinion of considerable weight.

According to the eloquent, and sometimes well-informed, author of the Philosophical and Political History of the Establishment of the Europeans in the two Indies, the annual importation of registered gold and silver into Spain, at an average of eleven years, viz. from 1754 to 1764, both inclusive, amounted to 13,984,185$^{3}/_{5}$ piastres of ten reals. On account of what may have been smuggled, however, the whole annual importation, he supposes, may have amounted to seventeen millions of piastres, which, at 4s. 6d. the piastre, is equal to L.3,825,000 sterling. He gives the detail, too, of the particular places from which the gold and silver were brought, and of the particular quantities of each metal, which according to the register, each of them afforded. He informs us, too, that if we were to judge of the quantity of gold annually imported from the Brazils to Lisbon, by the amount of the tax paid to the king of Portugal, which it seems, is one-fifth of the standard metal, we might value it at eighteen millions of cruzadoes, or forty-five millions of French livres, equal to about twenty millions sterling. On account of what may have

been smuggled, however, we may safely, he says, add to this sum an eighth more, or L.250,000 sterling, so that the whole will amount to L.2,250,000 sterling. According to this account, therefore, the whole annual importation of the precious metals into both Spain and Portugal, amounts to about L.6,075,000 sterling.

Several other very well authenticated, though manuscript accounts, I have been assured, agree in making this whole annual importation amount, at an average, to about six millions sterling; sometimes a little more, sometimes a little less.

The annual importation of the precious metals into Cadiz and Lisbon, indeed, is not equal to the whole annual produce of the mines of America. Some part is sent annually by the Acapulco ships to Manilla; some part is employed in a contraband trade, which the Spanish colonies carry on with those of other European nations; and some part, no doubt, remains in the country. The mines of America, besides, are by no means the only gold and silver mines in the world. They, are, however, by far the most abundant. The produce of all the other mines which are known is insignificant, it is acknowledged, in comparison with their's; and the far greater part of their produce, it is likewise acknowledged, is annually imported into Cadiz and Lisbon. But the consumption of Birmingham alone, at the rate of fifty thousand pounds a-year, is equal to the hundred-and-twentieth part of this annual importation, at the rate of six millions a-year. The whole annual consumption of gold and silver, therefore, in all the different countries of the world where those metals are used, may, perhaps, be nearly equal to the whole annual produce. The remainder may be no more than sufficient to supply the increasing demand of all thriving countries. It may even have fallen so far short of this demand, as somewhat to raise the price of those metals in the European market.

The quantity of brass and iron annually brought from the mine to the market, is out of all proportion greater than that of gold and silver. We do not, however, upon this account, imagine that those coarse metals are likely to multiply beyond the demand, or to become gradually cheaper and cheaper. Why should we imagine that the precious metals are likely to do so? The course metals, indeed, though harder, are put to much harder uses, and, as they are of less value, less care is employed in their preservation. The precious metals, however, are not necessarily immortal any more than they, but are liable, too, to be lost, wasted, and consumed, in a great variety of ways.

The price of all metals, though liable to slow and gradual variations, varies less from year to year than that of almost any other part of the rude

produce of land: and the price of the precious metals is even less liable to sudden variations than that of the coarse ones. The durableness of metals is the foundation of this extraordinary steadiness of price. The corn which was brought to market last year will be all, or almost all, consumed, long before the end of this year. But some part of the iron which was brought from the mine two or three hundred years ago, may be still in use, and, perhaps, some part of the gold which was brought from it two or three thousand years ago. The different masses of corn, which, in different years, must supply the consumption of the world, will always be nearly in proportion to the respective produce of those different years. But the proportion between the different masses of iron which may be in use in two different years, will be very little affected by any accidental difference in the produce of the iron mines of those two years; and the proportion between the masses of gold will be still less affected by any such difference in the produce of the gold mines. Though the produce of the greater part of metallic mines, therefore, varies, perhaps, still more from year to year than that of the greater part of corn fields, these variations have not the same effect upon the price of the species of commodities as upon that of the other.

Variations in the Proportion between the respective Values of Gold and Silver.

Before the discovery of the mines of America, the value of fine gold to fine silver was regulated in the different mines of Europe, between the proportions of one to ten and one to twelve; that is, an ounce of fine gold was supposed to be worth from ten to twelve ounces of fine silver. About the middle of the last century, it came to be regulated, between the proportions of one to fourteen and one to fifteen; that is, an ounce of fine gold came to be supposed worth between fourteen and fifteen ounces of fine silver. Gold rose in its nominal value, or in the quantity of silver which was given for it. Both metals sunk in their real value, or in the quantity of labour which they could purchase; but silver sunk more than gold. Though both the gold and silver mines of America exceeded in fertility all those which had ever been known before, the fertility of the silver mines had, it seems, been proportionally still greater than that of the gold ones.

The great quantities of silver carried annually from Europe to India, have, in some of of the English settlements, gradually reduced the value of that metal in proportion to gold. In the mint of Calcutta, an ounce of

fine gold is supposed to be worth fifteen ounces of fine silver, in the same manner as in Europe. It is in the mint, perhaps, rated too high for the value which it bears in the market of Bengal. In China, the proportion of gold to silver still continues as one to ten, or one to twelve. In Japan, it is said to be as one to eight.

The proportion between the quantities of gold and silver annually imported into Europe, according to Mr Meggens' account, is as one to twenty-two nearly; that is, for one ounce of gold there are imported a little more than twenty-two ounces of silver. The great quantity of silver sent annually to the East Indies reduces, he supposes, the quantities of those metals which remain in Europe to the proportion of one to fourteen or fifteen, the proportion of their values. The proportion between their values, he seems to think, must necessarily be the same as that between their quantities, and would therefore be as one to twenty-two, were it not for this greater exportation of silver.

But the ordinary proportion between the respective values of two commodities is not necessarily the same as that between the quantities of them which are commonly in the market. The price of an ox, reckoned at ten guineas, is about three score times the price of a lamb, reckoned at 3s. 6d. It would be absurd, however, to infer from thence, that there are commonly in the market three score lambs for one ox; and it would be just as absurd to infer, because an ounce of gold will commonly purchase from fourteen or fifteen ounces of silver, that there are commonly in the market only fourteen or fifteen ounces of silver for one ounce of gold.

The quantity of silver commonly in the market, it is probable, is much greater in proportion to that of gold, than the value of a certain quantity of gold is to that of an equal quantity of silver. The whole quantity of a cheap commodity brought to market is commonly not only greater, but of greater value, than the whole quantity of a dear one. The whole quantity of bread annually brought to market, is not only greater, but of greater value, than the whole quantity of butcher's meat; the whole quantity of butcher's meat, than the whole quantity of poultry; and the whole quantity of poultry, than the whole quantity of wild fowl. There are so many more purchasers for the cheap than for the dear commodity, that, not only a greater quantity of it, but a greater value can commonly be disposed of. The whole quantity, therefore, of the cheap commodity, must commonly be greater in proportion to the whole quantity of the dear one, than the value of a certain quantity of the dear one, is to the value of an equal quantity of the cheap one. When we compare the precious metals with one another, silver is a cheap, and gold a dear

commodity. We ought naturally to expect, therefore, that there should always be in the market, not only a greater quantity, but a greater value of silver than of gold. Let any man, who has a little of both, compare his own silver with his gold plate, and he will probably find, that not only the quantity, but the value of the former, greatly exceeds that of the latter. Many people, besides, have a good deal of silver who have no gold plate, which, even with those who have it, is generally confined to watch-cases, snuff-boxes, and such like trinkets, of which the whole amount is seldom of great value. In the British coin, indeed, the value of the gold preponderates greatly, but it is not so in that of all countries. In the coin of some countries, the value of the two metals is nearly equal. In the Scotch coin, before the union with England, the gold preponderated very little, though it did somewhat[21*], as it appears by the accounts of the mint. In the coin of many countries the silver preponderates. In France, the largest sums are commonly paid in that metal, and it in there difficult to get more gold than what is necessary to carry about in your pocket. The superior value, however, of the silver plate above that of the gold, which takes place in all countries, will much more than compensate the preponderancy of the gold coin above the silver, which takes place only in some countries.

Though, in one sense of the word, silver always has been, and probably always will be, much cheaper than gold; yet, in another sense, gold may perhaps, in the present state of the Spanish market, be said to be somewhat cheaper than silver. A commodity may be said to be dear or cheap not only according to the absolute greatness or smallness of its usual price, but according as that price is more or less above the lowest for which it is possible to bring it to market for any considerable time together. This lowest price is that which barely replaces, with a moderate profit, the stock which must be employed in bringing of the commodity thither. It is the price which affords nothing to the landlord, of which rent makes not any component part, but which resolves itself altogether into wages and profit. But, in the present state of the Spanish market, gold is certainly somewhat nearer to this lowest price than silver. The tax of the king of Spain upon gold is only one-twentieth part of the standard metal, or five per cent.; whereas his tax upon silver amounts to one-tenth part of it, or to ten per cent. In these taxes, too, it has already been observed, consists the whole rent of the greater part of the gold and silver mines of Spanish America; and that upon gold is still worse paid than that upon silver. The profits of the undertakers of gold mines, too, as they more rarely make a fortune, must, in general, be still more moderate than those

of the undertakers of silver mines. The price of Spanish gold, therefore, as it affords both less rent and less profit, must, in the Spanish market, be somewhat nearer to the lowest price for which it is possible to bring it thither, than the price of Spanish silver. When all expenses are computed, the whole quantity of the one metal, it would seem, cannot, in the Spanish market, be disposed of so advantageously as the whole quantity of the other. The tax, indeed, of the king of Portugal upon the gold of the Brazils, is the same with the ancient tax of the king of Spain upon the silver of Mexico and Peru; or one-fifth part of the standard metal. It may therefore be uncertain, whether, to the general market of Europe, the whole mass of American gold comes at a price nearer to the lowest for which it is possible to bring it thither, than the whole mass of American silver.

The price of diamonds and other precious stones may, perhaps, be still nearer to the lowest price at which it is possible to bring them to market, than even the price of gold.

Though it is not very probable that any part of a tax, which is not only imposed upon one of the most proper subjects of taxation, a mere luxury and superfluity, but which affords so very important a revenue as the tax upon silver, will ever be given up us long as it is possible to pay it; yet the same impossibility of paying it, which, in 1736, made it necessary to reduce it from one-fifth to one-tenth, may in time make it necessary to reduce it still further; in the same manner as it made it necessary to reduce the tax upon gold to one-twentieth. That the silver mines of Spanish America, like all other mines, become gradually more expensive in the working, on account of the greater depths at which it is necessary to carry on the works, and of the greater expense of drawing out the water, and of supplying them with fresh air at those depths, is acknowledged by every body who has inquired into the state of those mines.

These causes, which are equivalent to a growing scarcity of silver (for a commodity may be said to grow scarcer when it becomes more difficult and expensive to collect a certain quantity of it), must, in time, produce one or other of the three following events: The increase of the expense must either, first, be compensated altogether by a proportionable increase in the price of the metal; or, secondly, it must be compensated altogether by a proportionable diminution of the tax upon silver; or thirdly, it must be compensated partly by the one and partly by the other of those two expedients. This third event is very possible. As gold rose in its price in proportion to silver, notwithstanding a great diminution of the

tax upon gold, so silver might rise in its price in proportion to labour and commodities, notwithstanding an equal diminution of the tax upon silver.

Such successive reductions of the tax, however, though they may not prevent altogether, must certainly retard, more or less, the rise of the value of silver in the European market. In consequence of such reductions, many mines may be wrought which could not be wrought before, because they could not afford to pay the old tax; and the quantity of silver annually brought to market, must always be somewhat greater, and, therefore, the value of any given quantity somewhat less, than it otherwise would have been. In consequence of the reduction in 1736, the value of silver in the European market, though it may not at this day be lower than before that reduction, is, probably, at least ten per cent. lower than it would have been, had the court of Spain continued to exact the old tax.

That, notwithstanding this reduction, the value of silver has, during the course of the present century, begun to rise somewhat in the European market, the facts and arguments which have been alleged above, dispose me to believe, or more properly to suspect and conjecture; for the best opinion which I can form upon this subject, scarce, perhaps, deserves the name of belief. The rise, indeed, supposing there has been any, has hitherto been so very small, that after all that has been said, it may, perhaps, appear to many people uncertain, not only whether this event has actually taken place, but whether the contrary may not have taken place, or whether the value of silver may not still continue to fall in the European market.

It must be observed, however, that whatever may be the supposed annual importation of gold and silver, there must be a certain period at which the annual consumption of those metals will be equal to that annual importation. Their consumption must increase as their mass increases, or rather in a much greater proportion. As their mass increases, their value diminishes. They are more used, and less cared for, and their consumption consequently increases in a greater proportion than their mass. After a certain period, therefore, the annual consumption of these metals must, in this manner, become equal to their annual importation, provided that importation is not continually increasing; which, in the present times, is not supposed to be the case.

If, when the annual consumption has become equal to the annual importation, the annual importation should gradually diminish, the annual consumption may, for some time, exceed the annual importation. The mass of those metals may gradually and insensibly diminish, and

their value gradually and insensibly rise, till the annual importation becoming again stationary, the annual consumption will gradually and insensibly accommodate itself to what that annual importation can maintain.

Grounds of the suspicion that the Value of Silver still continues to decrease.

The increase of the wealth of Europe, and the popular action, that as the quantity of the precious metals naturally increases with the increase of wealth, so their value diminishes as their quantity increases, may, perhaps, dispose many people to believe that their value still continues to fall in the European market; and the still gradually increasing price of many parts of the rude produce of land may confirm them still farther in this opinion.

That that increase in the quantity of the precious metals, which arises in any country from the increase of wealth, has no tendency to diminish their value, I have endeavoured to shew already. Gold and silver naturally resort to a rich country, for the same reason that all sorts of luxuries and curiosities resort to it; not because they are cheaper there than in poorer countries, but because they are dearer, or because a better price is given for them. It is the superiority of price which attracts them; and as soon as that superiority ceases, they necessarily cease to go thither.

If you except corn, and such other vegetables as are raised altogether by human industry, that all other sorts of rude produce, cattle, poultry, game of all kinds, the useful fossils and minerals of the earth, &c. naturally grow dearer, as the society advances in wealth and improvement, I have endeavoured to shew already. Though such commodities, therefore, come to exchange for a greater quantity of silver than before, it will not from thence follow that silver has become really cheaper, or will purchase less labour than before; but that such commodities have become really dearer, or will purchase more labour than before. It is not their nominal price only, but their real price, which rises in the progress of improvement. The rise of their nominal price is the effect, not of any degradation of the value of silver, but of the rise in their real price.

Different Effects of the Progress of Improvement upon three different sorts of rude Produce.

These different sorts of rude produce may be divided into three classes. The first comprehends those which it is scarce in the power of human industry to multiply at all. The second, those which it can multiply in proportion to the demand. The third, those in which the efficacy of industry is either limited or uncertain. In the progress of wealth and improvement, the rent price of the first may rise to any degree of extravagance, and seems not to be limited by any certain boundary. That of the second, though it may rise greatly, has, however, a certain boundary, beyond which it cannot well pass for any considerable time together. That of the third, though its natural tendency is to rise in the progress of improvement, yet in the same degree of improvement it may sometimes happen even to fall, some times to continue the same, and sometimes to rise more or less, according as different accidents render the efforts of human industry, in multiplying this sort of rude produce, more or less successful.

First Sort. — The first sort of rude produce, of which the price rises in the progress of improvement, is that which it is scarce in the power of human industry to multiply at all. It consists in those things which nature produces only in certain quantities, and which being of a very perishable nature, it is impossible to accumulate together the produce of many different seasons. Such are the greater part of rare and singular birds and fishes, many different sorts of game, almost all wild-fowl, all birds of passage in particular, as well as many other things. When wealth, and the luxury which accompanies it, increase, the demand for these is likely to increase with them, and no effort of human industry may be able to increase the supply much beyond what it was before this increase of the demand. The quantity of such commodities, therefore, remaining the same, or nearly the same, while the competition to purchase them is continually increasing, their price may rise to any degree of extravagance, and seems not to be limited by any certain boundary. If woodcocks should become so fashionable as to sell for twenty guineas a-piece, no effort of human industry could increase the number of those brought to market, much beyond what it is at present. The high price paid by the Romans, in the time of their greatest grandeur, for rare birds and fishes, may in this manner easily be accounted for. These prices were not the effects of the low value of silver in those times, but of the high value of such rarities and curiosities as human industry could not multiply at pleasure. The real value of silver was higher at Rome, for some time before, and after the fall of the republic, than it is through the

greater part of Europe at present. Three sestertii equal to about sixpence sterling, was the price which the republic paid for the modius or peck of the tithe wheat of Sicily. This price, however, was probably below the average market price, the obligation to deliver their wheat at this rate being considered as a tax upon the Sicilian farmers. When the Romans, therefore, had occasion to order more corn than the tithe of wheat amounted to, they were bound by capitulation to pay for the surplus at the rate of four sestertii, or eightpence sterling the peck; and this had probably been reckoned the moderate and reasonable, that is, the ordinary or average contract price of those times; it is equal to about one-and-twenty shillings the quarter. Eight-and-twenty shillings the quarter was, before the late years of scarcity, the ordinary contract price of English wheat, which in quality is inferior to the Sicilian, and generally sells for a lower price in the European market. The value of silver, therefore, in those ancient times, must have been to its value in the present, as three to four inversely; that is, three ounces of silver would then have purchased the same quantity of labour and commodities which four ounces will do at present. When we read in Pliny, therefore, that Seius[22]* bought a white nightingale, as a present for the empress Agrippina, at the price of six thousand sestertii, equal to about fifty pounds of our present money; and that Asinius Celer[23]* purchased a surmullet at the price of eight thousand sestertii, equal to about sixty-six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence of our present money; the extravagance of those prices, how much soever it may surprise us, is apt, notwithstanding, to appear to us about one third less than it really was. Their real price, the quantity of labour and subsistence which was given away for them, was about one-third more than their nominal price is apt to express to us in the present times. Seius gave for the nightingale the command of a quantity or labour and subsistence, equal to what L.66 : 13 : 4d. would purchase in the present times; and Asinius Celer gave for a surmullet the command of a quantity equal to what L.88 : 17 : 9d. would purchase. What occasioned the extravagance of those high prices was, not so much the abundance of silver, as the abundance of labour and subsistence, of which those Romans had the disposal, beyond what was necessary for their own use. The quantity of silver, of which they had the disposal, was a good deal less than what the command of the same quantity of labour and subsistence would have procured to them in the present times.

Second sort. — The second sort of rude produce, of which the price rises in the progress of improvement, is that which human industry can multiply in proportion to the demand. It consists in those useful plants and animals, which, in uncultivated countries, nature produces with such profuse abundance, that they are of little or no value, and which, as cultivation advances, are therefore forced to give place to some more profitable produce. During a long period in the progress of improvement, the quantity of these is continually diminishing, while, at the same time, the demand for them is continually increasing. Their real value, therefore, the real quantity of labour which they will purchase or command, gradually rises, till at last it gets so high as to render them as profitable a produce as any thing else which human industry can raise upon the most fertile and best cultivated land. When it has got so high, it cannot well go higher. If it did, more land and more industry would soon be employed to increase their quantity.

When the price of cattle, for example, rises so high, that it is as profitable to cultivate land in order to raise food for them as in order to raise food for man, it cannot well go higher. If it did, more corn land would soon be turned into pasture. The extension of tillage, by diminishing the quantity of wild pasture, diminishes the quantity of butcher's meat, which the country naturally produces without labour or cultivation; and, by increasing the number of those who have either corn, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of corn, to give in exchange for it, increases the demand. The price of butcher's meat, therefore, and, consequently, of cattle, must gradually rise, till it gets so high, that it becomes as profitable to employ the most fertile and best cultivated lands in raising food for them as in raising corn. But it must always be late in the progress of improvement before tillage can be so far extended as to raise the price of cattle to this height; and, till it has got to this height, if the country is advancing at all, their price must be continually rising. There are, perhaps, some parts of Europe in which the price of cattle has not yet got to this height. It had not got to this height in any part of Scotland before the Union. Had the Scotch cattle been always confined to the market of Scotland, in a country in which the quantity of land, which can be applied to no other purpose but the feeding of cattle, is so great in proportion to what can be applied to other purposes, it is scarce possible, perhaps, that their price could ever have risen so high as to render it profitable to cultivate land for the sake of feeding them. In England, the price of cattle, it has already been observed, seems, in the neighbourhood of London, to have got to this height about the beginning

of the last century; but it was much later, probably, before it got through the greater part of the remoter counties, in some of which, perhaps, it may scarce yet have got to it. Of all the different substances, however, which compose this second sort of rude produce, cattle is, perhaps, that of which the price, in the progress of improvement, rises first to this height.

Till the price of cattle, indeed, has got to this height, it seems scarce possible that the greater part, even of those lands which are capable of the highest cultivation, can be completely cultivated. In all farms too distant from any town to carry manure from it, that is, in the far greater part of those of every extensive country, the quantity of well cultivated land must be in proportion to the quantity of manure which the farm itself produces; and this, again, must be in proportion to the stock of cattle which are maintained upon it. The land is manured, either by pasturing the cattle upon it, or by feeding them in the stable, and from thence carrying out their dung to it. But unless the price of the cattle be sufficient to pay both the rent and profit of cultivated land, the farmer cannot afford to pasture them upon it; and he can still less afford to feed them in the stable. It is with the produce of improved and cultivated land only that cattle can be fed in the stable; because, to collect the scanty and scattered produce of waste and unimproved lands, would require too much labour, and be too expensive. If the price of the cattle, therefore, is not sufficient to pay for the produce of improved and cultivated land, when they are allowed to pasture it, that price will be still less sufficient to pay for that produce, when it must be collected with a good deal of additional labour, and brought into the stable to them. In these circumstances, therefore, no more cattle can with profit be fed in the stable than what are necessary for tillage. But these can never afford manure enough for keeping constantly in good condition all the lands which they are capable of cultivating. What they afford, being insufficient for the whole farm, will naturally be reserved for the lands to which it can be most advantageously or conveniently applied; the most fertile, or those, perhaps, in the neighbourhood of the farm-yard. These, therefore, will be kept constantly in good condition, and fit for tillage. The rest will, the greater part of them, be allowed to lie waste, producing scarce any thing but some miserable pasture, just sufficient to keep alive a few straggling, half-starved cattle; the farm, though much overstocked in proportion to what would be necessary for its complete cultivation, being very frequently overstocked in proportion to its actual produce. A portion of this waste land, however, after having been pastured in this

wretched manner for six or seven years together, may be ploughed up, when it will yield, perhaps, a poor crop or two of bad oats, or of some other coarse grain; and then, being entirely exhausted, it must be rested and pastured again as before, and another portion ploughed up, to be in the same manner exhausted and rested again in its turn. Such, accordingly, was the general system of management all over the low country of Scotland before the Union. The lands which were kept constantly well manured and in good condition seldom exceeded a third or fourth part of the whole farm, and sometimes did not amount to a fifth or a sixth part of it. The rest were never manured, but a certain portion of them was in its turn, notwithstanding, regularly cultivated and exhausted. Under this system of management, it is evident, even that part of the lands of Scotland which is capable of good cultivation, could produce but little in comparison of what it may be capable of producing. But how disadvantageous soever this system may appear, yet, before the Union, the low price of cattle seems to have rendered it almost unavoidable. If, notwithstanding a great rise in the price, it still continues to prevail through a considerable part of the country, it is owing in many places, no doubt, to ignorance and attachment to old customs, but, in most places, to the unavoidable obstructions which the natural course of things opposes to the immediate or speedy establishment of a better system: first, to the poverty of the tenants, to their not having yet had time to acquire a stock of cattle sufficient to cultivate their lands more completely, the same rise of price, which would render it advantageous for them to maintain a greater stock, rendering it more difficult for them to acquire it; and, secondly, to their not having yet had time to put their lands in condition to maintain this greater stock properly, supposing they were capable of acquiring it. The increase of stock and the improvement of land are two events which must go hand in hand, and of which the one can nowhere much outrun the other. Without some increase of stock, there can be scarce any improvement of land, but there can be no considerable increase of stock, but in consequence of a considerable improvement of land; because otherwise the land could not maintain it. These natural obstructions to the establishment of a better system, cannot be removed but by a long course of frugality and industry; and half a century or a century more, perhaps, must pass away before the old system, which is wearing out gradually, can be completely abolished through all the different parts of the country. Of all the commercial advantages, however, which Scotland has derived from the Union with England, this rise in the price of cattle is, perhaps, the greatest. It has not

only raised the value of all highland estates, but it has, perhaps, been the principal cause of the improvement of the low country.

In all new colonies, the great quantity of waste land, which can for many years be applied to no other purpose but the feeding of cattle, soon renders them extremely abundant; and in every thing great cheapness is the necessary consequence of great abundance. Though all the cattle of the European colonies in America were originally carried from Europe, they soon multiplied so much there, and became of so little value, that even horses were allowed to run wild in the woods, without any owner thinking it worth while to claim them. It must be a long time after the first establishment of such colonies, before it can become profitable to feed cattle upon the produce of cultivated land. The same causes, therefore, the want of manure, and the disproportion between the stock employed in cultivation and the land which it is destined to cultivate, are likely to introduce there a system of husbandry, not unlike that which still continues to take place in so many parts of Scotland. Mr Kalm, the Swedish traveller, when he gives an account of the husbandry of some of the English colonies in North America, as he found it in 1749, observes, accordingly, that he can with difficulty discover there the character of the English nation, so well skilled in all the different branches of agriculture. They make scarce any manure for their corn fields, he says; but when one piece of ground has been exhausted by continual cropping, they clear and cultivate another piece of fresh land; and when that is exhausted, proceed to a third. Their cattle are allowed to wander through the woods and other uncultivated grounds, where they are half-starved; having long ago extirpated almost all the annual grasses, by cropping them too early in the spring, before they had time to form their flowers, or to shed their seeds.[24*] The annual grasses were, it seems, the best natural grasses in that part of North America; and when the Europeans first settled there, they used to grow very thick, and to rise three or four feet high. A piece of ground which, when he wrote, could not maintain one cow, would in former times, he was assured, have maintained four, each of which would have given four times the quantity of milk which that one was capable of giving. The poorness of the pasture had, in his opinion, occasioned the degradation of their cattle, which degenerated sensibly from one generation to another. They were probably not unlike that stunted breed which was common all over Scotland thirty or forty years ago, and which is now so much mended through the greater part of the low country, not so much by a change of the breed, though that expedient

has been employed in some places, as by a more plentiful method of feeding them.

Though it is late, therefore, in the progress of improvement, before cattle can bring such a price as to render it profitable to cultivate land for the sake of feeding them; yet of all the different parts which compose this second sort of rude produce, they are perhaps the first which bring this price; because, till they bring it, it seems impossible that improvement can be brought near even to that degree of perfection to which it has arrived in many parts of Europe.

As cattle are among the first, so perhaps venison is among the last parts of this sort of rude produce which bring this price. The price of venison in Great Britain, how extravagant soever it may appear, is not near sufficient to compensate the expense of a deer park, as is well known to all those who have had any experience in the feeding of deer. If it was otherwise, the feeding of deer would soon become an article of common farming, in the same manner as the feeding of those small birds, called turdi, was among the ancient Romans. Varro and Columella assure us, that it was a most profitable article. The fattening of ortolans, birds of passage which arrive lean in the country, is said to be so in some parts of France. If venison continues in fashion, and the wealth and luxury of Great Britain increase as they have done for some time past, its price may very probably rise still higher than it is at present.

Between that period in the progress of improvement, which brings to its height the price of so necessary an article as cattle, and that which brings to it the price of such a superfluity as venison, there is a very long interval, in the course of which many other sorts of rude produce gradually arrive at their highest price, some sooner and some later, according to different circumstances.

Thus, in every farm, the offals of the barn and stable will maintain a certain number of poultry. These, as they are fed with what would otherwise be lost, are a mere save-all; and as they cost the farmer scarce any thing, so he can afford to sell them for very little. Almost all that he gets is pure gain, and their price can scarce be so low as to discourage him from feeding this number. But in countries ill cultivated, and therefore but thinly inhabited, the poultry, which are thus raised without expense, are often fully sufficient to supply the whole demand. In this state of things, therefore, they are often as cheap as butcher’s meat, or any other sort of animal food. But the whole quantity of poultry which the farm in this manner produces without expense, must always be much smaller than the whole quantity of butcher’s meat which is reared upon

it; and in times of wealth and luxury, what is rare, with only nearly equal merit, is always preferred to what is common. As wealth and luxury increase, therefore, in consequence of improvement and cultivation, the price of poultry gradually rises above that of butcher's meat, till at last it gets so high, that it becomes profitable to cultivate land for the sake of feeding them. When it has got to this height, it cannot well go higher. If it did, more land would soon be turned to this purpose. In several provinces of France, the feeding of poultry is considered as a very important article in rural economy, and sufficiently profitable to encourage the farmer to raise a considerable quantity of Indian corn and buckwheat for this purpose. A middling farmer will there sometimes have four hundred fowls in his yard. The feeding of poultry seems scarce yet to be generally considered as a matter of so much importance in England. They are certainly, however, dearer in England than in France, as England receives considerable supplies from France. In the progress of improvements, the period at which every particular sort of animal food in dearest, must naturally be that which immediately precedes the general practice of cultivating land for the sake of raising it. For some time before this practice becomes general, the scarcity must necessarily raise the price. After it has become general, new methods of feeding are commonly fallen upon, which enable the farmer to raise upon the same quantity of ground a much greater quantity of that particular sort of animal food. The plenty not only obliges him to sell cheaper, but, in consequence of these improvements, he can afford to sell cheaper; for if he could not afford it, the plenty would not be of long continuance. It has been probably in this manner that the introduction of clover, turnips, carrots, cabbages, &c. has contributed to sink the common price of butcher's meat in the London market, somewhat below what it was about the beginning of the last century.

The hog, that finds his food among ordure, and greedily devours many things rejected by every other useful animal, is, like poultry, originally kept as a save-all. As long as the number of such animals, which can thus be reared at little or no expense, is fully sufficient to supply the demand, this sort of butcher's meat comes to market at a much lower price than any other. But when the demand rises beyond what this quantity can supply, when it becomes necessary to raise food on purpose for feeding and fattening hogs, in the same manner as for feeding and fattening other cattle, the price necessarily rises, and becomes proportionably either higher or lower than that of other butcher's meat, according as the nature of the country, and the state of its

agriculture, happen to render the feeding of hogs more or less expensive than that of other cattle. In France, according to Mr Buffon, the price of pork is nearly equal to that of beef. In most parts of Great Britain it is at present somewhat higher.

The great rise in the price both of hogs and poultry, has, in Great Britain, been frequently imputed to the diminution of the number of cottagers and other small occupiers of land; an event which has in every part of Europe been the immediate forerunner of improvement and better cultivation, but which at the same time may have contributed to raise the price of those articles, both somewhat sooner and somewhat faster than it would otherwise have risen. As the poorest family can often maintain a cat or a dog without any expense, so the poorest occupiers of land can commonly maintain a few poultry, or a sow and a few pigs, at very little. The little offals of their own table, their whey, skimmed milk, and butter milk, supply those animals with a part of their food, and they find the rest in the neighbouring fields, without doing any sensible damage to any body. By diminishing the number of those small occupiers, therefore, the quantity of this sort of provisions, which is thus produced at little or no expense, must certainly have been a good deal diminished, and their price must consequently have been raised both sooner and faster than it would otherwise have risen. Sooner or later, however, in the progress of improvement, it must at any rate have risen to the utmost height to which it is capable of rising; or to the price which pays the labour and expense of cultivating the land which furnishes them with food, as well as these are paid upon the greater part of other cultivated land.

The business of the dairy, like the feeding of hogs and poultry, is originally carried on as a save-all. The cattle necessarily kept upon the farm produce more milk than either the rearing of their own young, or the consumption of the farmer’s family requires; and they produce most at one particular season. But of all the productions of land, milk is perhaps the most perishable. In the warm season, when it is most abundant, it will scarce keep four-and-twenty hours. The farmer, by making it into fresh butter, stores a small part of it for a week; by making it into salt butter, for a year; and by making it into cheese, he stores a much greater part of it for several years. Part of all these is reserved for the use of his own family, the rest goes to market, in order to find the best price which is to be had, and which can scarce be so low as to discourage him from sending thither whatever is over and above the use of his own family. If it is very low indeed, he will be likely to manage his dairy in a very slovenly and dirty manner, and will scarce, perhaps, think

it worth while to have a particular room or building on purpose for it, but will suffer the business to be carried on amidst the smoke, filth, and nastiness of his own kitchen, as was the case of almost all the farmers' dairies in Scotland thirty or forty years ago, and as is the case of many of them still. The same causes which gradually raise the price of butcher's meat, the increase of the demand, and, in consequence of the improvement of the country, the diminution of the quantity which can be fed at little or no expense, raise, in the same manner, that of the produce of the dairy, of which the price naturally connects with that of butcher's meat, or with the expense of feeding cattle. The increase of price pays for more labour, care, and cleanliness. The dairy becomes more worthy of the farmer's attention, and the quality of its produce gradually improves. The price at last gets so high, that it become worth while to employ some of the most fertile and best cultivated lands in feeding cattle merely for the purpose of the dairy; and when it has got to this height, it cannot well go higher. If it did, more land would soon be turned to this purpose. It seems to have got to this height through the greater part of England, where much good land is commonly employed in this manner. If you except the neighbourhood of a few considerable towns, it seems not yet to have got to this height anywhere in Scotland, where common farmers seldom employ much good land in raising food for cattle, merely for the purpose of the dairy. The price of the produce, though it has risen very considerably within these few years, is probably still too low to admit of it. The inferiority of the quality, indeed, compared with that of the produce of English dairies, is fully equal to that of the price. But this inferiority of quality is, perhaps, rather the effect of this lowness of price, than the cause of it. Though the quality was much better, the greater part of what is brought to market could not, I apprehend, in the present circumstances of the country, be disposed of at a much better price; and the present price, it is probable, would not pay the expense of the land and labour necessary for producing a much better quality. Through the greater part of England, notwithstanding the superiority of price, the dairy is not reckoned a more profitable employment of land than the raising of corn, or the fattening of cattle, the two great objects of agriculture. Through the greater part of Scotland, therefore, it cannot yet be even so profitable.

The lands of no country, it is evident, can ever be completely cultivated and improved, till once the price of every produce, which human industry in obliged to raise upon them, has got so high as to pay for the expense of complete improvement and cultivation. In order to do

this, the price of each particular produce must be sufficient, first, to pay the rent of good corn land, as it is that which regulates the rent of the greater part of other cultivated land; and, secondly, to pay the labour and expense of the farmer, as well as they are commonly paid upon good corn land; or, in other words, to replace with the ordinary profits the stock which he employs about it. This rise in the price of each particular produce, must evidently be previous to the improvement and cultivation of the land which is destined for raising it. Gain is the end of all improvement; and nothing could deserve that name, of which loss was to be the necessary consequence. But loss must be the necessary consequence of improving land for the sake of a produce of which the price could never bring back the expense. If the complete improvement and cultivation of the country be, as it most certainly is, the greatest of all public advantages, this rise in the price of all those different sorts of rude produce, instead of being considered as a public calamity, ought to be regarded as the necessary forerunner and attendant of the greatest of all public advantages.

This rise, too, in the nominal or money price of all these different sorts of rude produce, has been the effect, not of any degradation in the value of silver, but of a rise in their real price. They have become worth, not only a greater quantity of silver, but a greater quantity of labour and subsistence than before. As it costs a greater quantity of labour and subsistence to bring them to market, so, when they are brought thither they represent, or are equivalent to a greater quantity.

Third Sort. — The third and last sort of rude produce, of which the price naturally rises in the progress of improvement, is that in which the efficacy of human industry, in augmenting the quantity, is either limited or uncertain. Though the real price of this sort of rude produce, therefore, naturally tends to rise in the progress of improvement, yet, according as different accidents happen to render the efforts of human industry more or less successful in augmenting the quantity, it may happen sometimes even to fall, sometimes to continue the same, in very different periods of improvement, and sometimes to rise more or less in the same period.

There are some sorts of rude produce which nature has rendered a kind of appendages to other sorts; so that the quantity of the one which any country can afford, is necessarily limited by that of the other. The quantity of wool or of raw hides, for example, which any country can afford, is necessarily limited by the number of great and small cattle that

are kept in it. The state of its improvement, and the nature of its agriculture, again necessarily determine this number.

The same causes which, in the progress of improvement, gradually raise the price of butcher's meat, should have the same effect, it may be thought, upon the prices of wool and raw hides, and raise them, too, nearly in the same proportion. It probably would be so, if, in the rude beginnings of improvement, the market for the latter commodities was confined within as narrow bounds as that for the former. But the extent of their respective markets is commonly extremely different.

The market for butcher's meat is almost everywhere confined to the country which produces it. Ireland, and some part of British America, indeed, carry on a considerable trade in salt provisions; but they are, I believe, the only countries in the commercial world which do so, or which export to other countries any considerable part of their butcher's meat.

The market for wool and raw hides, on the contrary, is, in the rude beginnings of improvement, very seldom confined to the country which produces them. They can easily be transported to distant countries; wool without any preparation, and raw hides with very little; and as they are the materials of many manufactures, the industry of other countries may occasion a demand for them, though that of the country which produces them might not occasion any.

In countries ill cultivated, and therefore but thinly inhabited, the price of the wool and the hide bears always a much greater proportion to that of the whole beast, than in countries where, improvement and population being further advanced, there is more demand for butcher's meat. Mr Hume observes, that in the Saxon times, the fleece was estimated at two-fifths of the value of the whole sheep, and that this was much above the proportion of its present estimation. In some provinces of Spain, I have been assured, the sheep is frequently killed merely for the sake of the fleece and the tallow. The carcase is often left to rot upon the ground, or to be devoured by beasts and birds of prey. If this sometimes happens even in Spain, it happens almost constantly in Chili, at Buenos Ayres, and in many other parts of Spanish America, where the horned cattle are almost constantly killed merely for the sake of the hide and the tallow. This, too, used to happen almost constantly in Hispaniola, while it was infested by the buccaneers, and before the settlement, improvement, and populousness of the French plantations (which now extend round the coast of almost the whole western half of the island) had given some value to the cattle of the Spaniards, who still continue to possess, not

only the eastern part of the coast, but the whole inland mountainous part of the country.

Though, in the progress of improvement and population, the price of the whole beast necessarily rises, yet the price of the carcase is likely to be much more affected by this rise than that of the wool and the hide. The market for the carcase being in the rude state of society confined always to the country which produces it, must necessarily be extended in proportion to the improvement and population of that country. But the market for the wool and the hides, even of a barbarous country, often extending to the whole commercial world, it can very seldom be enlarged in the same proportion. The state of the whole commercial world can seldom be much affected by the improvement of any particular country; and the market for such commodities may remain the same, or very nearly the same, after such improvements, as before. It should, however, in the natural course of things, rather, upon the whole, be somewhat extended in consequence of them. If the manufactures, especially, of which those commodities are the materials, should ever come to flourish in the country, the market, though it might not be much enlarged, would at least be brought much nearer to the place of growth than before; and the price of those materials might at least be increased by what had usually been the expense of transporting them to distant countries. Though it might not rise, therefore, in the same proportion as that of butcher's meat, it ought naturally to rise somewhat, and it ought certainly not to fall.

In England, however, notwithstanding the flourishing state of its woollen manufacture, the price of English wool has fallen very considerably since the time of Edward III. There are many authentic records which demonstrate that, during the reign of that prince (towards the middle of the fourteenth century, or about 1339), what was reckoned the moderate and reasonable price of the tod, or twenty-eight pounds of English wool, was not less than ten shillings of the money of those times[25*], containing, at the rate of twenty-pence the ounce, six ounces of silver, Tower weight, equal to about thirty shillings of our present money. In the present times, one-and-twenty shillings the tod may be reckoned a good price for very good English wool. The money price of wool, therefore, in the time of Edward III. was to its money price in the present times as ten to seven. The superiority of its real price was still greater. At the rate of six shillings and eightpence the quarter, ten shillings was in those ancient times the price of twelve bushels of wheat. At the rate of twenty-eight shillings the quarter, one-and-twenty shillings is in the

present times the price of six bushels only. The proportion between the real price of ancient and modern times, therefore, is as twelve to six, or as two to one. In those ancient times, a tod of wool would have purchased twice the quantity of subsistence which it will purchase at present, and consequently twice the quantity of labour, if the real recompence of labour had been the same in both periods.

This degradation, both in the real and nominal value of wool, could never have happened in consequence of the natural course of things. It has accordingly been the effect of violence and artifice. First, of the absolute prohibition of exporting wool from England: secondly, of the permission of importing it from Spain, duty free: thirdly, of the prohibition of exporting it from Ireland to any other country but England. In consequence of these regulations, the market for English wool, instead of being somewhat extended, in consequence of the improvement of England, has been confined to the home market, where the wool of several other countries is allowed to come into competition with it, and where that of Ireland is forced into competition with it. As the woollen manufactures, too, of Ireland, are fully as much discouraged as is consistent with justice and fair dealing, the Irish can work up but a smaller part of their own wool at home, and are therefore obliged to send a greater proportion of it to Great Britain, the only market they are allowed.

I have not been able to find any such authentic records concerning the price of raw hides in ancient times. Wool was commonly paid as a subsidy to the king, and its valuation in that subsidy ascertains, at least in some degree, what was its ordinary price. But this seems not to have been the case with raw hides. Fleetwood, however, from an account in 1425, between the prior of Burcester Oxford and one of his canons, gives us their price, at least as it was stated upon that particular ocassion, viz. five ox hides at twelve shillings; five cow hides at seven shillings and threepence; thirty-six sheep skins of two years old at nine shillings; sixteen calf skins at two shillings. In 1425, twelve shillings contained about the same quantity of silver as four-and-twenty shillings of our present money. An ox hide, therefore, was in this account valued at the same quantity of silver as 4s. $^{4}/_{5}$ths of our present money. Its nominal price was a good deal lower than at present. But at the rate of six shillings and eightpence the quarter, twelve shillings would in those times have purchased fourteen bushels and four-fifths of a bushel of wheat, which, at three and sixpence the bushel, would in the present times cost 51s. 4d. An ox hide, therefore, would in those times have

purchased as much corn as ten shillings and threepence would purchase at present. Its real value was equal to ten shillings and threepence of our present money. In those ancient times, when the cattle were half starved during the greater part of the winter, we cannot suppose that they were of a very large size. An ox hide which weighs four stone of sixteen pounds of avoirdupois, is not in the present times reckoned a bad one; and in those ancient times would probably have been reckoned a very good one. But at half-a-crown the stone, which at this moment (February 1773) I understand to be the common price, such a hide would at present cost only ten shillings. — Though its nominal price, therefore, is higher in the present than it was in those ancient times, its real price, the real quantity of subsistence which it will purchase or command, is rather somewhat lower. The price of cow hides, as stated in the above account, is nearly in the common proportion to that of ox hides. That of sheep skins is a good deal above it. They had probably been sold with the wool. That of calves skins, on the contrary, is greatly below it. In countries where the price of cattle is very low, the calves, which are not intended to be reared in order to keep up the stock, are generally killed very young, as was the case in Scotland twenty or thirty years ago. It saves the milk, which their price would not pay for. Their skins, therefore, are commonly good for little.

The price of raw hides is a good deal lower at present than it was a few years ago; owing probably to the taking off the duty upon seal skins, and to the allowing, for a limited time, the importation of raw hides from Ireland, and from the plantations, duty free, which was done in 1769. Take the whole of the present century at an average, their real price has probably been somewhat higher than it was in those ancient times. The nature of the commodity renders it not quite so proper for being transported to distant markets as wool. It suffers more by keeping. A salted hide is reckoned inferior to a fresh one, and sells for a lower price. This circumstance must necessarily have some tendency to sink the price of raw hides produced in a country which does not manufacture them, but is obliged to export them, and comparatively to raise that of those produced in a country which does manufacture them. It must have some tendency to sink their price in a barbarous, and to raise it in an improved and manufacturing country. It must have had some tendency, therefore, to sink it in ancient, and to raise it in modern times. Our tanners, besides, have not been quite so successful as our clothiers, in convincing the wisdom of the nation, that the safety of the commonwealth depends upon the prosperity of their particular manufacture. They have accordingly been much less favoured. The exportation of raw hides has, indeed, been

prohibited, and declared a nuisance; but their importation from foreign countries has been subjected to a duty; and though this duty has been taken off from those of Ireland and the plantations (for the limited time of five years only), yet Ireland has not been confined to the market of Great Britain for the sale of its surplus hides, or of these which are not manufactured at home. The hides of common cattle have, but within these few years, been put among the enumerated commodities which the plantations can send nowhere but to the mother country; neither has the commerce of Ireland been in this case oppressed hitherto, in order to support the manufactures of Great Britain.

Whatever regulations tend to sink the price, either of wool or of raw hides, below what it naturally would be, must, in an improved and cultivated country, have some tendency to raise the price of butcher's meat. The price both of the great and small cattle, which are fed on improved and cultivated land, must be sufficient to pay the rent which the landlord, and the profit which the farmer, has reason to expect from improved and cultivated land. If it is not, they will soon cease to feed them. Whatever part of this price, therefore, is not paid by the wool and the hide, must be paid by the carcase. The less there is paid for the one, the more must be paid for the other. In what manner this price is to be divided upon the different parts of the beast, is indifferent to the landlords and farmers, provided it is all paid to them. In an improved and more cultivated country, therefore, their interest as landlords and farmers cannot be much affected by such regulations, though their interest as consumers may, by the rise in the price of provisions. It would be quite otherwise, however, in an unimproved and uncultivated country, where the greater part of the lands could be applied to no other purpose but the feeding of cattle, and where the wool and the hide made the principal part of the value of those cattle. Their interest as landlords and farmers would in this case be very deeply affected by such regulations, and their interest as consumers very little. The fall in the price of the wool and the hide would not in this case raise the price of the carcase; because the greater part of the lands of the country being applicable to no other purpose but the feeding of cattle, the same number would still continue to be fed. The same quantity of butcher's meat would still come to market. The demand for it would be no greater than before. Its price, therefore, would be the same as before. The whole price of cattle would fall, and along with it both the rent and the profit of all those lands of which cattle was the principal produce, that is, of the greater part of the lands of the country. The perpetual prohibition of the exportation of

wool, which is commonly, but very falsely, ascribed to Edward III., would, in the then circumstances of the country, have been the most destructive regulation which could well have been thought of. It would not only have reduced the actual value of the greater part of the lands in the kingdom, but by reducing the price of the most important species of small cattle, it would have retarded very much its subsequent improvement.

The wool of Scotland fell very considerably in its price in consequence of the union with England, by which it was excluded from the great market of Europe, and confined to the narrow one of Great Britain. The value of the greater part of the lands in the southern counties of Scotland, which are chiefly a sheep country, would have been very deeply affected by this event, had not the rise in the price of butcher's meat fully compensated the fall in the price of wool.

As the efficacy of human industry, in increasing the quantity either of wool or of raw hides, is limited, so far as it depends upon the produce of the country where it is exerted; so it is uncertain so far as it depends upon the produce of other countries. It so far depends not so much upon the quantity which they produce, as upon that which they do not manufacture; and upon the restraints which they may or may not think proper to impose upon the exportation of this sort of rude produce. These circumstances, as they are altogether independent of domestic industry, so they necessarily render the efficiency of its efforts more or less uncertain. In multiplying this sort of rude produce, therefore, the efficacy of human industry is not only limited, but uncertain.

In multiplying another very important sort of rude produce, the quantity of fish that is brought to market, it is likewise both limited and uncertain. It is limited by the local situation of the country, by the proximity or distance of its different provinces from the sea, by the number of its lakes and rivers, and by what may be called the fertility or barrenness of those seas, lakes, and rivers, as to this sort of rude produce. As population increases, as the annual produce of the land and labour of the country grows greater and greater, there come to be more buyers of fish; and those buyers, too, have a greater quantity and variety of other goods, or, what is the same thing, the price of a greater quantity and variety of other goods, to buy with. But it will generally be impossible to supply the great and extended market, without employing a quantity of labour greater than in proportion to what had been requisite for supplying the narrow and confined one. A market which, from requiring only one thousand, comes to require annually ten thousand ton of fish, can seldom

be supplied, without employing more than ten times the quantity of labour which had before been sufficient to supply it. The fish must generally be sought for at a greater distance, larger vessels must be employed, and more expensive machinery of every kind made use of. The real price of this commodity, therefore, naturally rises in the progress of improvement. It has accordingly done so, I believe, more or less in every country.

Though the success of a particular day's fishing may be a very uncertain matter, yet the local situation of the country being supposed, the general efficacy of industry in bringing a certain quantity of fish to market, taking the course of a year, or of several years together, it may, perhaps, be thought is certain enough; and it, no doubt, is so. As it depends more, however, upon the local situation of the country, than upon the state of its wealth and industry; as upon this account it may in different countries be the same in very different periods of improvement, and very different in the same period; its connection with the state of improvement is uncertain; and it is of this sort of uncertainty that I am here speaking.

In increasing the quantity of the different minerals and metals which are drawn from the bowels of the earth, that of the more precious ones particularly, the efficacy of human industry seems not to be limited, but to be altogether uncertain.

The quantity of the precious metals which is to be found in any country, is not limited by any thing in its local situation, such as the fertility or barrenness of its own mines. Those metals frequently abound in countries which possess no mines. Their quantity, in every particular country, seems to depend upon two different circumstances; first, upon its power of purchasing, upon the state of its industry, upon the annual produce of its land and labour, in consequence of which it can afford to employ a greater or a smaller quantity of labour and subsistence, in bringing or purchasing such superfluities as gold and silver, either from its own mines, or from those of other countries; and, secondly, upon the fertility or barrenness of the mines which may happen at any particular time to supply the commercial world with those metals. The quantity of those metals in the countries most remote from the mines, must be more or less affected by this fertility or barrenness, on account of the easy and cheap transportation of those metals, of their small bulk and great value. Their quantity in China and Indostan must have been more or less affected by the abundance of the mines of America.

So far as their quantity in any particular country depends upon the former of those two circumstances (the power of purchasing), their real price, like that of all other luxuries and superfluities, is likely to rise with the wealth and improvement of the country, and to fall with its poverty and depression. Countries which have a great quantity of labour and subsistence to spare, can afford to purchase any particular quantity of those metals at the expense of a greater quantity of labour and subsistence, than countries which have less to spare.

So far as their quantity in any particular country depends upon the latter of those two circumstances (the fertility or barrenness of the mines which happen to supply the commercial world), their real price, the real quantity of labour and subsistence which they will purchase or exchange for, will, no doubt, sink more or less in proportion to the fertility, and rise in proportion to the barrenness of those mines.

The fertility or barrenness of the mines, however, which may happen at any particular time to supply the commercial world, is a circumstance which, it is evident, may have no sort of connection with the state of industry in a particular country. It seems even to have no very necessary connection with that of the world in general. As arts and commerce, indeed, gradually spread themselves over a greater and a greater part of the earth, the search for new mines, being extended over a wider surface, may have somewhat a better chance for being successful than when confined within narrower bounds. The discovery of new mines, however, as the old ones come to be gradually exhausted, is a matter of the greatest uncertainty, and such as no human skill or industry can insure. All indications, it is acknowledged, are doubtful; and the actual discovery and successful working of a new mine can alone ascertain the reality of its value, or even of its existence. In this search there seem to be no certain limits, either to the possible success, or to the possible disappointment of human industry. In the course of a century or two, it is possible that new mines may be discovered, more fertile than any that have ever yet been known, and it is just equally possible, that the most fertile mine then known may be more barren than any that was wrought before the discovery of the mines of America. Whether the one or the other of those two events may happen to take place, is of very little importance to the real wealth and prosperity of the world, to the real value of the annual produce of the land and labour of mankind. Its nominal value, the quantity of gold and silver by which this annual produce could be expressed or represented, would, no doubt, be very different; but its real value, the real quantity of labour which it could

purchase or command, would be precisely the same. A shilling might, in the one case, represent no more labour than a penny does at present; and a penny, in the other, might represent as much as a shilling does now. But in the one case, he who had a shilling in his pocket would be no richer than he who has a penny at present; and in the other, he who had a penny would be just as rich as he who has a shilling now. The cheapness and abundance of gold and silver plate would be the sole advantage which the world could derive from the one event; and the dearness and scarcity of those trifling superfluities, the only inconveniency it could suffer from the other.

Conclusion of the Digression concerning the Variations in the Value of Silver.

The greater part of the writers who have collected the money price of things in ancient times, seem to have considered the low money price of corn, and of goods in general, or, in other words, the high value of gold and silver, as a proof, not only of the scarcity of those metals, but of the poverty and barbarism of the country at the time when it took place. This notion is connected with the system of political economy, which represents national wealth as consisting in the abundance and national poverty in the scarcity, of gold and silver; a system which I shall endeavour to explain and examine at great length in the fourth book of this Inquiry. I shall only observe at present, that the high value of the precious metals can be no proof of the poverty or barbarism of any particular country at the time when it took place. It is a proof only of the barrenness of the mines which happened at that time to supply the commercial world. A poor country, as it cannot afford to buy more, so it can as little afford to pay dearer for gold and silver than a rich one; and the value of those metals, therefore, is not likely to be higher in the former than in the latter. In China, a country much richer than any part of Europe, the value of the precious metals is much higher than in any part of Europe. As the wealth of Europe, indeed, has increased greatly since the discovery of the mines of America, so the value of gold and silver has gradually diminished. This diminution of their value, however, has not been owing to the increase of the real wealth of Europe, of the annual produce of its land and labour, but to the accidental discovery of more abundant mines than any that were known before. The increase of the quantity of gold and silver in Europe, and the increase of its manufactures and agriculture, are two events which, though they have

happened nearly about the same time, yet have arisen from very different causes, and have scarce any natural connection with one another. The one has arisen from a mere accident, in which neither prudence nor policy either had or could have any share; the other, from the fall of the feudal system, and from the establishment of a government which afforded to industry the only encouragement which it requires, some tolerable security that it shall enjoy the fruits of its own labour. Poland, where the feudal system still continues to take place, is at this day as beggarly a country as it was before the discovery of America. The money price of corn, however, has risen; the real value of the precious metals has fallen in Poland, in the same manner as in other parts of Europe. Their quantity, therefore, must have increased there as in other places, and nearly in the same proportion to the annual produce of its land and labour. This increase of the quantity of those metals, however, has not, it seems, increased that annual produce, has neither improved the manufactures and agriculture of the country, nor mended the circumstances of its inhabitants. Spain and Portugal, the countries which possess the mines, are, after Poland, perhaps the two most beggarly countries in Europe. The value of the precious metals, however, must be lower in Spain and Portugal than in any other part of Europe, as they come from those countries to all other parts of Europe, loaded, not only with a freight and an insurance, but with the expense of smuggling, their exportation being either prohibited or subjected to a duty. In proportion to the annual produce of the land and labour, therefore, their quantity must be greater in those countries than in any other part of Europe; those countries, however, are poorer than the greater part of Europe. Though the feudal system has been abolished in Spain and Portugal, it has not been succeeded by a much better.

As the low value of gold and silver, therefore, is no proof of the wealth and flourishing state of the country where it takes place; so neither is their high value, or the low money price either of goods in general, or of corn in particular, any proof of its poverty and barbarism.

But though the low money price, either of goods in general, or of corn in particular, be no proof of the poverty or barbarism of the times, the low money price, of some particular sorts of goods, such as cattle, poultry game of all kinds, &c. in proportion to that of corn, is a most decisive one. It clearly demonstrates, first, their great abundance in proportion to that of corn, and, consequently, the great extent of the land which they occupied in proportion to what was occupied by corn; and, secondly, the low value of this land in proportion to that of corn land,

and, consequently, the uncultivated and unimproved state of the far greater part of the lands of the country. It clearly demonstrates, that the stock and population of the country did not bear the same proportion to the extent of its territory, which they commonly do in civilized countries; and that society was at that time, and in that country, but in its infancy. From the high or low money price, either of goods in general, or of corn in particular, we can infer only, that the mines, which at that time happened to supply the commercial world with gold and silver, were fertile or barren, not that the country was rich or poor. But from the high or low money price of some sorts of goods in proportion to that of others, we infer, with a degree of probability that approaches almost to certainty, that it was rich or poor, that the greater part of its lands were improved or unimproved, and that it was either in a more or less barbarous state, or in a more or less civilised one.

Any rise in the money price of goods which proceeded altogether from the degradation of the value of silver, would affect all sorts of goods equally, and raise their price universally, a third, or a fourth, or a fifth part higher, according as silver happened to lose a third, or a fourth, or a fifth part of its former value. But the rise in the price of provisions, which has been the subject of so much reasoning and conversation, does not affect all sorts of provisions equally. Taking the course of the present century at an average, the price of corn, it is acknowledged, even by those who account for this rise by the degradation of the value of silver, has risen much less than that of some other sorts of provisions. The rise in the price of those other sorts of provisions, therefore, cannot be owing altogether to the degradation of the value of silver. Some other causes must be taken into the account; and those which have been above assigned, will, perhaps, without having recourse to the supposed degradation of the value of silver, sufficiently explain this rise in those particular sorts of provisions, of which the price has actually risen in proportion to that of corn.

As to the price of corn itself, it has, during the sixty-four first years of the present century, and before the late extraordinary course of bad seasons, been somewhat lower than was during the sixty-four last years of the preceding century. This fact is attested, not only by the accounts of Windsor market, but by the public fiars of all the different counties of Scotland, and by the accounts of several different markets in France, which have been collected with great diligence and fidelity by Mr Messance, and by Mr Dupré de St Maur. The evidence is more complete

than could well have been expected in a matter which is naturally so very difficult to be ascertained.

As to the high price of corn during these last ten or twelve years, it can be sufficiently accounted for from the badness of the seasons, without supposing any degradation in the value of silver.

The opinion, therefore, that silver is continually sinking in its value, seems not to be founded upon any good observations, either upon the prices of corn, or upon those of other provisions.

The same quantity of silver, it may perhaps be said, will, in the present times, even according to the account which has been here given, purchase a much smaller quantity of several sorts of provisions than it would have done during some part of the last century; and to ascertain whether this change be owing to a rise in the value of those goods, or to a fall in the value of silver, is only to establish a vain and useless distinction, which can be of no sort of service to the man who has only a certain quantity of silver to go to market with, or a certain fixed revenue in money. I certainly do not pretend that the knowledge of this distinction will enable him to buy cheaper. It may not, however, upon that account be altogether useless.

It may be of some use to the public, by affording an easy proof of the prosperous condition of the country. If the rise in the price of some sorts of provisions be owing altogether to a fall in the value of silver, it is owing to a circumstance, from which nothing can be inferred but the fertility of the American mines. The real wealth of the country, the annual produce of its land and labour, may, notwithstanding this circumstance, be either gradually declining, as in Portugal and Poland; or gradually advancing, as in most other parts of Europe. But if this rise in the price of some sorts of provisions be owing to a rise in the real value of the land which produces them, to its increased fertility, or, in consequence of more extended improvement and good cultivation, to its having been rendered fit for producing corn; it is owing to a circumstance which indicates, in the clearest manner, the prosperous and advancing state of the country. The land constitutes by far the greatest, the most important, and the most durable part of the wealth of every extensive country. It may surely be of some use, or, at least, it may give some satisfaction to the public, to have so decisive a proof of the increasing value of by far the greatest, the most important, and the most durable part of its wealth.

It may, too, be of some use to the public, in regulating the pecuniary reward of some of its inferior servants. If this rise in the price of some

sorts of provisions be owing to a fall in the value of silver, their pecuniary reward, provided it was not too large before, ought certainly to be augmented in proportion to the extent of this fall. If it is not augmented, their real recompence will evidently be so much diminished. But if this rise of price is owing in the increased value, in consequence of the improved fertility of the land which produces such provisions, it becomes a much nicer matter to judge, either in what proportion any pecuniary reward ought to be augmented, or whether it ought to be augmented at all. The extension of improvement and cultivation, as it necessarily raises more or less, in proportion to the price of corn, that of every sort of animal food, so it as necessarily lowers that of, I believe, every sort of vegetable food. It raises the price of animal food; because a great part of the land which produces it, being rendered fit for producing corn, must afford to the landlord and farmer the rent and profit of corn land. It lowers the price of vegetable food; because, by increasing the fertility of the land, it increases its abundance. The improvements of agriculture, too, introduce many sorts of vegetable food, which requiring less land, and not more labour than corn, come much cheaper to market. Such are potatoes and maize, or what is called Indian corn, the two most important improvements which the agriculture of Europe, perhaps, which Europe itself, has received from the great extension of its commerce and navigation. Many sorts of vegetable food, besides, which in the rude state of agriculture are confined to the kitchen-garden, and raised only by the spade, come, in its improved state, to be introduced into common fields, and to be raised by the plough; such as turnips, carrots, cabbages, &c. If, in the progress of improvement, therefore, the real price of one species of food necessarily rises, that of another as necessarily falls; and it becomes a matter of more nicety to judge how far the rise in the one may be compensated by the fall in the other. When the real price of butcher’s meat has once got to its height (which, with regard to every sort, except perhaps that of hogs flesh, it seems to have done through a great part of England more than a century ago), any rise which can afterwards happen in that of any other sort of animal food, cannot much affect the circumstances of the inferior ranks of people. The circumstances of the poor, through a great part of England, cannot surely be so much distressed by any rise in the price of poultry, fish, wild-fowl, or venison, as they must he relieved by the fall in that of potatoes.

In the present season of scarcity, the high price of corn no doubt distresses the poor. But in times of moderate plenty, when corn is at its ordinary or average price, the natural rise in the price of any other sort of

rude produce cannot much affect them. They suffer more, perhaps, by the artificial rise which has been occasioned by taxes in the price of some manufactured commodities, as of salt, soap, leather, candles, malt, beer, ale, &c.

Effects of the Progress of Improvement upon the real Price of Manufactures.

It is the natural effect of improvement, however, to diminish gradually the real price of almost all manufactures. That of the manufacturing workmanship diminishes, perhaps, in all of them without exception. In consequence of better machinery, of greater dexterity, and of a more proper division and distribution of work, all of which are the natural effects of improvement, a much smaller quantity of labour becomes requisite for executing any particular piece of work; and though, in consequence of the flourishing circumstances of the society, the real price of labour should rise very considerably, yet the great diminution of the quantity will generally much more than compensate the greatest rise which can happen in the price.

There are, indeed, a few manufactures, in which the necessary rise in the real price of the rude materials will more than compensate all the advantages which improvement can introduce into the execution of the work. In carpenters' and joiners' work, and in the coarser sort of cabinet work, the necessary rise in the real price of barren timber, in consequence of the improvement of land, will more than compensate all the advantages which can be derived from the best machinery, the greatest dexterity, and the most proper division and distribution of work.

But in all cases in which the real price of the rude material either does not rise at all, or does not rise very much, that of the manufactured commodity sinks very considerably.

This diminution of price has, in the course of the present and preceding century, been most remarkable in these manufactures of which the materials are the coarser metals. A better movement of a watch, than about the middle of the last century could have been bought for twenty pounds, may now perhaps be had for twenty shillings. In the work of cutlers and locksmiths, in all the toys which are made of the coarser metals, and in all those goods which are commonly known by the name of Birmingham and Sheffield ware, there has been, during the same period, a very great reduction of price, though not altogether so great as in watch-work. It has, however, been sufficient to astonish the workmen of every other part of Europe, who in many cases acknowledge that they can produce no work of equal goodness for double or even for triple the price. There are perhaps no manufactures, in which the division of labour can be carried further, or in which the machinery employed admits of a greater variety of improvements, than those of which the materials are the coarser metals.

In the clothing manufacture there has, during the same period, been no such sensible reduction of price. The price of superfine cloth, I have been assured, on the contrary, has, within these five-and-twenty or thirty years, risen somewhat in proportion to its quality, owing, it was said, to a considerable rise in the price of the material, which consists altogether of Spanish wool. That of the Yorkshire cloth, which is made altogether of English wool, is said, indeed, during the course of the present century, to have fallen a good deal in proportion to its quality. Quality, however, is so very disputable a matter, that I look upon all information of this kind as somewhat uncertain. In the clothing manufacture, the division of labour is nearly the same now as it was a century ago, and the machinery employed is not very different. There may, however, have been some

small improvements in both, which may have occasioned some reduction of price.

But the reduction will appear much more sensible and undeniable, if we compare the price of this manufacture in the present times with what it was in a much remoter period, towards the end of the fifteenth century, when the labour was probably much less subdivided, and the machinery employed much more imperfect, than it is at present.

In 1487, being the 4th of Henry VII., it was enacted, that “whosoever shall sell by retail a broad yard of the finest scarlet grained, or of other grained cloth of the finest making, above sixteen shillings, shall forfeit forty shillings for every yard so sold.” Sixteen shillings, therefore, containing about the same quantity of silver as four-and-twenty shillings of our present money, was, at that time, reckoned not an unreasonable price for a yard of the finest cloth; and as this is a sumptuary law, such cloth, it is probable, had usually been sold somewhat dearer. A guinea may be reckoned the highest price in the present times. Even though the quality of the cloths, therefore, should be supposed equal, and that of the present times is most probably much superior, yet, even upon this supposition, the money price of the finest cloth appears to have been considerably reduced since the end of the fifteenth century. But its real price has been much more reduced. Six shillings and eightpence was then, and long afterwards, reckoned the average price of a quarter of wheat. Sixteen shillings, therefore, was the price of two quarters and more than three bushels of wheat. Valuing a quarter of wheat in the present times at eight-and-twenty shillings, the real price of a yard of fine cloth must, in those times, have been equal to at least three pounds six shillings and sixpence of our present money. The man who bought it must have parted with the command of a quantity of labour and subsistence equal to what that sum would purchase in the present times.

The reduction in the real price of the coarse manufacture, though considerable, has not been so great as in that of the fine.

In 1463, being the 3d of Edward IV. it was enacted, that “no servant in husbandry nor common labourer, nor servant to any artificer inhabiting out of a city or burgh, shall use or wear in their clothing any cloth above two shillings the broad yard.” In the 3d of Edward IV., two shillings contained very nearly the same quantity of silver as four of our present money. But the Yorkshire cloth which is now sold at four shillings the yard, is probably much superior to any that was then made for the wearing of the very poorest order of common servants. Even the money price of their clothing, therefore, may, in proportion to the quality, be

somewhat cheaper in the present than it was in those ancient times. The real price is certainly a good deal cheaper. Tenpence was then reckoned what is called the moderate and reasonable price of a bushel of wheat. Two shillings, therefore, was the price of two bushels and near two pecks of wheat, which in the present times, at three shillings and sixpence the bushel, would be worth eight shillings and ninepence. For a yard of this cloth the poor servant must have parted with the power of purchasing a quantity of subsistence equal to what eight shillings and ninepence would purchase in the present times. This is a sumptuary law, too, restraining the luxury and extravagance of the poor. Their clothing, therefore, had commonly been much more expensive.

The same order of people are, by the same law, prohibited from wearing hose, of which the price should exceed fourteen-pence the pair, equal to about eight-and-twenty pence of our present money. But fourteen-pence was in those times the price of a bushel and near two pecks of wheat; which in the present times, at three and sixpence the bushel, would cost five shillings and threepence. We should in the present times consider this a very high price for a pair of stockings to a servant of the poorest and lowest order. He must, however, in these times, have paid what was really equivalent to this price for them.

In the time of Edward IV. the art of knitting stockings was probably not known in any part of Europe. Their hose were made of common cloth, which may have been one of the causes of their dearness. The first person that wore stockings in England is said to have been Queen Elizabeth. She received them as a present from the Spanish ambassador.

Both in the coarse and in the fine woollen manufacture, the machinery employed was much more imperfect in those ancient, than it is in the present times. It has since received three very capital improvements, besides, probably, many smaller ones, of which it may be difficult to ascertain either the number or the importance. The three capital improvements are, first, the exchange of the rock and spindle for the spinning-wheel, which, with the same quantity of labour, will perform more than double the quantity of work. Secondly, the use of several very ingenious machines, which facilitate and abridge, in a still greater proportion, the winding of the worsted and woollen yarn, or the proper arrangement of the warp and woof before they are put into the loom, an operation which, previous to the invention of those machines, must have been extremely tedious and troublesome. — Thirdly, the employment of the fulling-mill for thickening the cloth, instead of treading it in water. Neither wind nor water mills of any kind were known in England so

early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, nor, so far as I know, in any other part of Europe north of the Alps. They had been introduced into Italy some time before.

The consideration of these circumstances may, perhaps, in some measure, explain to us why the real price both of the course and of the fine manufacture was so much higher in those ancient than it is in the present times. It cost a greater quantity of labour to bring the goods to market. When they were brought thither, therefore, they must have purchased, or exchanged for the price of, a greater quantity.

The coarse manufacture probably was, in these ancient times, carried on in England in the same manner as it always has been in countries where arts and manufactures are in their infancy. It was probably a household manufacture, in which every different part of the work was occasionally performed by all the different members of almost every private family, but so as to be their work only when they had nothing else to do, and not to be the principal business from which any of them derived the greater part of their subsistence. The work which is performed in this manner, it has already been observed, comes always much cheaper to market than that which is the principal or sole fund of the workman’s subsistence. The fine manufacture, on the other hand, was not, in those times, carried on in England, but in the rich and commercial country of Flanders; and it was probably conducted then, in the same manner as now, by people who derived the whole, or the principal part of their subsistence from it. It was, besides, a foreign manufacture, and must have paid some duty, the ancient custom of tonnage and poundage at least, to the king. This duty, indeed, would not probably be very great. It was not then the policy of Europe to restrain, by high duties, the importation of foreign manufactures, but rather to encourage it, in order that merchants might be enabled to supply, at as easy a rate as possible, the great men with the conveniencies and luxuries which they wanted, and which the industry of their own country could not afford them.

The consideration of these circumstances may, perhaps, in some measure explain to us why, in those ancient times, the real price of the coarse manufacture was, in proportion to that of the fine, so much lower than in the present times.

Conclusion of the Chapter.

I shall conclude this very long chapter with observing, that every improvement in the circumstances of the society tends, either directly or

indirectly, to raise the real rent of land, to increase the real wealth of the landlord, his power of purchasing the labour, or the produce of the labour of other people.

The extension of improvement and cultivations tends to raise it directly. The landlord's share of the produce necessarily increases with the increase of the produce.

That rise in the real price of these parts of the rude produce of land, which is first the effect of the extended improvement and cultivation, and afterwards the cause of their being still further extended, the rise in the price of cattle, for example, tends, too, to raise the rent of land directly, and in a still greater proportion. The real value of the landlord's share, his real command of the labour of other people, not only rises with the real value of the produce, but the proportion of his share to the whole produce rises with it.

That produce, after the rise in its real price, requires no more labour to collect it than before. A smaller proportion of it will, therefore, be sufficient to replace, with the ordinary profit, the stock which employs that labour. A greater proportion of it must consequently belong to the landlord.

All those improvements in the productive powers of labour, which tend directly to reduce the rent price of manufactures, tend indirectly to raise the real rent of land. The landlord exchanges that part of his rude produce, which is over and above his own consumption, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of that part of it, for manufactured produce. Whatever reduces the real price of the latter, raises that of the former. An equal quantity of the former becomes thereby equivalent to a greater quantity of the latter; and the landlord is enabled to purchase a greater quantity of the conveniencies, ornaments, or luxuries which he has occasion for.

Every increase in the real wealth of the society, every increase in the quantity of useful labour employed within it, tends indirectly to raise the real rent of land. A certain proportion of this labour naturally goes to the land. A greater number of men and cattle are employed in its cultivation, the produce increases with the increase of the stock which is thus employed in raising it, and the rent increases with the produce.

The contrary circumstances, the neglect of cultivation and improvement, the fall in the real price of any part of the rude produce of land, the rise in the real price of manufactures from the decay of manufacturing art and industry, the declension of the real wealth of the society, all tend, on the other hand, to lower the real rent of land, to

reduce the real wealth of the landlord, to diminish his power of purchasing either the labour, or the produce of the labour, of other people.

The whole annual produce of the land and labour of every country, or, what comes to the same thing, the whole price of that annual produce, naturally divides itself, it has already been observed, into three parts; the rent of land, the wages of labour, and the profits of stock; and constitutes a revenue to three different orders of people; to those who live by rent, to these who live by wages, and to those who live by profit. These are the three great, original, and constituent, orders of every civilized society, from whose revenue that of every other order is ultimately derived.

The interest of the first of those three great orders, it appears from what has been just now said, is strictly and inseparably connected with the general interest of the society. Whatever either promotes or obstructs the one, necessarily promotes or obstructs the other. When the public deliberates concerning any regulation of commerce or police, the proprietors of land never can mislead it, with a view to promote the interest of their own particular order; at least, if they have any tolerable knowledge of that interest. They are, indeed, too often defective in this tolerable knowledge. They are the only one of the three orders whose revenue costs them neither labour nor care, but comes to them, as it were, of its own accord, and independent of any plan or project of their own. That indolence which is the natural effect of the ease and security of their situation, renders them too often, not only ignorant, but incapable of that application of mind, which is necessary in order to foresee and understand the consequence of any public regulation.

The interest of the second order, that of those who live by wages, is as strictly connected with the interest of the society as that of the first. The wages of the labourer, it has already been shewn, are never so high as when the demand for labour is continually rising, or when the quantity employed is every year increasing considerably. When this real wealth of the society becomes stationary, his wages are soon reduced to what is barely enough to enable him to bring up a family, or to continue the race of labourers. When the society declines, they fall even below this. The order of proprietors may perhaps gain more by the prosperity of the society than that of labourers; but there is no order that suffers so cruelly from its decline. But though the interest of the labourer is strictly connected with that of the society, he is incapable either of comprehending that interest, or of understanding its connexion with his own. His condition leaves him no time to receive the necessary

information, and his education and habits are commonly such as to render him unfit to judge, even though he was fully informed. In the public deliberations, therefore, his voice is little heard, and less regarded; except upon particular occasions, when his clamour is animated, set on, and supported by his employers, not for him, but their own particular purposes.

His employers constitute the third order, that of those who live by profit. It is the stock that is employed for the sake of profit, which puts into motion the greater part of the useful labour of every society. The plans and projects of the employers of stock regulate and direct all the most important operations of labour, and profit is the end proposed by all those plans and projects. But the rate of profit does not, like rent and wages, rise with the prosperity, and fall with the declension of the society. On the contrary, it is naturally low in rich, and high in poor countries, and it is always highest in the countries which are going fastest to ruin. The interest of this third order, therefore, has not the same connexion with the general interest of the society, as that of the other two. Merchants and master manufacturers are, in this order, the two classes of people who commonly employ the largest capitals, and who by their wealth draw to themselves the greatest share of the public consideration. As during their whole lives they are engaged in plans and projects, they have frequently more acuteness of understanding than the greater part of country gentlemen. As their thoughts, however, are commonly exercised rather about the interest of their own particular branch of business than about that of the society, their judgment, even when given with the greatest candour (which it has not been upon every occasion), is much more to be depended upon with regard to the former of those two objects, than with regard to the latter. Their superiority over the country gentleman is, not so much in their knowledge of the public interest, as in their having a better knowledge of their own interest than he has of his. It is by this superior knowledge of their own interest that they have frequently imposed upon his generosity, and persuaded him to give up both his own interest and that of the public, from a very simple but honest conviction, that their interest, and not his, was the interest of the public. The interest of the dealers, however, in any particular branch of trade or manufactures, is always in some respects different from, and even opposite to, that of the public. To widen the market, and to narrow the competition, is always the interest of the dealers. To widen the market may frequently be agreeable enough to the interest of the public; but to narrow the competition must always be against it, and can only

serve to enable the dealers, by raising their profits above what they naturally would be, to levy, for their own benefit, an absurd tax upon the rest of their fellow-citizens. The proposal of any new law or regulation of commerce which comes from this order, ought always to be listened to with great precaution, and ought never to be adopted till after having been long and carefully examined, not only with the most scrupulous, but with the most suspicious attention. It comes from an order of men, whose interest is never exactly the same with that of the public, who have generally an interest to deceive and even to oppress the public, and who accordingly have, upon many occasions, both deceived and oppressed it.

PRICES OF WHEAT.

Years XII.	Price of the Quarter of Wheat each Year.	Average of the different Prices of the same Year.	The Average Price of each Year in Money of the present times.
	L. s. d.	L. s. d.	L. s. d.
1202	0 12 0	- - -	

1 16 0

1205

0 12 0
0 13 4
0 15 0

0 13 5
2 0 3

1223
0 12 0
- - -
1 16 0

1237
0 3 4
- - -
0 10 0

1243
0 2 0
- - -
0 6 0

1244
0 2 0
- - -
0 6 0

1246
0 16 0
- - -
2 8 0

1247
0 13 5
- - -
2 0 0

1257
1 4 0
- - -
3 12 0

1258

1 0 0
0 15 0
0 16 0

0 17 0
2 11 0

1270

4 16 0
6 8 0

5 12 0
16 16 0

1286

0 2 8
0 16 0

0 9 4
1 8 0

Total,
35 9 3

Average price,
2 19 1¼

1287
0 3 4
- - -
0 10 0

1288

0 0 8
0 1 0
0 1 4
0 1 6
0 1 8
0 2 0
0 3 4
0 9 4

0 3 0¼
0 9 1¾

1289

0 12 0
0 6 0
0 2 0
0 10 8
1 0 0

0 10 1½
1 10 4½

1290
0 16 0
- - -
2 8 0

1294
0 16 0
- - -
2 8 0

1302
0 4 0
- - -
0 12 0

1309
0 7 2
- - -
1 1 6

1315
1 0 0
- - -
3 0 0

1316

1 0 0
1 10 0
1 12 0
2 0 0

1 10 6
4 11 6

1317

2 4 0
0 14 0
2 13 0
4 0 0
0 6 8

1 19 6
5 18 6

1336
0 2 0
- - -
0 6 0

1338
0 3 4
- - -
0 10 0

Total,
23 4 11¼

Average price,
1 18 8

1339
0 9 0
- - -
1 7 0

1349
0 2 0
- - -
0 5 2

1359
1 6 8
- - -
3 2 2

1361
0 2 0
- - -
0 4 8

1363
0 15 0
- - -
1 15 0

1369

1 0 0
1 4 0

1 2 0
2 9 4

1379
0 4 0
- - -
0 9 4

1387
0 2 0
- - -
0 4 8

1390

0 13 4
0 14 0
0 16 0

0 14 5
1 13 7

1401
0 16 0

- - -
1 17 6

1407

0 4 4¾
0 3 4

0 3 10
0 8 11

1416
0 16 0
- - -
1 12 0

Total,
15 9 4

Aver. price,
1 5 9½

1423
0 8 0
- - -
0 16 0

1425
0 4 0
- - -
0 8 0

1434
1 6 8
- - -
2 13 4

1435
0 5 4
- - -
0 10 8

1439

1 0 0
1 6 8

1 3 4
2 6 8

1440
1 4 0
- - -
2 8 0

1444

0 4 4
0 4 0

0 4 2
0 8 4

1445
0 4 6
- - -
0 9 0

1447
0 8 0
- - -

0 16 0

1448
0 6 8
- - -
0 13 4

1449
0 5 0
- - -
0 10 0

1451
0 8 0
- - -
0 16 0

Total,
12 15 4

Aver. price,
1 1 3⅓

1453
0 5 4
- - -
0 10 8

1455
0 1 2
- - -

0 2 4

1457
0 7 8
- - -
0 15 4

1459
0 5 0
- - -
0 10 0

1460
0 8 0
- - -
0 16 0

1463

0 2 0
0 1 8

0 1 10
0 3 8

1464
0 6 8
- - -
0 10 0

1486
1 4 0
- - -
1 17 0

1491
0 14 8
- - -
1 2 0

1494
0 4 0
- - -
0 6 0

1495
0 3 4
- - -
0 5 0

1497
1 0 0
- - -
1 11 0

Total,
8 9 0

Aver. price,
0 14 1

1499
0 4 0
- - -
0 6 0

1504
0 5 8
- - -
0 8 6

1521
1 0 0
- - -
1 10 0

1551
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1553
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1554
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1555
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1556
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1957

0 4 0
0 5 0
0 8 0
2 13 4

0 17 8½
0 17 8½

1558
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1559
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1560
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

Total,
6 0 2½

Average price,
0 10 0$^{5}/_{12}$

1561
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1562
0 8 0
- - -
0 8 0

1574

2 16 0
1 4 0

2 0 0
2 0 0

1587
3 4 0
- - -
3 4 0

1594
2 16 0
- - -
2 16 0

1595
2 13 0
- - -
2 13 0

1596
4 0 0
- - -
4 0 0

1597

5 4 0
4 0 0

4 12 0
4 12 0

1598
2 16 8
- - -
2 16 8

1599
1 19 2
- - -
1 19 2

1600
1 17 8
- - -
1 17 8

1601
1 14 10
- - -
1 14 10

Total,
28 9 4

Average price,
2 7 5⅓

PRICES OF THE QUARTER OF NINE BUSHELS OF THE BEST OR HIGHEST PRICED WHEAT AT WINDSOR MARKET, ON LADY-DAY AND MICHAELMAS, FROM 1595 TO 1764, BOTH INCLUSIVE; THE PRICE OF EACH YEAR BEING THE MEDIUM BETWEEN THE HIGHEST PRICES OF THOSE TWO MARKET-DAYS.

Wheat per Quarter.

Years.	L.	s.	d.
1595	2	0	0
1596	2	8	0
1597	3	9	6
1598	2	16	8
1599	1	19	2
1600	1	17	8
1601	1	14	10

1602
1
9
4

1603
1
15
4

1604
1
10
8

1605
1
15
10

1606
1
13
0

1607
1
16
8

1608
2
16
8

1609
2
10
0

1610
1
15
10

1611
1
18
8

1612
2
2
4

1613
2
8
8

1614
2
1
8½

1615
1
18
8

1616
2
0
4

1617
2
8
8

1618
2
6
8

1619
1
15
4

1620
1
10
4

——— ——— ——— ———

26)54
0
6½

——— ——— ——— ———

2
1
6$^{9}/_{13}$

Wheat per Quarter.

Years.
L.
s.
d.

1621
1
10
4

1622
2
18
8

1623
2
12
0

1624
2
8
0

1625
2
12
0

1626
2
9
4

1627
1
16
0

1628
1
8
0

1629
2
2
0

1630
2
15
8

1631
3
8
0

1632
2
13
4

1633
2
18
0

1634
2
16
0

1635
2
16
0

1636
2
16
8

16)40
0
0

2
10
0

Wheat per Quarter.

Years.
L.
s.
d.

1637
2
13
0

1638
2
17
4

1639
2
4
10

1640
2
4
8

1641
2
8
0

1642[26*]
0
0
0

1643[26*]
0
0
0

1644[26*]
0
0
0

1645[26*]
0
0
0

1646
2
8
0

1647
3
13
0

1648
4
5
0

1649
4
0
0

1650
3
16
8

1651
3
13
4

1652
2
9
6

1653
1
15
6

1654
1
6
0

1655
1
13
4

1656
2
3
0

1657
2
6
8

1658
3
5
0

1659
3
6
0

1660
2
16
6

1661
3
10
0

1662
3
14
0

1663
2
17
0

1664
2
0
6

1665
2
9
4

1666
1
16
0

1667
1
16
0

1668
2
0
0

1669
2
4
4

1670
2
1
8

1671
2
2
0

1672
2
1
0

1673
2
6
8

1674
3
8
8

1675
3
4
8

1676
1
18
0

1677
2
2
0

1678
2
19
0

1679
3
0
0

1680
2
5
0

1681
2
6
8

1682
2
4
0

1683
2
0
0

1684
2
4
0

1685
2
6
8

1686
1
14
0

1687
1
5
2

1688
2
6
0

1689
1
10
0

1690
1
14
8

1691
1
14
0

1692
2
6
8

1693
3
7
8

1694
3
4
0

1695
2
13
0

1696
3
11
0

1697
3
0
0

1698
3
8
4

1699
3
4
0

1700
2
0
0

—— —— —— ——

60)153
1
8

—— —— —— ——

2
11

0½

Wheat per Quarter.

Years.
L.
s.
d.

1701
1
17
8

1702
1
9
6

1703
1
16
0

1704
2
6
6

1705
1
10
0

1706
1
6

0

1707
1
8
6

1708
2
1
6

1709
3
18
6

1710
3
18
0

1711
2
14
0

1712
2
6
4

1713
2
11
0

1714
2
10

4

1715
2
3
0

1716
2
8
0

1717
2
5
8

1718
1
18
10

1719
1
15
0

1720
1
17
0

1721
1
17
6

1722
1
16

0

1723
1
14
8

1724
1
17
0

1725
2
8
6

1726
2
6
0

1727
2
2
0

1728
2
14
6

1729
2
6
10

1730
1
16

6

1731
1
12
10

1732
1
6
8

1733
1
8
4

1734
1
18
10

1735
2
3
0

1736
2
0
4

1737
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18
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1738
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15

6

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1740
2
10
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1741
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6
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1742
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14
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1743
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1745
1
7
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1746
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19

0

1747
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14
10

1748
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17
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1749
1
17
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1750
1
12
6

1751
1
18
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1752
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1753
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1754
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14

8

1755
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13
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1756
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5
3

1757
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0
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1758
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10
0

1759
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19
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1760
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16
6

1761
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1762
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19

0

1763
2
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9

1764
2
6
9

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64)129
13
6

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2
0
$6^{18}/_{64}$

Wheat per Quarter.

Years.
L.
s.
d.

1731
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12

10

1732
1
6
8

1733
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8
4

1734
1
18
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1735
2
3
0

1736
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1737
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1738
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15
6

1739
1
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1740
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8

10)18
12
8

1
17
3⅕

Wheat per Quarter.

Years.
L.
s.
d.

1741
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1742
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1743
1
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1744
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1745
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1746
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$9\frac{4}{5}$

BOOK II. OF THE NATURE, ACCUMULATION, AND EMPLOYMENT OF STOCK.

INTRODUCTION.

In that rude state of society, in which there is no division of labour, in which exchanges are seldom made, and in which every man provides every thing for himself, it is not necessary that any stock should be accumulated, or stored up before-hand, in order to carry on the business of the society. Every man endeavours to supply, by his own industry, his own occasional wants, as they occur. When he is hungry, he goes to the forest to hunt; when his coat is worn out, he clothes himself with the skin of the first large animal he kills; and when his hut begins to go to ruin, he repairs it, as well as he can, with the trees and the turf that are nearest it.

But when the division of labour has once been thoroughly introduced, the produce of a man's own labour can supply but a very small part of his occasional wants. The far greater part of them are supplied by the produce of other men's labour, which he purchases with the produce, or, what is the same thing, with the price of the produce, of his own. But this purchase cannot be made till such time as the produce of his own labour has not only been completed, but sold. A stock of goods of different kinds, therefore, must be stored up somewhere, sufficient to maintain him, and to supply him with the materials and tools of his work, till such time at least as both these events can be brought about. A weaver cannot apply himself entirely to his peculiar business, unless there is before-hand stored up somewhere, either in his own possession, or in that of some other person, a stock sufficient to maintain him, and to supply him with the materials and tools of his work, till he has not only completed, but sold his web. This accumulation must evidently be previous to his applying his industry for so long a time to such a peculiar business.

As the accumulation of stock must, in the nature of things, be previous to the division of labour, so labour can be more and more subdivided in proportion only as stock is previously more and more accumulated. The quantity of materials which the same number of people can work up, increases in a great proportion as labour comes to be more and more subdivided; and as the operations of each workman are gradually reduced to a greater degree of simplicity, a variety of new

machines come to be invented for facilitating and abridging these operations. As the division of labour advances, therefore, in order to give constant employment to an equal number of workman, an equal stock of provisions, and a greater stock of materials and tools than what would have been necessary in a ruder state of things, must be accumulated before-hand. But the number of workmen in every branch of business generally increases with the division of labour in that branch; or rather it is the increase of their number which enables them to class and subdivide themselves in this manner.

As the accumulation of stock is previously necessary for carrying on this great improvement in the productive powers of labour, so that accumulation naturally leads to this improvement. The person who employs his stock in maintaining labour, necessarily wishes to employ it in such a manner as to produce as great a quantity of work as possible. He endeavours, therefore, both to make among his workmen the most proper distribution of employment, and to furnish them with the best machines which he can either invent or afford to purchase. His abilities, in both these respects, are generally in proportion to the extent of his stock, or to the number of people whom it can employ. The quantity of industry, therefore, not only increases in every country with the increase of the stock which employs it, but, in consequence of that increase, the same quantity of industry produces a much greater quantity of work.

Such are in general the effects of the increase of stock upon industry and its productive powers.

In the following book, I have endeavoured to explain the nature of stock, the effects of its accumulation into capital of different kinds, and the effects of the different employments of those capitals. This book is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, I have endeavoured to shew what are the different parts or branches into which the stock, either of an individual, or of a great society, naturally divides itself. In the second, I have endeavoured to explain the nature and operation of money, considered as a particular branch of the general stock of the society. The stock which is accumulated into a capital, may either be employed by the person to whom it belongs, or it may be lent to some other person. In the third and fourth chapters, I have endeavoured to examine the manner in which it operates in both these situations. The fifth and last chapter treats of the different effects which the different employments of capital immediately produce upon the quantity, both of national industry, and of the annual produce of land and labour.

CHAP. I. OF THE DIVISION OF STOCK.

When the stock which a man possesses is no more than sufficient to maintain him for a few days or a few weeks, he seldom thinks of deriving any revenue from it. He consumes it as sparingly as he can, and endeavours, by his labour, to acquire something which may supply its place before it be consumed altogether. His revenue is, in this case, derived from his labour only. This is the state of the greater part of the labouring poor in all countries.

But when he possesses stock sufficient to maintain him for months or years, he naturally endeavours to derive a revenue from the greater part of it, reserving only so much for his immediate consumption as may maintain him till this revenue begins to come in. His whole stock, therefore, is distinguished into two parts. That part which he expects is to afford him this revenue is called his capital. The other is that which supplies his immediate consumption, and which consists either, first, in that portion of his whole stock which was originally reserved for this purpose; or, secondly, in his revenue, from whatever source derived, as it gradually comes in; or, thirdly, in such things as had been purchased by either of these in former years, and which are not yet entirely consumed, such as a stock of clothes, household furniture, and the like. In one or other, or all of these three articles, consists the stock which men commonly reserve for their own immediate consumption.

There are two different ways in which a capital may be employed so as to yield a revenue or profit to its employer.

First, it may be employed in raising, manufacturing, or purchasing goods, and selling them again with a profit. The capital employed in this manner yields no revenue or profit to its employer, while it either remains in his possession, or continues in the same shape. The goods of the merchant yield him no revenue or profit till he sells them for money, and the money yields him as little till it is again exchanged for goods. His capital is continually going from him in one shape, and returning to him in another; and it is only by means of such circulation, or successive changes, that it can yield him any profit. Such capitals, therefore, may very properly be called circulating capitals.

Secondly, it may be employed in the improvement of land, in the purchase of useful machines and instruments of trade, or in such like things as yield a revenue or profit without changing masters, or

circulating any further. Such capitals, therefore, may very properly be called fixed capitals.

Different occupations require very different proportions between the fixed and circulating capitals employed in them.

The capital of a merchant, for example, is altogether a circulating capital. He has occasion for no machines or instruments of trade, unless his shop or warehouse be considered as such.

Some part of the capital of every master artificer or manufacturer must be fixed in the instruments of his trade. This part, however, is very small in some, and very great in others. A master tailor requires no other instruments of trade but a parcel of needles. Those of the master shoemaker are a little, though but a very little, more expensive. Those of the weaver rise a good deal above those of the shoemaker. The far greater part of the capital of all such master artificers, however, is circulated either in the wages of their workmen, or in the price of their materials, and repaid, with a profit, by the price of the work.

In other works a much greater fixed capital is required. In a great iron-work, for example, the furnace for melting the ore, the forge, the slit-mill, are instruments of trade which cannot be erected without a very great expense. In coal works, and mines of every kind, the machinery necessary, both for drawing out the water, and for other purposes, is frequently still more expensive.

That part of the capital of the farmer which is employed in the instruments of agriculture is a fixed, that which is employed in the wages and maintenance of his labouring servants is a circulating capital. He makes a profit of the one by keeping it in his own possession, and of the other by parting with it. The price or value of his labouring cattle is a fixed capital, in the same manner as that of the instruments of husbandry; their maintenance is a circulating capital, in the same manner as that of the labouring servants. The farmer makes his profit by keeping the labouring cattle, and by parting with their maintenance. Both the price and the maintenance of the cattle which are bought in and fattened, not for labour, but for sale, are a circulating capital. The farmer makes his profit by parting with them. A flock of sheep or a herd of cattle, that, in a breeding country, is brought in neither for labour nor for sale, but in order to make a profit by their wool, by their milk, and by their increase, is a fixed capital. The profit is made by keeping them. Their maintenance is a circulating capital. The profit is made by parting with it; and it comes back with both its own profit and the profit upon the whole price of the cattle, in the price of the wool, the milk, and the increase. The whole

value of the seed, too, is properly a fixed capital. Though it goes backwards and forwards between the ground and the granary, it never changes masters, and therefore does not properly circulate. The farmer makes his profit, not by its sale, but by its increase.

The general stock of any country or society is the same with that of all its inhabitants or members; and, therefore, naturally divides itself into the same three portions, each of which has a distinct function or office.

The first is that portion which is reserved for immediate consumption, and of which the characteristic is, that it affords no revenue or profit. It consists in the stock of food, clothes, household furniture, &c. which have been purchased by their proper consumers, but which are not yet entirely consumed. The whole stock of mere dwelling-houses, too, subsisting at any one time in the country, make a part of this first portion. The stock that is laid out in a house, if it is to be the dwelling-house of the proprietor, ceases from that moment to serve in the function of a capital, or to afford any revenue to its owner. A dwelling-house, as such, contributes nothing to the revenue of its inhabitant; and though it is, no doubt, extremely useful to him, it is as his clothes and household furniture are useful to him, which, however, make a part of his expense, and not of his revenue. If it is to be let to a tenant for rent, as the house itself can produce nothing, the tenant must always pay the rent out of some other revenue, which he derives, either from labour, or stock, or land. Though a house, therefore, may yield a revenue to its proprietor, and thereby serve in the function of a capital to him, it cannot yield any to the public, nor serve in the function of a capital to it, and the revenue of the whole body of the people can never be in the smallest degree increased by it. Clothes and household furniture, in the same manner, sometimes yield a revenue, and thereby serve in the function of a capital to particular persons. In countries where masquerades are common, it is a trade to let out masquerade dresses for a night. Upholsterers frequently let furniture by the month or by the year. Undertakers let the furniture of funerals by the day and by the week. Many people let furnished houses, and get a rent, not only for the use of the house, but for that of the furniture. The revenue, however, which is derived from such things, must always be ultimately drawn from some other source of revenue. Of all parts of the stock, either of an individual or of a society, reserved for immediate consumption, what is laid out in houses is most slowly consumed. A stock of clothes may last several years; a stock of furniture half a century or a century; but a stock of houses, well built and properly taken care of, may last many centuries. Though the period of their total

consumption, however, is more distant, they are still as really a stock reserved for immediate consumption as either clothes or household furniture.

The second of the three portions into which the general stock of the society divides itself, is the fixed capital; of which the characteristic is, that it affords a revenue or profit without circulating or changing masters. It consists chiefly of the four following articles.

First, of all useful machines and instruments of trade, which facilitate and abridge labour.

Secondly, of all those profitable buildings which are the means of procuring a revenue, not only to the proprietor who lets them for a rent, but to the person who possesses them, and pays that rent for them; such as shops, warehouses, workhouses, farm-houses, with all their necessary buildings, stables, granaries, &c. These are very different from mere dwelling-houses. They are a sort of instruments of trade, and may be considered in the same light.

Thirdly, of the improvements of land, of what has been profitably laid out in clearing, draining, inclosing, manuring, and reducing it into the condition most proper for tillage and culture. An improved farm may very justly be regarded in the same light as those useful machines which facilitate and abridge labour, and by means of which an equal circulating capital can afford a much greater revenue to its employer. An improved farm is equally advantageous and more durable than any of those machines, frequently requiring no other repairs than the most profitable application of the farmer’s capital employed in cultivating it.

Fourthly, of the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants and members of the society. The acquisition of such talents, by the maintenance of the acquirer during his education, study, or apprenticeship, always costs a real expense, which is a capital fixed and realised, as it were, in his person. Those talents, as they make a part of his fortune, so do they likewise that of the society to which he belongs. The improved dexterity of a workman may be considered in the same light as a machine or instrument of trade which facilitates and abridges labour, and which, though it costs a certain expense, repays that expense with a profit.

The third and last of the three portions into which the general stock of the society naturally divides itself, is the circulating capital, of which the characteristic is, that it affords a revenue only by circulating or changing masters. It is composed likewise of four parts.

First, of the money, by means of which all the other three are circulated and distributed to their proper consumers.

Secondly, of the stock of provisions which are in the possession of the butcher, the grazier, the farmer, the corn-merchant, the brewer, &c. and from the sale of which they expect to derive a profit.

Thirdly, of the materials, whether altogether rude, or more or less manufactured, of clothes, furniture, and building which are not yet made up into any of those three shapes, but which remain in the hands of the growers, the manufacturers, the mercers, and drapers, the timber-merchants, the carpenters and joiners, the brick-makers, &c.

Fourthly, and lastly, of the work which is made up and completed, but which is still in the hands of the merchant and manufacturer, and not yet disposed of or distributed to the proper consumers; such as the finished work which we frequently find ready made in the shops of the smith, the cabinet-maker, the goldsmith, the jeweller, the china-merchant, &c. The circulating capital consists, in this manner, of the provisions, materials, and finished work of all kinds that are in the hands of their respective dealers, and of the money that is necessary for circulating and distributing them to those who are finally to use or to consume them.

Of these four parts, three — provisions, materials, and finished work, are either annually or in a longer or shorter period, regularly withdrawn from it, and placed either in the fixed capital, or in the stock reserved for immediate consumption.

Every fixed capital is both originally derived from, and requires to be continually supported by, a circulating capital. All useful machines and instruments of trade are originally derived from a circulating capital, which furnishes the materials of which they are made, and the maintenance of the workmen who make them. They require, too, a capital of the same kind to keep them in constant repair.

No fixed capital can yield any revenue but by means of a circulating capital. The most useful machines and instruments of trade will produce nothing, without the circulating capital, which affords the materials they are employed upon, and the maintenance of the workmen who employ them. Land, however improved, will yield no revenue without a circulating capital, which maintains the labourers who cultivate and collect its produce.

To maintain and augment the stock which may be reserved for immediate consumption, is the sole end and purpose both of the fixed and circulating capitals. It is this stock which feeds, clothes, and lodges the people. Their riches or poverty depend upon the abundant or sparing

supplies which those two capitals can afford to the stock reserved for immediate consumption.

So great a part of the circulating capital being continually withdrawn from it, in order to be placed in the other two branches of the general stock of the society, it must in its turn require continual supplies without which it would soon cease to exist. These supplies are principally drawn from three sources; the produce of land, of mines, and of fisheries. These afford continual supplies of provisions and materials, of which part is afterwards wrought up into finished work and by which are replaced the provisions, materials, and finished work, continually withdrawn from the circulating capital. From mines, too, is drawn what is necessary for maintaining and augmenting that part of it which consists in money. For though, in the ordinary course of business, this part is not, like the other three, necessarily withdrawn from it, in order to be placed in the other two branches of the stock of the society, it must, however, like all other things, be wasted and worn out at last, and sometimes, too, be either lost or sent abroad, and must, therefore, require continual, though no doubt much smaller, supplies.

Lands, mines, and fisheries, require all both a fixed and circulating capital to cultivate them; and their produce replaces, with a profit not only those capitals, but all the others in the society. Thus the farmer annually replaces to the manufacturer the provisions which he had consumed, and the materials which he had wrought up the year before; and the manufacturer replaces to the farmer the finished work which he had wasted and worn out in the same time. This is the real exchange that is annually made between those two orders of people, though it seldom happens that the rude produce of the one, and the manufactured produce of the other, are directly bartered for one another; because it seldom happens that the farmer sells his corn and his cattle, his flax and his wool, to the very same person of whom he chuses to purchase the clothes, furniture, and instruments of trade, which he wants. He sells, therefore, his rude produce for money, with which he can purchase, wherever it is to be had, the manufactured produce he has occasion for. Land even replaces, in part at least, the capitals with which fisheries and mines are cultivated. It is the produce of land which draws the fish from the waters; and it is the produce of the surface of the earth which extracts the minerals from its bowels.

The produce of land, mines, and fisheries, when their natural fertility is equal, is in proportion to the extent and proper application of the

capitals employed about them. When the capitals are equal, and equally well applied, it is in proportion to their natural fertility.

In all countries where there is a tolerable security, every man of common understanding will endeavour to employ whatever stock he can command, in procuring either present enjoyment or future profit. If it is employed in procuring present enjoyment, it is a stock reserved for immediate consumption. If it is employed in procuring future profit, it must procure this profit either by staying with him, or by going from him. In the one case it is a fixed, in the other it is a circulating capital. A man must be perfectly crazy, who, where there is a tolerable security, does not employ all the stock which he commands, whether it be his own, or borrowed of other people, in some one or other of those three ways.

In those unfortunate countries, indeed, where men are continually afraid of the violence of their superiors, they frequently bury or conceal a great part of their stock, in order to have it always at hand to carry with them to some place of safety, in case of their being threatened with any of those disasters to which they consider themselves at all times exposed. This is said to be a common practice in Turkey, in Indostan, and, I believe, in most other governments of Asia. It seems to have been a common practice among our ancestors during the violence of the feudal government. Treasure-trove was, in these times, considered as no contemptible part of the revenue of the greatest sovereigns in Europe. It consisted in such treasure as was found concealed in the earth, and to which no particular person could prove any right. This was regarded, in those times, as so important an object, that it was always considered as belonging to the sovereign, and neither to the finder nor to the proprietor of the land, unless the right to it had been conveyed to the latter by an express clause in his charter. It was put upon the same footing with gold and silver mines, which, without a special clause in the charter, were never supposed to be comprehended in the general grant of the lands, though mines of lead, copper, tin, and coal were, as things of smaller consequence.

CHAP II.

OF MONEY, CONSIDERED AS A PARTICULAR BRANCH OF THE GENERAL STOCK OF THE SOCIETY, OR OF THE EXPENSE OF MAINTAINING THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

It has been shown in the First Book, that the price of the greater part of commodities resolves itself into three parts, of which one pays the wages of the labour, another the profits of the stock, and a third the rent of the land which had been employed in producing and bringing them to market: that there are, indeed, some commodities of which the price is made up of two of those parts only, the wages of labour, and the profits of stock; and a very few in which it consists altogether in one, the wages of labour; but that the price of every commodity necessarily resolves itself into some one or other, or all, of those three parts; every part of it which goes neither to rent nor to wages, being necessarily profit to somebody.

Since this is the case, it has been observed, with regard to every particular commodity, taken separately, it must be so with regard to all the commodities which compose the whole annual produce of the land and labour of every country, taken complexly. The whole price or exchangeable value of that annual produce must resolve itself into the same three parts, and be parcelled out among the different inhabitants of the country, either as the wages of their labour, the profits of their their stock, or the rent of their land.

But though the whole value of the annual produce of the land and labour of every country, is thus divided among, and constitutes a revenue to, its different inhabitants; yet, as in the rent of a private estate, we distinguish between the gross rent and the neat rent, so may we likewise in the revenue of all the inhabitants of a great country.

The gross rent of a private estate comprehends whatever is paid by the farmer; the neat rent, what remains free to the landlord, after deducting the expense of management, of repairs, and all other necessary charges; or what, without hurting his estate, he can afford to place in his stock reserved for immediate consumption, or to spend upon his table, equipage, the ornaments of his house and furniture, his private enjoyments and amusements. His real wealth is in proportion, not to his gross, but to his neat rent.

The gross revenue of all the inhabitants of a great country comprehends the whole annual produce of their land and labour; the neat revenue, what remains free to them, after deducting the expense of maintaining, first, their fixed, and, secondly, their circulating capital, or what, without encroaching upon their capital, they can place in their stock reserved for immediate consumption, or spend upon their subsistence, conveniencies, and amusements. Their real wealth, too, is in proportion, not to their gross, but to their neat revenue.

The whole expense of maintaining the fixed capital must evidently be excluded from the neat revenue of the society. Neither the materials necessary for supporting their useful machines and instruments of trade, their profitable buildings, &c. nor the produce of the labour necessary for fashioning those materials into the proper form, can ever make any part of it. The price of that labour may indeed make a part of it; as the workmen so employed may place the whole value of their wages in their stock reserved for immediate consumption. But in other sorts of labour, both the price and the produce go to this stock; the price to that of the workmen, the produce to that of other people, whose subsistence, conveniencies, and amusements, are augmented by the labour of those workmen.

The intention of the fixed capital is to increase the productive powers of labour, or to enable the same number of labourers to perform a much greater quantity of work. In a farm where all the necessary buildings, fences, drains, communications, &c. are in the most perfect good order, the same number of labourers and labouring cattle will raise a much greater produce, than in one of equal extent and equally good ground, but not furnished with equal conveniencies. In manufactures, the same number of hands, assisted with the best machinery, will work up a much greater quantity of goods than with more imperfect instruments of trade. The expense which is properly laid out upon a fixed capital of any kind, is always repaid with great profit, and increases the annual produce by a much greater value than that of the support which such improvements require. This support, however, still requires a certain portion of that produce. A certain quantity of materials, and the labour of a certain number of workmen, both of which might have been immediately employed to augment the food, clothing, and lodging, the subsistence and conveniencies of the society, are thus diverted to another employment, highly advantageous indeed, but still different from this one. It is upon this account that all such improvements in mechanics, as enable the same number of workmen to perform an equal quantity of

work with cheaper and simpler machinery than had been usual before, are always regarded as advantageous to every society. A certain quantity of materials, and the labour of a certain number of workmen, which had before been employed in supporting a more complex and expensive machinery, can afterwards be applied to augment the quantity of work which that or any other machinery is useful only for performing. The undertaker of some great manufactory, who employs a thousand a-year in the maintenance of his machinery, if he can reduce this expense to five hundred, will naturally employ the other five hundred in purchasing an additional quantity of materials, to be wrought up by an additional number of workmen. The quantity of that work, therefore, which his machinery was useful only for performing, will naturally be augmented, and with it all the advantage and conveniency which the society can derive from that work.

The expense of maintaining the fixed capital in a great country, may very properly be compared to that of repairs in a private estate. The expense of repairs may frequently be necessary for supporting the produce of the estate, and consequently both the gross and the neat rent of the landlord. When by a more proper direction, however, it can be diminished without occasioning any diminution of produce, the gross rent remains at least the same as before, and the neat rent is necessarily augmented.

But though the whole expense of maintaining the fixed capital is thus necessarily excluded from the neat revenue of the society, it is not the same case with that of maintaining the circulating capital. Of the four parts of which this latter capital is composed, money, provisions, materials, and finished work, the three last, it has already been observed, are regularly withdrawn from it, and placed either in the fixed capital of the society, or in their stock reserved for immediate consumption. Whatever portion of those consumable goods is not employed in maintaining the former, goes all to the latter, and makes a part of the neat revenue of the society. The maintenance of those three parts of the circulating capital, therefore, withdraws no portion of the annual produce from the neat revenue of the society, besides what is necessary for maintaining the fixed capital.

The circulating capital of a society is in this respect different from that of an individual. That of an individual is totally excluded from making any part of his neat revenue, which must consist altogether in his profits. But though the circulating capital of every individual makes a part of that of the society to which he belongs, it is not upon that account totally

excluded from making a part likewise of their neat revenue. Though the whole goods in a merchant's shop must by no means be placed in his own stock reserved for immediate consumption, they may in that of other people, who, from a revenue derived from other funds, may regularly replace their value to him, together with its profits, without occasioning any diminution either of his capital or of theirs.

Money, therefore, is the only part of the circulating capital of a society, of which the maintenance can occasion any diminution in their neat revenue.

The fixed capital, and that part of the circulating capital which consists in money, so far as they affect the revenue of the society, bear a very great resemblance to one another.

First, as those machines and instruments of trade, &c. require a certain expense, first to erect them, and afterwards to support them, both which expenses, though they make a part of the gross, are deductions from the neat revenue of the society; so the stock of money which circulates in any country must require a certain expense, first to collect it, and afterwards to support it; both which expenses, though they make a part of the gross, are, in the same manner, deductions from the neat revenue of the society. A certain quantity of very valuable materials, gold and silver, and of very curious labour, instead of augmenting the stock reserved for immediate consumption, the subsistence, conveniencies, and amusements of individuals, is employed in supporting that great but expensive instrument of commerce, by means of which every individual in the society has his subsistence, conveniencies, and amusements, regularly distributed to him in their proper proportions.

Secondly, as the machines and instruments of trade, &c. which compose the fixed capital either of an individual or of a society, make no part either of the gross or of the neat revenue of either; so money, by means of which the whole revenue of the society is regularly distributed among all its different members, makes itself no part of that revenue. The great wheel of circulation is altogether different from the goods which are circulated by means of it. The revenue of the society consists altogether in those goods, and not in the wheel which circulates them. In computing either the gross or the neat revenue of any society, we must always, from the whole annual circulation of money and goods, deduct the whole value of the money, of which not a single farthing can ever make any part of either.

It is the ambiguity of language only which can make this proposition appear either doubtful or paradoxical. When properly explained and

understood, it is almost self-evident.

When we talk of any particular sum of money, we sometimes mean nothing but the metal pieces of which it is composed, and sometimes we include in our meaning some obscure reference to the goods which can be had in exchange for it, or to the power of purchasing which the possession of it conveys. Thus, when we say that the circulating money of England has been computed at eighteen millions, we mean only to express the amount of the metal pieces, which some writers have computed, or rather have supposed, to circulate in that country. But when we say that a man is worth fifty or a hundred pounds a-year, we mean commonly to express, not only the amount of the metal pieces which are annually paid to him, but the value of the goods which he can annually purchase or consume; we mean commonly to assertain what is or ought to be his way of living, or the quantity and quality of the necessaries and conveniencies of life in which he can with propriety indulge himself.

When, by any particular sum of money, we mean not only to express the amount of the metal pieces of which it is composed, but to include in its signification some obscure reference to the goods which can be had in exchange for them, the wealth or revenue which it in this case denotes, is equal only to one of the two values which are thus intimated somewhat ambiguously by the same word, and to the latter more properly than to the former, to the money's worth more properly than to the money.

Thus, if a guinea be the weekly pension of a particular person, he can in the course of the week purchase with it a certain quantity of subsistence, conveniencies, and amusements. In proportion as this quantity is great or small, so are his real riches, his real weekly revenue. His weekly revenue is certainly not equal both to the guinea and to what can be purchased with it, but only to one or other of those two equal values, and to the latter more properly than to the former, to the guinea's worth rather than to the guinea.

If the pension of such a person was paid to him, not in gold, but in a weekly bill for a guinea, his revenue surely would not so properly consist in the piece of paper, as in what he could get for it. A guinea may be considered as a bill for a certain quantity of necessaries and conveniencies upon all the tradesmen in the neighbourhood. The revenue of the person to whom it is paid, does not so properly consist in the piece of gold, as in what he can get for it, or in what he can exchange it for. If it could be exchanged for nothing, it would, like a bill upon a bankrupt, be of no more value than the most useless piece of paper.

Though the weekly or yearly revenue of all the different inhabitants of any country, in the same manner, may be, and in reality frequently is, paid to them in money, their real riches, however, the real weekly or yearly revenue of all of them taken together, must always be great or small, in proportion to the quantity of consumable goods which they can all of them purchase with this money. The whole revenue of all of them taken together is evidently not equal to both the money and the consumable goods, but only to one or other of those two values, and to the latter more properly than to the former.

Though we frequently, therefore, express a person's revenue by the metal pieces which are annually paid to him, it is because the amount of those pieces regulates the extent of his power of purchasing, or the value of the goods which he can annually afford to consume. We still consider his revenue as consisting in this power of purchasing or consuming, and not in the pieces which convey it.

But if this is sufficiently evident, even with regard to an individual, it is still more so with regard to a society. The amount of the metal pieces which are annually paid to an individual, is often precisely equal to his revenue, and is upon that account the shortest and best expression of its value. But the amount of the metal pieces which circulate in a society, can never be equal to the revenue of all its members. As the same guinea which pays the weekly pension of one man to-day, may pay that of another to-morrow, and that of a third the day thereafter, the amount of the metal pieces which annually circulate in any country, must always be of much less value than the whole money pensions annually paid with them. But the power of purchasing, or the goods which can successively be bought with the whole of those money pensions, as they are successively paid, must always be precisely of the same value with those pensions; as must likewise be the revenue of the different persons to whom they are paid. That revenue, therefore, cannot consist in those metal pieces, of which the amount is so much inferior to its value, but in the power of purchasing, in the goods which can successively be bought with them as they circulate from hand to hand.

Money, therefore, the great wheel of circulation, the great instrument of commerce, like all other instruments of trade, though it makes a part, and a very valuable part, of the capital, makes no part of the revenue of the society to which it belongs; and though the metal pieces of which it is composed, in the course of their annual circulation, distribute to every man the revenue which properly belongs to him, they make themselves no part of that revenue.

Thirdly, and lastly, the machines and instruments of trade, &c. which compose the fixed capital, bear this further resemblance to that part of the circulating capital which consists in money; that as every saving in the expense of erecting and supporting those machines, which does not diminish the introductive powers of labour, is an improvement of the neat revenue of the society; so every saving in the expense of collecting and supporting that part of the circulating capital which consists in money is an improvement of exactly the same kind.

It is sufficiently obvious, and it has partly, too, been explained already, in what manner every saving in the expense of supporting the fixed capital is an improvement of the neat revenue of the society. The whole capital of the undertaker of every work is necessarily divided between his fixed and his circulating capital. While his whole capital remains the same, the smaller the one part, the greater must necessarily be the other. It is the circulating capital which furnishes the materials and wages of labour, and puts industry into motion. Every saving, therefore, in the expense of maintaining the fixed capital, which does not diminish the productive powers of labour, must increase the fund which puts industry into motion, and consequently the annual produce of land and labour, the real revenue of every society.

The substitution of paper in the room of gold and silver money, replaces a very expensive instrument of commerce with one much less costly, and sometimes equally convenient. Circulation comes to be carried on by a new wheel, which it costs less both to erect and to maintain than the old one. But in what manner this operation is performed, and in what manner it tends to increase either the gross or the neat revenue of the society, is not altogether so obvious, and may therefore require some further explication.

There are several different sorts of paper money; but the circulating notes of banks and bankers are the species which is best known, and which seems best adapted for this purpose.

When the people of any particular country have such confidence in the fortune, probity and prudence of a particular banker, as to believe that he is always ready to pay upon demand such of his promissory notes as are likely to be at any time presented to him, those notes come to have the same currency as gold and silver money, from the confidence that such money can at any time be had for them.

A particular banker lends among his customers his own promissory notes, to the extent, we shall suppose, of a hundred thousand pounds. As those notes serve all the purposes of money, his debtors pay him the

same interest as if he had lent them so much money. This interest is the source of his gain. Though some of those notes are continually coming back upon him for payment, part of them continue to circulate for months and years together. Though he has generally in circulation, therefore, notes to the extent of a hundred thousand pounds, twenty thousand pounds in gold and silver may, frequently, be a sufficient provision for answering occasional demands. By this operation, therefore, twenty thousand pounds in gold and silver perform all the functions which a hundred thousand could otherwise have performed. The same exchanges may be made, the same quantity of consumable goods may be circulated and distributed to their proper consumers, by means of his promissory notes, to the value of a hundred thousand pounds, as by an equal value of gold and silver money. Eighty thousand pounds of gold and silver, therefore, can in this manner be spared from the circulation of the country; and if different operations of the same kind should, at the same time, be carried on by many different banks and bankers, the whole circulation may thus be conducted with a fifth part only of the gold and silver which would otherwise have been requisite.

Let us suppose, for example, that the whole circulating money of some particular country amounted, at a particular time, to one million sterling, that sum being then sufficient for circulating the whole annual produce of their land and labour; let us suppose, too, that some time thereafter, different banks and bankers issued promissory notes payable to the bearer, to the extent of one million, reserving in their different coffers two hundred thousand pounds for answering occasional demands; there would remain, therefore, in circulation, eight hundred thousand pounds in gold and silver, and a million of bank notes, or eighteen hundred thousand pounds of paper and money together. But the annual produce of the land and labour of the country had before required only one million to circulate and distribute it to its proper consumers, and that annual produce cannot be immediately augmented by those operations of banking. One million, therefore, will be sufficient to circulate it after them. The goods to be bought and sold being precisely the same as before, the same quantity of money will be sufficient for buying and selling them. The channel of circulation, if I may be allowed such an expression, will remain precisely the same as before. One million we have supposed sufficient to fill that channel. Whatever, therefore, is poured into it beyond this sum, cannot run into it, but must overflow. One million eight hundred thousand pounds are poured into it. Eight hundred thousand pounds, therefore, must overflow, that sum being over

and above what can be employed in the circulation of the country. But though this sum cannot be employed at home, it is too valuable to be allowed to lie idle. It will, therefore, be sent abroad, in order to seek that profitable employment which it cannot find at home. But the paper cannot go abroad; because at a distance from the banks which issue it, and from the country in which payment of it can be exacted by law, it will not be received in common payments. Gold and silver, therefore, to the amount of eight hundred thousand pounds, will be sent abroad, and the channel of home circulation will remain filled with a million of paper instead of a million of those metals which filled it before.

But though so great a quantity of gold and silver is thus sent abroad, we must not imagine that it is sent abroad for nothing, or that its proprietors make a present of it to foreign nations. They will exchange it for foreign goods of some kind or another, in order to supply the consumption either of some other foreign country, or of their own.

If they employ it in purchasing goods in one foreign country, in order to supply the consumption of another, or in what is called the carrying trade, whatever profit they make will be in addition to the neat revenue of their own country. It is like a new fund, created for carrying on a new trade; domestic business being now transacted by paper, and the gold and silver being converted into a fund for this new trade.

If they employ it in purchasing foreign goods for home consumption, they may either, first, purchase such goods as are likely to be consumed by idle people, who produce nothing, such as foreign wines, foreign silks, &c.; or, secondly, they may purchase an additional stock of materials, tools, and provisions, in order to maintain and employ an additional number of industrious people, who reproduce, with a profit, the value of their annual consumption.

So far as it is employed in the first way, is promotes prodigality, increases expense and consumption, without increasing production, or establishing any permanent fund for supporting that expense, and is in every respect hurtful to the society.

So far as it is employed in the second way, it promotes industry; and though it increases the consumption of the society, it provides a permanent fund for supporting that consumption; the people who consume reproducing, with a profit, the whole value of their annual consumption. The gross revenue of the society, the annual produce of their land and labour, is increased by the whole value which the labour of these workmen adds to the materials upon which they are employed, and

their neat revenue by what remains of this value, after deducting what is necessary for supporting the tools and instruments of their trade.

That the greater part of the gold and silver which being forced abroad by those operations of banking, is employed in purchasing foreign goods for home consumption, is, and must be, employed in purchasing those of this second kind, seems not only probable, but almost unavoidable. Though some particular men may sometimes increase their expense very considerably, though their revenue does not increase at all, we may be assured that no class or order of men ever does so; because, though the principles of common prudence do not always govern the conduct of every individual, they always influence that of the majority of every class or order. But the revenue of idle people, considered as a class or order, cannot, in the smallest degree, be increased by those operations of banking. Their expense in general, therefore, cannot be much increased by them, though that of a few individuals among them may, and in reality sometimes is. The demand of idle people, therefore, for foreign goods, being the same, or very nearly the same as before, a very small part of the money which, being forced abroad by those operations of banking, is employed in purchasing foreign goods for home consumption, is likely to be employed in purchasing those for their use. The greater part of it will naturally be destined for the employment of industry, and not for the maintenance of idleness.

When we compute the quantity of industry which the circulating capital of any society can employ, we must always have regard to those parts of it only which consist in provisions, materials, and finished work; the other, which consists in money, and which serves only to circulate those three, must always be deducted. In order to put industry into motion, three things are requisite; materials to work upon, tools to work with, and the wages or recompence for the sake of which the work is done. Money is neither a material to work upon, nor a tool to work with; and though the wages of the workman are commonly paid to him in money, his real revenue, like that of all other men, consists, not in the money, but in the money's worth; not in the metal pieces, but in what can be got for them.

The quantity of industry which any capital can employ, must evidently be equal to the number of workmen whom it can supply with materials, tools, and a maintenance suitable to the nature of the work. Money may be requisite for purchasing the materials and tools of the work, as well as the maintenance of the workmen; but the quantity of industry which the whole capital can employ, is certainly not equal both

to the money which purchases, and to the materials, tools, and maintenance, which are purchased with it, but only to one or other of those two values, and to the latter more properly than to the former.

When paper is substituted in the room of gold and silver money, the quantity of the materials, tools, and maintenance, which the whole circulating capital can supply, may be increased by the whole value of gold and silver which used to be employed in purchasing them. The whole value of the great wheel of circulation and distribution is added to the goods which are circulated and distributed by means of it. The operation, in some measure, resembles that of the undertaker of some great work, who, in consequence of some improvement in mechanics, takes down his old machinery, and adds the difference between its price and that of the new to his circulating capital, to the fund from which he furnishes materials and wages to his workmen.

What is the proportion which the circulating money of any country bears to the whole value of the annual produce circulated by means of it, it is perhaps impossible to determine. It has been computed by different authors at a fifth, at a tenth, at a twentieth, and at a thirtieth, part of that value. But how small soever the proportion which the circulating money may bear to the whole value of the annual produce, as but a part, and frequently but a small part, of that produce, is ever destined for the maintenance of industry, it must always bear a very considerable proportion to that part. When, therefore, by the substitution of paper, the gold and silver necessary for circulation is reduced to, perhaps, a fifth part of the former quantity, if the value of only the greater part of the other four-fifths be added to the funds which are destined for the maintenance of industry, it must make a very considerable addition to the quantity of that industry, and, consequently, to the value of the annual produce of land and labour.

An operation of this kind has, within these five-and-twenty or thirty years, been performed in Scotland, by the erection of new banking companies in almost every considerable town, and even in some country villages. The effects of it have been precisely those above described. The business of the country is almost entirely carried on by means of the paper of those different banking companies, with which purchases and payments of all kinds are commonly made. Silver very seldom appears, except in the change of a twenty shilling bank note, and gold still seldomer. But though the conduct of all those different companies has not been unexceptionable, and has accordingly required an act of parliament to regulate it, the country, notwithstanding, has evidently

derived great benefit from their trade. I have heard it asserted, that the trade of the city of Glasgow doubled in about fifteen years after the first erection of the banks there; and that the trade of Scotland has more than quadrupled since the first erection of the two public banks at Edinburgh; of which the one, called the Bank of Scotland, was established by act of parliament in 1695, and the other, called the Royal Bank, by royal charter in 1727. Whether the trade, either of Scotland in general, or of the city of Glasgow in particular, has really increased in so great a proportion, during so short a period, I do not pretend to know. If either of them has increased in this proportion, it seems to be an effect too great to be accounted for by the sole operation of this cause. That the trade and industry of Scotland, however, have increased very considerably during this period, and that the banks have contributed a good deal to this increase, cannot be doubted.

The value of the silver money which circulated in Scotland before the Union in 1707, and which, immediately after it, was brought into the Bank of Scotland, in order to be recoined, amounted to £411,117 : 10 : 9 sterling. No account has been got of the gold coin; but it appears from the ancient accounts of the mint of Scotland, that the value of the gold annually coined somewhat exceeded that of the silver[27*]. There were a good many people, too, upon this occasion, who, from a diffidence of repayment, did not bring their silver into the Bank of Scotland; and there was, besides, some English coin, which was not called in. The whole value of the gold and silver, therefore, which circulated in Scotland before the Union, cannot be estimated at less than a million sterling. It seems to have constituted almost the whole circulation of that country; for though the circulation of the Bank of Scotland, which had then no rival, was considerable, it seems to have made but a very small part of the whole. In the present times, the whole circulation of Scotland cannot be estimated at less than two millions, of which that part which consists in gold and silver, most probably, does not amount to half a million. But though the circulating gold and silver of Scotland have suffered so great a diminution during this period, its real riches and prosperity do not appear to have suffered any. Its agriculture, manufactures, and trade, on the contrary, the annual produce of its land and labour, have evidently been augmented.

It is chiefly by discounting bills of exchange, that is, by advancing money upon them before they are due, that the greater part of banks and bankers issue their promissory notes. They deduct always, upon whatever sum they advance, the legal interest till the bill shall become

due. The payment of the bill, when it becomes due, replaces to the bank the value of what had been advanced, together with a clear profit of the interest. The banker, who advances to the merchant whose bill he discounts, not gold and silver, but his own promissory notes, has the advantage of being able to discount to a greater amount by the whole value of his promissory notes, which he finds, by experience, are commonly in circulation. He is thereby enabled to make his clear gain of interest on so much a larger sum.

The commerce of Scotland, which at present is not very great, was still more inconsiderable when the two first banking companies were established; and those companies would have had but little trade, had they confined their business to the discounting of bills of exchange. They invented, therefore, another method of issuing their promissory notes; by granting what they called cash accounts, that is, by giving credit, to the extent of a certain sum (two or three thousand pounds for example), to any individual who could procure two persons of undoubted credit and good landed estate to become surety for him, that whatever money should be advanced to him, within the sum for which the credit had been given, should be repaid upon demand, together with the legal interest. Credits of this kind are, I believe, commonly granted by banks and bankers in all different parts of the world. But the easy terms upon which the Scotch banking companies accept of repayment are, so far as I know, peculiar to them, and have, perhaps, been the principal cause, both of the great trade of those companies, and of the benefit which the country has received from it.

Whoever has a credit of this kind with one of those companies, and borrows a thousand pounds upon it, for example, may repay this sum piece-meal, by twenty and thirty pounds at a time, the company discounting a proportionable part of the interest of the great sum, from the day on which each of those small sums is paid in, till the whole be in this manner repaid. All merchants, therefore, and almost all men of business, find it convenient to keep such cash accounts with them, and are thereby interested to promote the trade of those companies, by readily receiving their notes in all payments, and by encouraging all those with whom they have any influence to do the same. The banks, when their customers apply to them for money, generally advance it to them in their own promissory notes. These the merchants pay away to the manufacturers for goods, the manufacturers to the farmers for materials and provisions, the farmers to their landlords for rent; the landlords repay them to the merchants for the conveniencies and luxuries

with which they supply them, and the merchants again return them to the banks in order to balance their cash accounts, or to replace what they may have borrowed of them; and thus almost the whole money business of the country is transacted by means of them. Hence the great trade of those companies.

By means of those cash accounts, every merchant can, without imprudence, carry on a greater trade than he otherwise could do. If there are two merchants, one in London and the other in Edinburgh, who employ equal stocks in the same branch of trade, the Edinburgh merchant can, without imprudence, carry on a greater trade, and give employment to a greater number of people, than the London merchant. The London merchant must always keep by him a considerable sum of money, either in his own coffers, or in those of his banker, who gives him no interest for it, in order to answer the demands continually coming upon him for payment of the goods which he purchases upon credit. Let the ordinary amount of this sum be supposed five hundred pounds; the value of the goods in his warehouse must always be less, by five hundred pounds, than it would have been, had he not been obliged to keep such a sum unemployed. Let us suppose that he generally disposes of his whole stock upon hand, or of goods to the value of his whole stock upon hand, once in the year. By being obliged to keep so great a sum unemployed, he must sell in a year five hundred pounds worth less goods than he might otherwise have done. His annual profits must be less by all that he could have made by the sale of five hundred pounds worth more goods; and the number of people employed in preparing his goods for the market must be less by all those that five hundred pounds more stock could have employed. The merchant in Edinburgh, on the other hand, keeps no money unemployed for answering such occasional demands. When they actually come upon him, he satisfies them from his cash account with the bank, and gradually replaces the sum borrowed with the money or paper which comes in from the occasional sales of his goods. With the same stock, therefore, he can, without imprudence, have at all times in his warehouse a larger quantity of goods than the London merchant; and can thereby both make a greater profit himself, and give constant employment to a greater number of industrious people who prepare those goods for the market. Hence the great benefit which the country has derived from this trade.

The facility of discounting bills of exchange, it may be thought, indeed, gives the English merchants a conveniency equivalent to the cash accounts of the Scotch merchants. But the Scotch merchants, it must be

remembered, can discount their bills of exchange as easily as the English merchants; and have, besides, the additional conveniency of their cash accounts.

The whole paper money of every kind which can easily circulate in any country, never can exceed the value of the gold and silver, of which it supplies the place, or which (the commerce being supposed the same) would circulate there, if there was no paper money. If twenty shilling notes, for example, are the lowest paper money current in Scotland, the whole of that currency which can easily circulate there, cannot exceed the sum of gold and silver which would be necessary for transacting the annual exchanges of twenty shillings value and upwards usually transacted within that country. Should the circulating paper at any time exceed that sum, as the excess could neither be sent abroad nor be employed in the circulation of the country, it must immediately return upon the banks, to be exchanged for gold and silver. Many people would immediately perceive that they had more of this paper than was necessary for transacting their business at home; and as they could not send it abroad, they would immediately demand payment for it from the banks. When this superfluous paper was converted into gold and silver, they could easily find a use for it, by sending it abroad; but they could find none while it remained in the shape of paper. There would immediately, therefore, be a run upon the banks to the whole extent of this superfluous paper, and if they showed any difficulty or backwardness in payment, to a much greater extent; the alarm which this would occasion necessarily increasing the run.

Over and above the expenses which are common to every branch of trade, such as the expense of house-rent, the wages of servants, clerks, accountants, &c. the expenses peculiar to a bank consist chiefly in two articles: first, in the expense of keeping at all times in its coffers, for answering the occasional demands of the holders of its notes, a large sum of money, of which it loses the interest; and, secondly, in the expense of replenishing those coffers as fast as they are emptied by answering such occasional demands.

A banking company which issues more paper than can be employed in the circulation of the country, and of which the excess is continually returning upon them for payment, ought to increase the quantity of gold and silver which they keep at all times in their coffers, not only in proportion to this excessive increase of their circulation, but in a much greater proportion; their notes returning upon them much faster than in proportion to the excess of their quantity. Such a company, therefore,

ought to increase the first article of their expense, not only in proportion to this forced increase of their business, but in a much greater proportion.

The coffers of such a company, too, though they ought to be filled much fuller, yet must empty themselves much faster than if their business was confined within more reasonable bounds, and must require not only a more violent, but a more constant and uninterrupted exertion of expense, in order to replenish them. The coin, too, which is thus continually drawn in such large quantities from their coffers, cannot be employed in the circulation of the country. It comes in place of a paper which is over and above what can be employed in that circulation, and is, therefore, over and above what can be employed in it too. But as that coin will not be allowed to lie idle, it must, in one shape or another, be sent abroad, in order to find that profitable employment which it cannot find at home; and this continual exportation of gold and silver, by enhancing the difficulty, must necessarily enhance still farther the expense of the bank, in finding new gold and silver in order to replenish those coffers, which empty themselves so very rapidly. Such a company, therefore, must in proportion to this forced increase of their business, increase the second article of their expense still more than the first.

Let us suppose that all the paper of a particular bank, which the circulation of the country can easily absorb and employ, amounts exactly to forty thousand pounds, and that, for answering occasional demands, this bank is obliged to keep at all times in its coffers ten thousand pounds in gold and silver. Should this bank attempt to circulate forty-four thousand pounds, the four thousand pounds which are over and above what the circulation can easily absorb and employ, will return upon it almost as fast as they are issued. For answering occasional demands, therefore, this bank ought to keep at all times in its coffers, not eleven thousand pounds only, but fourteen thousand pounds. It will thus gain nothing by the interest of the four thousand pounds excessive circulation; and it will lose the whole expense of continually collecting four thousand pounds in gold and silver, which will be continually going out of its coffers as fast as they are brought into them.

Had every particular banking company always understood and attended to its own particular interest, the circulation never could have been overstocked with paper money. But every particular banking company has not always understood or attended to its own particular interest, and the circulation has frequently been overstocked with paper money.

By issuing too great a quantity of paper, of which the excess was continually returning, in order to be exchanged for gold and silver, the Bank of England was for many years together obliged to coin gold to the extent of between eight hundred thousand pounds and a million a-year; or, at an average, about eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds. For this great coinage, the bank (in consequence of the worn and degraded state into which the gold coin had fallen a few years ago) was frequently obliged to purchase gold bullion at the high price of four pounds an ounce, which it soon after issued in coin at L.3 : 17 : 10½ an ounce, losing in this manner between two and a half and three per cent. upon the coinage of so very large a sum. Though the bank, therefore, paid no seignorage, though the government was properly at the expense of this coinage, this liberality of government did not prevent altogether the expense of the bank.

The Scotch banks, in consequence of an excess of the same kind, were all obliged to employ constantly agents at London to collect money for them, at an expense which was seldom below one and a half or two per cent. This money was sent down by the waggon, and insured by the carriers at an additional expense of three quarters per cent. or fifteen shillings on the hundred pounds. Those agents were not always able to replenish the coffers of their employers so fast as they were emptied. In this case, the resource of the banks was, to draw upon their correspondents in London bills of exchange, to the extent of the sum which they wanted. When those correspondents afterwards drew upon them for the payment of this sum, together with the interest and commission, some of those banks, from the distress into which their excessive circulation had thrown them, had sometimes no other means of satisfying this draught, but by drawing a second set of bills, either upon the same, or upon some other correspondents in London; and the same sum, or rather bills for the same sum, would in this manner make sometimes more than two or three journeys; the debtor bank paying always the interest and commission upon the whole accumulated sum. Even those Scotch banks which never distinguished themselves by their extreme imprudence, were sometimes obliged to employ this ruinous resource.

The gold coin which was paid out, either by the Bank of England or by the Scotch banks, in exchange for that part of their paper which was over and above what could be employed in the circulation of the country, being likewise over and above what could be employed in that circulation, was sometimes sent abroad in the shape of coin, sometimes

melted down and sent abroad in the shape of bullion, and sometimes melted down and sold to the Bank of England at the high price of four pounds an ounce. It was the newest, the heaviest, and the best pieces only, which were carefully picked out of the whole coin, and either sent abroad or melted down. At home, and while they remained in the shape of coin, these heavy pieces were of no more value than the light; but they were of more value abroad, or when melted down into bullion at home. The Bank of England, notwithstanding their great annual coinage, found, to their astonishment, that there was every year the same scarcity of coin as there had been the year before; and that, notwithstanding the great quantity of good and new coin which was every year issued from the bank, the state of the coin, instead of growing better and better, became every year worse and worse. Every year they found themselves under the necessity of coining nearly the same quantity of gold as they had coined the year before; and from the continual rise in the price of gold bullion, in consequence of the continual wearing and clipping of the coin, the expense of this great annual coinage became, every year, greater and greater. The Bank of England, it is to be observed, by supplying its own coffers with coin, is indirectly obliged to supply the whole kingdom, into which coin is continually flowing from those coffers in a great variety of ways. Whatever coin, therefore, was wanted to support this excessive circulation both of Scotch and English paper money, whatever vacuities this excessive circulation occasioned in the necessary coin of the kingdom, the Bank of England was obliged to supply them. The Scotch banks, no doubt, paid all of them very dearly for their own imprudence and inattention: but the Bank of England paid very dearly, not only for its own imprudence, but for the much greater imprudence of almost all the Scotch banks.

The over-trading of some bold projectors in both parts of the united kingdom, was the original cause of this excessive circulation of paper money.

What a bank can with propriety advance to a merchant or undertaker of any kind, is not either the whole capital with which he trades, or even any considerable part of that capital; but that part of it only which he would otherwise be obliged to keep by him unemployed and in ready money, for answering occasional demands. If the paper money which the bank advances never exceeds this value, it can never exceed the value of the gold and silver which would necessarily circulate in the country if there was no paper money; it can never exceed the quantity which the circulation of the country can easily absorb and employ.

When a bank discounts to a merchant a real bill of exchange, drawn by a real creditor upon a real debtor, and which, as soon as it becomes due, is really paid by that debtor; it only advances to him a part of the value which he would otherwise be obliged to keep by him unemployed and in ready money, for answering occasional demands. The payment of the bill, when it becomes due, replaces to the bank the value of what it had advanced, together with the interest. The coffers of the bank, so far as its dealings are confined to such customers, resemble a water-pond, from which, though a stream is continually running out, yet another is continually running in, fully equal to that which runs out; so that, without any further care or attention, the pond keeps always equally, or very near equally full. Little or no expense can ever be necessary for replenishing the coffers of such a bank.

A merchant, without over-trading, may frequently have occasion for a sum of ready money, even when he has no bills to discount. When a bank, besides discounting his bills, advances him likewise, upon such occasions, such sums upon his cash account, and accepts of a piece-meal repayment, as the money comes in from the occasional sale of his goods, upon the easy terms of the banking companies of Scotland; it dispenses him entirely from the necessity of keeping any part of his stock by him unemployed and in ready money for answering occasional demands. When such demands actually come upon him, he can answer them sufficiently from his cash account. The bank, however, in dealing with such customers, ought to observe with great attention, whether, in the course of some short period (of four, five, six, or eight months, for example), the sum of the repayments which it commonly receives from them, is, or is not, fully equal to that of the advances which it commonly makes to them. If, within the course of such short periods, the sum of the repayments from certain customers is, upon most occasions, fully equal to that of the advances, it may safely continue to deal with such customers. Though the stream which is in this case continually running out from its coffers may be very large, that which is continually running into them must be at least equally large: so that, without any further care or attention, those coffers are likely to be always equally or very near equally full, and scarce ever to require any extraordinary expense to replenish them. If, on the contrary, the sum of the repayments from certain other customers, falls commonly very much short of the advances which it makes to them, it cannot with any safety continue to deal with such customers, at least if they continue to deal with it in this manner. The stream which is in this case continually running out from its coffers,

is necessarily much larger than that which is continually running in; so that, unless they are replenished by some great and continual effort of expense, those coffers must soon be exhausted altogether.

The banking companies of Scotland, accordingly, were for a long time very careful to require frequent and regular repayments from all their customers, and did not care to deal with any person, whatever might be his fortune or credit, who did not make, what they called, frequent and regular operations with them. By this attention, besides saving almost entirely the extraordinary expense of replenishing their coffers, they gained two other very considerable advantages.

First, by this attention they were enabled to make some tolerable judgment concerning the thriving or declining circumstances of their debtors, without being obliged to look out for any other evidence besides what their own books afforded them; men being, for the most part, either regular or irregular in their repayments, according as their circumstances are either thriving or declining. A private man who lends out his money to perhaps half a dozen or a dozen of debtors, may, either by himself or his agents, observe and inquire both constantly and carefully into the conduct and situation of each of them. But a banking company, which lends money to perhaps five hundred different people, and of which the attention is continually occupied by objects of a very different kind, can have no regular information concerning the conduct and circumstances of the greater part of its debtors, beyond what its own books afford it. In requiring frequent and regular repayments from all their customers, the banking companies of Scotland had probably this advantage in view.

Secondly, by this attention they secured themselves from the possibility of issuing more paper money than what the circulation of the country could easily absorb and employ. When they observed, that within moderate periods of time, the repayments of a particular customer were, upon most occasions, fully equal to the advances which they had made to him, they might he assured that the paper money which they had advanced to him had not, at any time, exceeded the quantity of gold and silver which he would otherwise have been obliged to keep by him for answering occasional demands; and that, consequently, the paper money, which they had circulated by his means, had not at any time exceeded the quantity of gold and silver which would have circulated in the country, had there been no paper money. The frequency, regularity, and amount of his repayments, would sufficiently demonstrate that the amount of their advances had at no time exceeded that part of his capital which he would otherwise have been obliged to keep by him unemployed, and in ready

money, for answering occasional demands; that is, for the purpose of keeping the rest of his capital in constant employment. It is this part of his capital only which, within moderate periods of time, is continually returning in every dealer in the shape of money, whether paper or coin, and continually going from him in the same shape. If the advances of the bank had commonly exceeded this part of his capital, the ordinary amount of his repayments could not, within moderate periods of time, have equalled the ordinary amount of its advances. The stream which, by means of his dealings, was continually running into the coffers of the bank, could not have been equal to the stream which, by means of the same dealings was continually running out. The advances of the bank paper, by exceeding the quantity of gold and silver which, had there been no such advances, he would have been obliged to keep by him for answering occasional demands, might soon come to exceed the whole quantity of gold and silver which (the commerce being supposed the same) would have circulated in the country, had there been no paper money; and, consequently, to exceed the quantity which the circulation of the country could easily absorb and employ; and the excess of this paper money would immediately have returned upon the bank, in order to be exchanged for gold and silver. This second advantage, though equally real, was not, perhaps, so well understood by all the different banking companies in Scotland as the first.

When, partly by the conveniency of discounting bills, and partly by that of cash accounts, the creditable traders of any country can be dispensed from the necessity of keeping any part of their stock by them unemployed, and in ready money, for answering occasional demands, they can reasonably expect no farther assistance from banks and bankers, who, when they have gone thus far, cannot, consistently with their own interest and safety, go farther. A bank cannot, consistently with its own interest, advance to a trader the whole, or even the greater part of the circulating capital with which he trades; because, though that capital is continually returning to him in the shape of money, and going from him in the same shape, yet the whole of the returns is too distant from the whole of the outgoings, and the sum of his the repayments could not equal the sum of his advances within much moderate periods of time as suit the conveniency of a bank. Still less could a bank afford to advance him any considerable part of his fixed capital; of the capital which the undertaker of an iron forge, for example, employs in erecting his forge and smelting-houses, his work-houses, and warehouses, the dwelling-houses of his workmen, &c.; of the capital which the undertaker of a

mine employs in sinking his shafts, in erecting engines for drawing out the water, in making roads and waggon-ways, &c.; of the capital which the person who undertakes to improve land employs in clearing, draining, inclosing, manuring, and ploughing waste and uncultivated fields; in building farm-houses, with all their necessary appendages of stables, granaries, &c. The returns of the fixed capital are, in almost all cases, much slower than those of the circulating capital: and such expenses, even when laid out with the greatest prudence and judgment, mean very seldom return to the undertaker till after period of many years, a period by far too distant to suit the conveniency of a bank. Traders and other undertakers may, no doubt with great propriety, carry on a very considerable part of their projects with borrowed money. In justice to their creditors, however, their own capital ought in this case to be sufficient to insure, if I may say so, the capital of those creditors; or to render it extremely improbable that those creditors should incur any loss, even though the success of the project should fall very much short of the expectation of the projectors. Even with this precaution, too, the money which is borrowed, and which it is meant should not be repaid till after a period of several years, ought not to be borrowed of a bank, but ought to be borrowed upon bond or mortgage, of such private people as propose to live upon the interest of their money, without taking the trouble themselves to employ the capital, and who are, upon that account, willing to lend that capital to such people of good credit as are likely lo keep it for several years. A bank, indeed, which lends its money without the expense of stamped paper, or of attorneys' fees for drawing bonds and mortgages, and which accepts of repayment upon the easy terms of the banking companies of Scotland, would, no doubt, be a very convenient creditor to such traders and undertakers. But such traders and undertakers would surely be most inconvenient debtors to such a bank.

It is now more than five and twenty years since the paper money issued by the different banking companies of Scotland was fully equal, or rather was somewhat more than fully equal, to what the circulation of the country could easily absorb and employ. Those companies, therefore, had so long ago given all the assistance to the traders and other undertakers of Scotland which it is possible for banks and bankers, consistently with their own interest, to give. They had even done somewhat more. They had over-traded a little, and had brought upon themselves that loss, or at least that diminution of profit, which, in this particular business, never fails to attend the smallest degree of over-trading. Those traders and other undertakers, having got so much

assistance from banks and bankers, wished to get still more. The banks, they seem to have thought, could extend their credits to whatever sum might be wanted, without incurring any other expense besides that of a few reams of paper. They complained of the contracted views and dastardly spirit of the directors of those banks, which did not, they said, extend their credits in proportion to the extension of the trade of the country; meaning, no doubt, by the extension of that trade, the extension of their own projects beyond what they could carry on either with their own capital, or with what they had credit to borrow of private people in the usual way of bond or mortgage. The banks, they seem to have thought, were in honour bound to supply the deficiency, and to provide them with all the capital which they wanted to trade with. The banks, however, were of a different opinion and upon their refusing to extend their credits, some of those traders had recourse to an expedient which, for a time, served their purpose, though at a much greater expense, yet as effectually as the utmost extension of bank credits could have done. This expedient was no other than the well known shift of drawing and redrawing; the shift to which unfortunate traders have sometimes recourse, when they are upon the brink of bankruptcy. The practice of raising money in this manner had been long known in England; and, during the course of the late war, when the high profits of trade afforded a great temptation to over-trading, is said to have been carried on to a very great extent. From England it was brought into Scotland, where, in proportion to the very limited commerce, and to the very moderate capital of the country, it was soon carried on to a much greater extent than it ever had been in England.

The practice of drawing and redrawing is so well known to all men of business, that it may, perhaps, be thought unnecessary to give any account of it. But as this book may come into the hands of many people who are not men of business, and as the effects of this practice upon the banking trade are not, perhaps, generally understood, even by men of business themselves, I shall endeavour to explain it as distinctly as I can.

The customs of merchants, which were established when the barbarous laws of Europe did not enforce the performance of their contracts, and which, during the course of the two last centuries, have been adopted into the laws of all European nations, have given such extraordinary privileges to bills of exchange, that money is more readily advanced upon them than upon any other species of obligation; especially when they are made payable within so short a period as two or three months after their date. If, when the bill becomes due, the acceptor

does not pay it as soon as it is presented, he becomes from that moment a bankrupt. The bill is protested, and returns upon the drawer, who, if he does not immediately pay it, becomes likewise a bankrupt. If, before it came to the person who presents it to the acceptor for payment, it had passed through the hands of several other persons, who had successively advanced to one another the contents of it, either in money or goods, and who, to express that each of them had in his turn received those contents, had all of them in their order indorsed, that is, written their names upon the back of the bill; each indorser becomes in his turn liable to the owner of the bill for those contents, and, if he fails to pay, he becomes too, from that moment, a bankrupt. Though the drawer, acceptor, and indorsers of the bill, should all of them be persons of doubtful credit; yet, still the shortness of the date gives some security to the owner of the bill. Though all of them may be very likely to become bankrupts, it is a chance if they all become so in so short a time. The house is crazy, says a weary traveller to himself, and will not stand very long; but it is a chance if it falls to-night, and I will venture, therefore, to sleep in it to-night.

The trader A in Edinburgh, we shall suppose, draws a bill upon B in London, payable two months after date. In reality B in London owes nothing to A in Edinburgh; but he agrees to accept of A’s bill, upon condition, that before the term of payment he shall redraw upon A in Edinburgh for the same sum, together with the interest and a commission, another bill, payable likewise two months after date. B accordingly, before the expiration of the first two months, redraws this bill upon A in Edinburgh; who, again before the expiration of the second two months, draws a second bill upon B in London, payable likewise two months after date; and before the expiration of the third two months, B in London redraws upon A in Edinburgh another bill payable also two months after date. This practice has sometimes gone on, not only for several months, but for several years together, the bill always returning upon A in Edinburgh with the accumulated interest and commission of all the former bills. The interest was five per cent. in the year, and the commission was never less than one half per cent. on each draught. This commission being repeated more than six times in the year, whatever money A might raise by this expedient might necessarily have cost him something more than eight per cent in the year and sometimes a great deal more, when either the price of the commission happened to rise, or when he was obliged to pay compound interest upon the interest and commission of former bills. This practice was called raising money by circulation.

In a country where the ordinary profits of stock, in the greater part of mercantile projects, are supposed to run between six and ten per cent. it must have been a very fortunate speculation, of which the returns could not only repay the enormous expense at which the money was thus borrowed for carrying it on, but afford, besides, a good surplus profit to the projector. Many vast and extensive projects, however, were undertaken, and for several years carried on, without any other fund to support them besides what was raised at this enormous expense. The projectors, no doubt, had in their golden dreams the most distinct vision of this great profit. Upon their awakening, however, either at the end of their projects, or when they were no longer able to carry them on, they very seldom, I believe, had the good fortune to find it.[28*]

The bills which A in Edinburgh drew upon B in London, he regularly discounted two months before they were due, with some bank or banker in Edinburgh; and the bills which B in London redrew upon A in Edinburgh, he as regularly discounted, either with the Bank of England, or with some other banker in London. Whatever was advanced upon such circulating bills was in Edinburgh advanced in the paper of the Scotch banks; and in London, when they were discounted at the Bank of England in the paper of that bank. Though the bills upon which this paper had been advanced were all of them repaid in their turn as soon as they became due, yet the value which had been really advanced upon the last bill was never really returned to the banks which advanced it, because, before each bill became due, another bill was always drawn to somewhat a greater amount than the bill which was soon to be paid: and the discounting of this other bill was essentially necessary towards the payment of that which was soon to be due. This payment, therefore, was altogether fictitious. The stream which, by means of those circulating bills of exchange, had once been made to run out from the coffers of the banks, was never replaced by any stream which really run into them.

The paper which was issued upon those circulating bills of exchange amounted, upon many occasions, to the whole fund destined for carrying on some vast and extensive project of agriculture, commerce, or manufactures; and not merely to that part of it which, had there been no paper money, the projector would have been obliged to keep by him unemployed, and in ready money, for answering occasional demands. The greater part of this paper was, consequently, over and above the value of the gold and silver which would have circulated in the country, had there been no paper money. It was over and above, therefore, what the circulation of the country could easily absorb and employ, and upon

that account, immediately returned upon the banks, in order to be exchanged for gold and silver, which they were to find as they could. It was a capital which those projectors had very artfully contrived to draw from those banks, not only without their knowledge or deliberate consent, but for some time, perhaps, without their having the most distant suspicion that they had really advanced it.

When two people, who are continually drawing and redrawing upon one another, discount their bills always with the same banker, he must immediately discover what they are about, and see clearly that they are trading, not with any capital of their own, but with the capital which he advances to them. But this discovery is not altogether so easy when they discount their bills sometimes with one banker, and sometimes with another, and when the two same persons do not constantly draw and redraw upon one another, but occasionally run the round of a great circle of projectors, who find it for their interest to assist one another in this method of raising money and to render it, upon that account, as difficult as possible to distinguish between a real and a fictitious bill of exchange, between a bill drawn by a real creditor upon a real debtor, and a bill for which there was properly no real creditor but the bank which discounted it, nor any real debtor but the projector who made use of the money. When a banker had even made this discovery, he might sometimes make it too late, and might find that he had already discounted the bills of those projectors to so great an extent, that, by refusing to discount any more, he would necessarily make them all bankrupts; and thus by ruining them, might perhaps ruin himself. For his own interest and safety, therefore, he might find it necessary, in this very perilous situation, to go on for some time, endeavouring, however, to withdraw gradually, and, upon that account, making every day greater and greater difficulties about discounting, in order to force these projectors by degrees to have recourse, either to other bankers, or to other methods of raising money: so as that he himself might, as soon as possible, get out of the circle. The difficulties, accordingly, which the Bank of England, which the principal bankers in London, and which even the more prudent Scotch banks began, after a certain time, and when all of them had already gone too far, to make about discounting, not only alarmed, but enraged, in the highest degree, those projectors. Their own distress, of which this prudent and necessary reserve of the banks was, no doubt, the immediate occasion, they called the distress of the country; and this distress of the country, they said, was altogether owing to the ignorance, pusillanimity, and bad conduct of the banks, which did not give a sufficiently-liberal

aid to the spirited undertakings of those who exerted themselves in order to beautify, improve, and enrich the country. It was the duty of the banks, they seemed to think, to lend for as long a time, and to as great an extent, as they might wish to borrow. The banks, however, by refusing in this manner to give more credit to those to whom they had already given a great deal too much, took the only method by which it was now possible to save either their own credit, or the public credit of the country.

In the midst of this clamour and distress, a new bank was established in Scotland, for the express purpose of relieving the distress of the country. The design was generous; but the execution was imprudent, and the nature and causes of the distress which it meant to relieve, were not, perhaps, well understood. This bank was more liberal then any other had ever been, both in granting cash-accounts, and in discounting bills of exchange. With regard to the latter, it seems to have made scarce any distinction between real and circulating bills, but to have discounted all equally. It was the avowed principle of this bank to advance upon any reasonable security, the whole capita, which was to be employed in those improvements of which the returns are the most slow and distant, such as the improvements of land. To promote such improvements was even said to be the chief or the public-spirited purposes for which it was instituted. By its liberality in granting cash-accounts, and in discounting bills of exchange, it, no doubt, issued great quantities of its bank notes. But those bank notes being, the greater part of them, over and above what the circulation of the country could easily absorb and employ, returned upon it, in order to be exchanged for gold and silver, as fast as they were issued. Its coffers were never well filled. The capital which had been subscribed to this bank, at two different subscriptions, amounted to one hundred and sixty thousand pounds, of which eighty per cent. only was paid up. This sum ought to have been paid in at several different instalments. A great part of the proprietors, when they paid in their first instalment, opened a cash-account with the bank; and the directors, thinking themselves obliged to treat their own proprietors with the same liberality with which they treated all other man, allowed many of them to borrow upon this cash-account what they paid in upon all their subsequent instalments. Such payments, therefore, only put into one coffer what had the moment before been taken out of another. But had the coffers of this bank been filled ever so well, its excessive circulation must have emptied them faster than they could have been replenished by any other expedient but the ruinous one of drawing upon London; and when the bill became due, paying it, together with interest and

commission, by another draught upon the same place. Its coffers having been filled so very ill, it is said to have been driven to this resource within a very few months after it began to do business. The estates of the proprietors of this bank were worth several millions, and, by their subscription to the original bond or contract of the bank, were really pledged for answering all its engagements. By means of the great credit which so great a pledge necessarily gave it, it was, notwithstanding its too liberal conduct, enabled to entry on business for more than two years. When it was obliged to stop, it had in the circulation about two hundred thousand pounds in bank notes. In order to support the circulation of those notes, which were continually returning upon it as fast as they were issued, it had been constantly in the practice of drawing bills of exchange upon London, of which the number and value were continually increasing, and, when it stopt, amounted to upwards of six hundred thousand pounds. This bank, therefore, had, in little more than the course of two years, advanced to different people upwards of eight hundred thousand pounds at five per cent. Upon the two hundred thousand pounds which it circulated in bank notes, this five per cent. might perhaps be considered as a clear gain, without any other deduction besides the expense of management. But upon upwards of six hundred thousand pounds, for which it was continually drawing bills of exchange upon London, it was paying, in the way of interest and commission, upwards of eight per cent. and was consequently losing more than three per cent. upon more than three-fourths of all its dealings.

The operations of this bank seem to have produced effects quite opposite to those which were intended by the particular persons who planned and directed it. They seem to have intended to support the spirited undertakings, for as such they considered them, which were at that time carrying on in different parts of the country; and, at the some time, by drawing the whole banking business to themselves, to supplant all the other Scotch banks, particularly those established at Edinburgh, whose backwardness in discounting bills of exchange had given some offence. This bank, no doubt, gave some temporary relief to those projectors, and enabled them to carry on their projects for about two years longer than they could otherwise have done. But it thereby only enabled them to get so much deeper into debt; so that, when rain came, it fell so much the heavier both upon them and upon their their creditors. The operations of this bank, therefore, instead of relieving, in reality aggravated in the long-run the distress which those projectors had brought both upon themselves and upon their country. It would have

been much better for themselves, their creditors, and their country, had the greater part of them been obliged to stop two years sooner than they actually did. The temporary relief, however, which this bank afforded to those projectors, proved a real and permanent relief to the other Scotch banks. All the dealers in circulating bills of exchange, which those other banks had become so backward in discounting, had recourse to this new bank, where they were received with open arms. Those other banks, therefore, were enabled to get very easily out of that fatal circle, from which they could not otherwise have disengaged themselves without incurring a considerable loss, and perhaps, too, even some degree of discredit.

In the long-run, therefore, the operations of this bank increased the real distress of the country, which it meant to relieve; and effectually relieved, from a very great distress, those rivals whom it meant to supplant.

At the first setting out of this bank, it was the opinion of some people, that how fast soever its coffers might be emptied, it might easily replenish them, by raising money upon the securities of those to whom it had advanced its paper. Experience, I believe, soon convinced them that this method of raising money was by much too slow to answer their purpose; and that coffers which originally were so ill filled, and which emptied themselves so very fast, could be replenished by no other expedient but the ruinous one of drawing bills upon London, and when they became due, paying them by other draughts on the same place, with accumulated interest and commission. But though they had been able by this method to raise money as fast as they wanted it, yet, instead of making a profit, they must have suffered a loss of every such operation; so that in the long-run they must have ruined themselves as a mercantile company, though perhaps not so soon as by the more expensive practice of drawing and redrawing. They could still have made nothing by the interest of the paper, which, being over and above what the circulation of the country could absorb and employ, returned upon them in order to be exchanged for gold and silver, as fast as they issued it; and for the payment of which they were themselves continually obliged to borrow money. On the contrary, the whole expense of this borrowing, of employing agents to look out for people who had money to lend, of negotiating with those people, and of drawing the proper bond or assignment, must have fallen upon them, and have been so much clear loss upon the balance of their accounts. The project of replenishing their coffers in this manner may be compared to that of a man who had a

water-pond from which a stream was continually running out, and into which no stream was continually running, but who proposed to keep it always equally full, by employing a number of people to go continually with buckets to a well at some miles distance, in order to bring water to replenish it.

But though this operation had proved not only practicable, but profitable to the bank, as a mercantile company; yet the country could have derived no benefit from it, but, on the contrary, must have suffered a very considerable loss by it. This operation could not augment, in the smallest degree, the quantity of money to be lent. It could only have erected this bank into a sort of general loan office for the whole country. Those who wanted to borrow must have applied to this bank, instead of applying to the private persons who had lent it their money. But a bank which lends money, perhaps to five hundred different people, the greater part of whom its directors can know very little about, is not likely to be more judicious in the choice of its debtors than a private person who lends out his money among a few people whom he knows, and in whose sober and frugal conduct he thinks he has good reason to confide. The debtors of such a bank as that whose conduct I have been giving some account of were likely, the greater part of them, to be chimerical projectors, the drawers and redrawers of circulating bills of exchange, who would employ the money in extravagant undertakings, which, with all the assistance that could be given them, they would probably never be able to complete, and which, if they should be completed, would never repay the expense which they had really cost, would never afford a fund capable of maintaining a quantity of labour equal to that which had been employed about them. The sober and frugal debtors of private persons, on the contrary, would be more likely to employ the money borrowed in sober undertakings which were proportioned to their capitals, and which, though they might have less of the grand and the marvellous, would have more of the solid and the profitable; which would repay with a large profit whatever had been laid out upon them, and which would thus afford a fund capable of maintaining a much greater quantity of labour than that which had been employed about them. The success of this operation, therefore, without increasing in the smallest degree the capital of the country, would only have transferred a great part of it from prudent and profitable to imprudent and unprofitable undertakings.

That the industry of Scotland languished for want of money to employ it, was the opinion of the famous Mr Law. By establishing a bank of a particular kind, which he seems to have imagined might issue paper to

the amount of the whole value of all the lands in the country, he proposed to remedy this want of money. The parliament of Scotland, when he first proposed his project, did not think proper to adopt it. It was afterwards adopted, with some variations, by the Duke of Orleans, at that time regent of France. The idea of the possibility of multiplying paper money to almost any extent was the real foundation of what is called the Mississippi scheme, the most extravagant project, both of banking and stock-jobbing, that perhaps the world ever saw. The different operations of this scheme are explained so fully, so clearly, and with so much order and distinctness, by Mr Du Verney, in his Examination of the Political Reflections upon commerce and finances of Mr Du Tot, that I shall not give any account of them. The principles upon which it was founded are explained by Mr Law himself, in a discourse concerning money and trade, which he published in Scotland when he first proposed his project. The splendid but visionary ideas which are set forth in that and some other works upon the same principles, still continue to make an impression upon many people, and have, perhaps, in part, contributed to that excess of banking, which has of late been complained of, both in Scotland and in other places.

The Bank of England is the greatest bank of circulation in Europe. It was incorporated, in pursuance of an act of parliament, by a charter under the great seal, dated the 27th of July 1694. It at that time advanced to government the sum of L.1,200,000 for an annuity of L.100,000, or for L.96,000 a-year, interest at the rate of eight per cent. and L.4,000 a-year for the expense of management. The credit of the new government, established by the Revolution, we may believe, must have been very low, when it was obliged to borrow at so high an interest.

In 1697, the bank was allowed to enlarge its capital stock, by an ingraftment of L.1,001,171 : 10s. Its whole capital stock, therefore, amounted at this time to L.2,201,171 : 10s. This ingraftment is said to have been for the support of public credit. In 1696, tallies had been at forty, and fifty, and sixty per cent. discount, and bank notes at twenty per cent.[29*] During the great re-coinage of the silver, which was going on at this time, the bank had thought proper to discontinue the payment of its notes, which necessarily occasioned their discredit.

In pursuance of the 7th Anne, c. 7, the bank advanced and paid into the exchequer the sum of L.400,000; making in all the sum of L.1,600,000, which it had advanced upon its original annuity of L.96,000 interest, and L.4,000 for expense of management. In 1708, therefore, the credit of government was as good as that of private persons, since it

could borrow at six per cent. interest, the common legal and market rate of those times. In pursuance of the same act, the bank cancelled exchequer bills to the amount of L.1,775,027 17s. 10½d. at six per cent. interest, and was at the same time allowed to take in subscriptions for doubling its capital. In 1708, therefore, the capital of the bank amounted to L.4,402,343; and it had advanced to government the sum of L.3,375,027 : 17 : 10½.

By a call of fifteen per cent. in 1709, there was paid in, and made stock, L.656,204 : 1 : 9d.; and by another of ten per cent. in 1710, L.501,448 : 12 : 11. In consequence of those two calls, therefore, the bank capital amounted to L.5,559,995 : 14 : 8.

In pursuance of the 3d George I. c. 8, the bank delivered up two millions of exchequer bills to be cancelled. It had at this time, therefore, advanced to government L.5,375,027 : 17 : 10d. In pursuance of the 8th George I. c. 21, the bank purchased of the South-sea company, stock to the amount of L.4,000,000; and in 1722, in consequence of the subscriptions which it had taken in for enabling it to make this purchase, its capital stock was increased by L.3,400,000. At this time, therefore, the bank had advanced to the public L.9,375,027 17s. 10½d.; and its capital stock amounted only to L.8,959,995 : 14 : 8. It was upon this occasion that the sum which the bank had advanced to the public, and for which it received interest, began first to exceed its capital stock, or the sum for which it paid a dividend to the proprietors of bank stock; or, in other words, that the bank began to have an undivided capital, over and above its divided one. It has continued to have an undivided capital of the same kind ever since. In 1746, the bank had, upon different occasions, advanced to the public L.11,686,800, and its divided capital had been raised by different calls and subscriptions to L.10,780,000. The state of those two sums has continued to be the same ever since. In pursuance of the 4th of George III. c. 25, the bank agreed to pay to government for the renewal of its charter L.110,000, without interest or re-payment. This sum, therefore did not increase either of these two other sums.

The dividend of the bank has varied according to the variations in the rate of the interest which it has, at different times, received for the money it had advanced to the public, as well as according to other circumstances. This rate of interest has gradually been reduced from eight to three per cent. For some years past, the bank dividend has been at five and a half per cent.

The stability of the bank of England is equal to that of the British government. All that it has advanced to the public must be lost before its creditors can sustain any loss. No other banking company in England can be established by act of parliament, or can consist of more than six members. It acts, not only as an ordinary bank, but as a great engine of state. It receives and pays the greater part of the annuities which are due to the creditors of the public; it circulates exchequer bills; and it advances to government the annual amount of the land and malt taxes, which are frequently not paid up till some years thereafter. In these different operations, its duty to the public may sometimes have obliged it, without any fault of its directors, to overstock the circulation with paper money. It likewise discounts merchants' bills, and has upon several different occasions, supported the credit of the principal houses, not only of England, but of Hamburgh and Holland. Upon one occasion, in 1768, it is said to have advanced for this purpose, in one week, about L.1,600,000, a great part of it in bullion. I do not, however, pretend to warrant either the greatness of the sum, or the shortness of the time. Upon other occasions, this great company has been reduced to the necessity of paying in sixpences.

It is not by augmenting the capital of the country, but by rendering a greater part of that capital active and productive than would otherwise be so, that the must judicious operations of banking can increase the industry of the country. That part of his capital which a dealer is obliged to keep by him unemployed and in ready money, for answering occasional demands, is so much dead stock, which, so long as it remains in this situation, produces nothing, either to him or to his country. The judicious operations of banking enable him to convert this dead stock into active and productive stock; into materials to work upon; into tools to work with and into provisions and subsistence to work for; into stock which produces something both to himself and to his country. The gold and silver money which circulates in any country, and by means of which, the produce of its land and labour is annually circulated and distributed to the proper consumers, is, in the same manner as the ready money of the dealer, all dead stock. It is a very valuable part of the capital of the country, which produces nothing to the country. The judicious operations of banking, by substituting paper in the room of a great part of this gold and silver, enable the country to convert a great part of this dead stock into active and productive stock; into stock which produces something to the country. The gold and silver money which circulates in any country may very properly be compared to a highway,

which, while it circulates and carries to market all the grass and corn of the country, produces itself not a single pile of either. The judicious operations of banking, by providing, if I may be allowed so violent a metaphor, a sort of waggon-way through the air, enable the country to convert, as it were, a great part of its highways into good pastures, and corn fields, and thereby to increase, very considerably, the annual produce of its land and labour. The commerce and industry of the country, however, it must be acknowledged, though they may be somewhat augmented, cannot be altogether so secure, when they are thus, as it were, suspended upon the Dædalian wings of paper money, as when they travel about upon the solid ground of gold and silver. Over and above the accidents to which they are exposed from the unskilfulness of the conductors of this paper money, they are liable to several others, from which no prudence or skill of those conductors can guard them.

An unsuccessful war, for example, in which the enemy got possession of the capital, and consequently of that treasure which supported the credit of the paper money, would occasion much greater confusion in a country where the whole circulation was carried on by paper, than in one where the greater part of it was carried on by gold and silver. The usual instrument of commerce having lost its value, no exchanges could be made but either by barter or upon credit. All taxes having been usually paid in paper money, the prince would not have wherewithal either to pay his troops, or to furnish his magazines; and the state of the country would be much more irretrievable than if the greater part of its circulation had consisted in gold and silver. A prince, anxious to maintain his dominions at all times in the state in which he can most easily defend them, ought upon this account to guard not only against that excessive multiplication of paper money which ruins the very banks which issue it, but even against that multiplication of it which enables them to fill the greater part of the circulation of the country with it.

The circulation of every country may be considered as divided into two different branches; the circulation of the dealers with one another, and the circulation between the dealers and the consumers. Though the same pieces of money, whether paper or metal, may be employed sometimes in the one circulation and sometimes in the other; yet as both are constantly going on at the same time, each requires a certain stock of money, of one kind or another, to carry it on. The value of the goods circulated between the different dealers never can exceed the value of those circulated between the dealers and the consumers; whatever is bought by the dealers being ultimately destined to be sold to the

consumers. The circulation between the dealers, as it is carried on by wholesale, requires generally a pretty large sum for every particular transaction. That between the dealers and the consumers, on the contrary, as it is generally carried on by retail, frequently requires but very small ones, a shilling, or even a halfpenny, being often sufficient. But small sums circulate much faster than large ones. A shilling changes masters more frequently than a guinea, and a halfpenny more frequently than a shilling. Though the annual purchases of all the consumers, therefore, are at least equal in value to those of all the dealers, they can generally be transacted with a much smaller quantity of money; the same pieces, by a more rapid circulation, serving as the instrument of many more purchases of the one kind than of the other.

Paper money may be so regulated as either to confine itself very much to the circulation between the different dealers, or to extend itself likewise to a great part of that between the dealers and the consumers. Where no bank notes are circulated under £10 value, as in London, paper money confines itself very much to the circulation between the dealers. When a ten pound bank note comes into the hands of a consumer, he is generally obliged to change it at the first shop where he has occasion to purchase five shillings worth of goods; so that it often returns into the hands of a dealer before the consumer has spent the fortieth part of the money. Where bank notes are issued for so small sums as 20s. as in Scotland, paper money extends itself to considerable part of the circulation between dealers and consumers. Before the act of parliament which put a stop to the circulation of ten and five shilling notes, it filled a still greater part of that circulation. In the currencies of North America, paper was commonly issued for so small a sum as a shilling, and filled almost the whole of that circulation. In some paper currencies of Yorkshire, it was issued even for so small a sum as a sixpence.

Where the issuing of bank notes for such very small sums is allowed, and commonly practised, many mean people are both enabled and encouraged to become bankers. A person whose promissory note for £5, or even for 20s. would be rejected by everybody, will get it to be received without scruple when it is issued for so small a sum as a sixpence. But the frequent bankruptcies to which such beggarly bankers must be liable, may occasion a very considerable inconveniency, and sometimes even a very great calamity, to many poor people who had received their notes in payment.

It were better, perhaps, that no bank notes were issued in any part of the kingdom for a smaller sum than £5. Paper money would then,

probably, confine itself, in every part of the kingdom, to the circulation between the different dealers, as much as it does at present in London, where no bank notes are issued under L.10 value; L.5 being, in most part of the kingdom, a sum which, though it will purchase, perhaps, little more than half the quantity of goods, is as much considered, and is as seldom spent all at once, as L.10 are amidst the profuse expense of London.

Where paper money, it is to be observed, is pretty much confined to the circulation between dealers and dealers, as at London, there is always plenty of gold and silver. Where it extends itself to a considerable part of the circulation between dealers and consumers, as in Scotland, and still more in North America, it banishes gold and silver almost entirely from the country; almost all the ordinary transactions of its interior commerce being thus carried on by paper. The suppression of ten and five shilling bank notes, somewhat relieved the scarcity of gold and silver in Scotland; and the suppression of twenty shilling notes will probably relieve it still more. Those metals are said to have become more abundant in America, since the suppression or some of their paper currencies. They are said, likewise, to have been more abundant before the institution of those currencies.

Though paper money should be pretty much confined to the circulation between dealers and dealers, yet banks and bankers might still be able to give nearly the same assistance to the industry and commerce of the country, as they had done when paper money filled almost the whole circulation. The ready money which a dealer is obliged to keep by him, for answering occasional demands, is destined altogether for the circulation between himself and other dealers of whom he buys goods. He has no occasion to keep any by him for the circulation between himself and the consumers, who are his customers, and who bring ready money to him, instead of taking any from him. Though no paper money, therefore, was allowed to be issued, but for such sums as would confine it pretty much to the circulation between dealers and dealers; yet partly by discounting real bills of exchange, and partly by lending upon cash-accounts, banks and bankers might still be able to relieve the greater part of those dealers from the necessity of keeping any considerable part of their stock by them unemployed, and in ready money, for answering occasional demands. They might still be able to give the utmost assistance which banks and bankers can with propriety give to traders of every kind.

To restrain private people, it may be said, from receiving in payment the promissory notes of a banker for any sum, whether great or small, when they themselves are willing to receive them; or, to restrain a banker from issuing such notes, when all his neighbours are willing to accept of them, is a manifest violation of that natural liberty, which it is the proper business of law not to infringe, but to support. Such regulations may, no doubt, be considered as in some respect a violation of natural liberty. But those exertions of the natural liberty of a few individuals, which might endanger the security of the whole society, are, and ought to be, restrained by the laws of all governments; of the most free, as well as of the most despotical. The obligation of building party walls, in order to prevent the communication of fire, is a violation of natural liberty, exactly of the same kind with the regulations of the banking trade which are here proposed.

A paper money, consisting in bank notes, issued by people of undoubted credit, payable upon demand, without any condition, and, in fact, always readily paid as soon as presented, is, in every respect, equal in value to gold and silver money, since gold and silver money can at any time be had for it. Whatever is either bought or sold for such paper, must necessarily be bought or sold as cheap as it could have been for gold and silver.

The increase of paper money, it has been said, by augmenting the quantity, and consequently diminishing the value, of the whole currency, necessarily augments the money price of commodities. But as the quantity of gold and silver, which is taken from the currency, is always equal to the quantity of paper which is added to it, paper money does not necessarily increase the quantity of the whole currency. From the beginning of the last century to the present time, provisions never were cheaper in Scotland than in 1759, though, from the circulation of ten and five shilling bank notes, there was then more paper money in the country than at present. The proportion between the price of provisions in Scotland and that in England is the same now as before the great multiplication of banking companies in Scotland. Corn is, upon most occasions, fully as cheap in England as in France, though there is a great deal of paper money in England, and scarce any in France. In 1751 and 1752, when Mr Hume published his Political Discourses, and soon after the great multiplication of paper money in Scotland, there was a very sensible rise in the price of provisions, owing, probably, to the badness of the seasons, and not to the multiplication of paper money.

It would be otherwise, indeed, with a paper money, consisting in promissory notes, of which the immediate payment depended, in any respect, either upon the good will of those who issued them, or upon a condition which the holder of the notes might not always have it in his power to fulfil, or of which the payment was not exigible till after a certain number of years, and which, in the meantime, bore no interest. Such a paper money would, no doubt, fall more or less below the value of gold and silver, according as the difficulty or uncertainty of obtaining immediate payment was supposed to be greater or less, or according to the greater or less distance of time at which payment was exigible.

Some years ago the different banking companies of Scotland were in the practice of inserting into their bank notes, what they called an optional clause; by which they promised payment to the bearer, either as soon as the note should be presented, or, in the option of the directors, six months after such presentment, together with the legal interest for the said six months. The directors of some of those banks sometimes took advantage of this optional clause, and sometimes threatened those who demanded gold and silver in exchange for a considerable number of their notes, that they would take advantage of it, unless such demanders would content themselves with a part of what they demanded. The promissory notes of those banking companies constituted, at that time, the far greater part of the currency of Scotland, which this uncertainty of payment necessarily degraded below the value of gold and silver money. During the continuance of this abuse (which prevailed chiefly in 1762, 1763, and 1764), while the exchange between London and Carlisle was at par, that between London and Dumfries would sometimes be four per cent. against Dumfries, though this town is not thirty miles distant from Carlisle. But at Carlisle, bills were paid in gold and silver; whereas at Dumfries they were paid in Scotch bank notes; and the uncertainty of getting those bank notes exchanged for gold and silver coin, had thus degraded them four per cent. below the value of that coin. The same act of parliament which suppressed ten and five shilling bank notes, suppressed likewise this optional clause, and thereby restored the exchange between England and Scotland to its natural rate, or to what the course of trade and remittances might happen to make it.

In the paper currencies of Yorkshire, the payment of so small a sum as 6d. sometimes depended upon the condition, that the holder of the note should bring the change of a guinea to the person who issued it; a condition which the holders of such notes might frequently find it very difficult to fulfil, and which must have degraded this currency below the

value of gold and silver money. An act of parliament, accordingly, declared all such clauses unlawful, and suppressed, in the same manner as in Scotland, all promissory notes, payable to the bearer, under 20s. value.

The paper currencies of North America consisted, not in bank notes payable to the bearer on demand, but in a government paper, of which the payment was not exigible till several years after it was issued; and though the colony governments paid no interest to the holders of this paper, they declared it to be, and in fact rendered it, a legal tender of payment for the full value for which it was issued. But allowing the colony security to be perfectly good, L.100, payable fifteen years hence, for example, in a country where interest is at six per cent., is worth little more than L.40 ready money. To oblige a creditor, therefore, to accept of this as full payment for a debt of L.100, actually paid down in ready money, was an act of such violent injustice, as has scarce, perhaps, been attempted by the government of any other country which pretended to be free. It bears the evident marks of having originally been, what the honest and downright Doctor Douglas assures us it was, a scheme of fraudulent debtors to cheat their creditors. The government of Pennsylvania, indeed, pretended, upon their first emission of paper money, in 1722, to render their paper of equal value with gold and silver, by enacting penalties against all those who made any difference in the price of their goods when they sold them for a colony paper, and when they sold them for gold and silver; a regulation equally tyrannical, but much less effectual, than that which it was meant to support. A positive law may render a shilling a legal tender for a guinea, because it may direct the courts of justice to discharge the debtor who has made that tender; but no positive law can oblige a person who sells goods, and who is at liberty to sell or not to sell as he pleases, to accept of a shilling as equivalent to a guinea in the price of them. Notwithstanding any regulation of this kind, it appeared, by the course of exchange with Great Britain, that L.100 sterling was occasionally considered an equivalent, in some of the colonies, to L.130, and in others to so great a sum as L.1100 currency; this difference in the value arising from the difference in the quantity of paper emitted in the different colonies, and in the distance and probability of the term of its final discharge and redemption.

No law, therefore, could be more equitable than the act of parliament, so unjustly complained of in the colonies, which declared, that no paper currency to be emitted there in time coming, should be a legal tender of payment.

Pennsylvania was always more moderate in its emissions of paper money than any other of our colonies. Its paper currency, accordingly, is said never to have sunk below the value of the gold and silver which was current in the colony before the first emission of its paper money. Before that emission, the colony had raised the denomination of its coin, and had, by act of assembly, ordered 5s. sterling to pass in the colonies for 6s. 3d., and afterwards for 6s. 8d. A pound, colony currency, therefore, even when that currency was gold and silver, was more than thirty per cent. below the value of L.1 sterling; and when that currency was turned into paper, it was seldom much more than thirty per cent. below that value. The pretence for raising the denomination of the coin was to prevent the exportation of gold and silver, by making equal quantities of those metals pass for greater sums in the colony than they did in the mother country. It was found, however, that the price of all goods from the mother country rose exactly in proportion as they raised the denomination of their coin, so that their gold and silver were exported as fast as ever.

The paper of each colony being received in the payment of the provincial taxes, for the full value for which it had been issued, it necessarily derived from this use some additional value, over and above what it would have had, from the real or supposed distance of the term of its final discharge and redemption. This additional value was greater or less, according as the quantity of paper issued was more or less above what could be employed in the payment of the taxes of the particular colony which issued it. It was in all the colonies very much above what could be employed in this manner.

A prince, who should enact that a certain proportion of his taxes should be paid in a paper money of a certain kind, might thereby give a certain value to this paper money, even though the term of its final discharge and redemption should depend altogether upon the will of the prince. If the bank which issued this paper was careful to keep the quantity of it always somewhat below what could easily be employed in this manner, the demand for it might be such as to make it even bear a premium, or sell for somewhat more in the market than the quantity of gold or silver currency for which it was issued. Some people account in this manner for what is called the agio of the bank of Amsterdam, or for the superiority of bank money over current money, though this bank money, as they pretend, cannot be taken out of the bank at the will of the owner. The greater part of foreign bills of exchange must be paid in bank money, that is, by a transfer in the books of the bank, and the directors of

the bank, they allege, are careful to keep the whole quantity of bank money always below what this use occasions a demand for. It is upon this account, they say, the bank money sells for a premium, or bears an agio of four or five per cent. above the same nominal sum of the gold and silver currency of the country. This account of the bank of Amsterdam, however, it will appear hereafter, is in a great measure chimerical.

A paper currency which falls below the value of gold and silver coin, does not thereby sink the value of those metals, or occasion equal quantities of them to exchange for a smaller quantity of goods of any other kind. The proportion between the value of gold and silver and that of goods of any other kind, depends in all cases, not upon the nature and quantity of any particular paper money, which may be current in any particular country, but upon the richness or poverty of the mines, which happen at any particular time to supply the great market of the commercial world with those metals. It depends upon the proportion between the quantity of labour which is necessary in order to bring a certain quantity of gold and silver to market, and that which is necessary in order to bring thither a certain quantity of any other sort of goods.

If bankers are restrained from issuing any circulating bank notes, or notes payable to the bearer, for less than a certain sum; and if they are subjected to the obligation of an immediate and unconditional payment of such bank notes as soon as presented, their trade may, with safety to the public, be rendered in all other respects perfectly free. The late multiplication of banking companies in both parts of the united kingdom, an event by which many people have been much alarmed, instead of diminishing, increases the security of the public. It obliges all of them to be more circumspect in their conduct, and, by not extending their currency beyond its due proportion to their cash, to guard themselves against those malicious runs, which the rivalship of so many competitors is always ready to bring upon them. It restrains the circulation of each particular company within a narrower circle, and reduces their circulating notes to a smaller number. By dividing the whole circulation into a greater number of parts, the failure of any one company, an accident which, in the course of things, must sometimes happen, becomes of less consequence to the public. This free competition, too, obliges all bankers to be more liberal in their dealings with their customers, lest their rivals should carry them away. In general, if any branch of trade, or any division of labour, be advantageous to the public, the freer and more general the competition, it will always be the more so.

CHAP. III. OF THE ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL, OR OF PRODUCTIVE AND UNPRODUCTIVE LABOUR.

There is one sort of labour which adds to the value of the subject upon which it is bestowed; there is another which has no such effect. The former as it produces a value, may be called productive, the latter, unproductive[30]* labour. Thus the labour of a manufacturer adds generally to the value of the materials which he works upon, that of his own maintenance, and of his master's profit. The labour of a menial servant, on the contrary, adds to the value of nothing. Though the manufacturer has his wages advanced to him by his master, he in reality costs him no expense, the value of those wages being generally restored, together with a profit, in the improved value of the subject upon which his labour is bestowed. But the maintenance of a menial servant never is restored. A man grows rich by employing a multitude of manufacturers; he grows poor by maintaining a multitude of menial servants. The labour of the latter, however, has its value, and deserves its reward as well as that of the former. But the labour of the manufacturer fixes and realizes itself in some particular subject or vendible commodity, which lasts for some time at least after that labour is past. It is, as it were, a certain quantity of labour stocked and stored up, to be employed, if necessary, upon some other occasion. That subject, or, what is the same thing, the price of that subject, can afterwards, if necessary, put into motion a quantity of labour equal to that which had originally produced it. The labour of the menial servant, on the contrary, does not fix or realize itself in any particular subject or vendible commodity. His services generally perish in the very instant of their performance, and seldom leave any trace of value behind them, for which an equal quantity of service could afterwards be procured.

The labour of some of the most respectable orders in the society is, like that of menial servants, unproductive of any value, and does not fix or realize itself in any permanent subject, or vendible commodity, which endures after that labour is past, and for which an equal quantity of labour could afterwards be procured. The sovereign, for example, with all the officers both of justice and war who serve under him, the whole army and navy, are unproductive labourers. They are the servants of the public, and are maintained by a part of the annual produce of the industry

of other people. Their service, how honourable, how useful, or how necessary soever, produces nothing for which an equal quantity of service can afterwards be procured. The protection, security, and defence, of the commonwealth, the effect of their labour this year, will not purchase its protection, security, and defence, for the year to come. In the same class must be ranked, some both of the gravest and most important, and some of the most frivolous professions; churchmen, lawyers, physicians, men of letters of all kinds; players, buffoons, musicians, opera-singers, opera-dancers, &c. The labour of the meanest of these has a certain value, regulated by the very same principles which regulate that of every other sort of labour; and that of the noblest and most useful produces nothing which could afterwards purchase or procure an equal quantity of labour. Like the declamation of the actor, the harangue of the orator, or the tune of the musician, the work of all of them perishes in the very instant of its production.

Both productive and unproductive labourers, and those who do not labour at all, are all equally maintained by the annual produce of the land and labour of the country. This produce, how great soever, can never be infinite, but must have certain limits. According, therefore, as a smaller or greater proportion of it is in any one year employed in maintaining unproductive hands, the more in the one case, and the less in the other, will remain for the productive, and the next year’s produce will be greater or smaller accordingly; the whole annual produce, if we except the spontaneous productions of the earth, being the effect of productive labour.

Though the whole annual produce of the land and labour of every country is no doubt ultimately destined for supplying the consumption of its inhabitants, and for procuring a revenue to them; yet when it first comes either from the ground, or from the hands of the productive labourers, it naturally divides itself into two parts. One of them, and frequently the largest, is, in the first place, destined for replacing a capital, or for renewing the provisions, materials, and finished work, which had been withdrawn from a capital; the other for constituting a revenue either to the owner of this capital, as the profit of his stock, or to some other person, as the rent of his land. Thus, of the produce of land, one part replaces the capital of the farmer; the other pays his profit and the rent of the landlord; and thus constitutes a revenue both to the owner of this capital, as the profits of his stock, and to some other person as the rent of his land. Of the produce of a great manufactory, in the same manner, one part, and that always the largest, replaces the capital of the

undertaker of the work; the other pays his profit, and thus constitutes a revenue to the owner of this capital.

That part of the annual produce of the land and labour of any country which replaces a capital, never is immediately employed to maintain any but productive hands. It pays the wages of productive labour only. That which is immediately destined for constituting a revenue, either as profit or as rent, may maintain indifferently either productive or unproductive hands.

Whatever part of his stock a man employs as a capital, he always expects it to be replaced to him with a profit. He employs it, therefore, in maintaining productive hands only; and after having served in the function of a capital to him, it constitutes a revenue to them. Whenever he employs any part of it in maintaining unproductive hands of any kind, that part is from that moment withdrawn from his capital, and placed in his stock reserved for immediate consumption.

Unproductive labourers, and those who do not labour at all, are all maintained by revenue; either, first, by that part of the annual produce which is originally destined for constituting a revenue to some particular persons, either as the rent of land, or as the profits of stock; or, secondly, by that part which, though originally destined for replacing a capital, and for maintaining productive labourers only, yet when it comes into their hands, whatever part of it is over and above their necessary subsistence, may be employed in maintaining indifferently either productive or unproductive hands. Thus, not only the great landlord or the rich merchant, but even the common workman, if his wages are considerable, may maintain a menial servant; or he may sometimes go to a play or a puppet-show, and so contribute his share towards maintaining one set of unproductive labourers; or he may pay some taxes, and thus help to maintain another set, more honourable and useful, indeed, but equally unproductive. No part of the annual produce, however, which had been originally destined to replace a capital, is ever directed towards maintaining unproductive hands, till after it has put into motion its full complement of productive labour, or all that it could put into motion in the way in which it was employed. The workman must have earned his wages by work done, before he can employ any part of them in this manner. That part, too, is generally but a small one. It is his spare revenue only, of which productive labourers have seldom a great deal. They generally have some, however; and in the payment of taxes, the greatness of their number may compensate, in some measure, the smallness of their contribution. The rent of land and the profits of stock

are everywhere, therefore, the principal sources from which unproductive hands derive their subsistence. These are the two sorts of revenue of which the owners have generally most to spare. They might both maintain indifferently, either productive or unproductive hands. They seem, however, to have some predilection for the latter. The expense of a great lord feeds generally more idle than industrious people. The rich merchant, though with his capital he maintains industrious people only, yet by his expense, that is, by the employment of his revenue, he feeds commonly the very same sort as the great lord.

The proportion, therefore, between the productive and unproductive hands, depends very much in every country upon the proportion between that part of the annual produce, which, as soon as it comes either from the ground, or from the hands of the productive labourers, is destined for replacing a capital, and that which is destined for constituting a revenue, either as rent or as profit. This proportion is very different in rich from what it is in poor countries.

Thus, at present, in the opulent countries of Europe, every large, frequently the largest, portion of the produce of the land, is destined for replacing the capital of the rich and independent farmer; the other for paying his profits, and the rent of the landlord. But anciently, during the prevalency of the feudal government, a very small portion of the produce was sufficient to replace the capital employed in cultivation. It consisted commonly in a few wretched cattle, maintained altogether by the spontaneous produce of uncultivated land, and which might, therefore, be considered as a part of that spontaneous produce. It generally, too, belonged to the landlord, and was by him advanced to the occupiers of the land. All the rest of the produce properly belonged to him too, either as rent for his land, or as profit upon this paltry capital. The occupiers of land were generally bondmen, whose persons and effects were equally his property. Those who were not bondmen were tenants at will; and though the rent which they paid was often nominally little more than a quit-rent, it really amounted to the whole produce of the land. Their lord could at all times command their labour in peace and their service in war. Though they lived at a distance from his house, they were equally dependent upon him as his retainers who lived in it. But the whole produce of the land undoubtedly belongs to him, who can dispose of the labour and service of all those whom it maintains. In the present state of Europe, the share of the landlord seldom exceeds a third, sometimes not a fourth part of the whole produce of the land. The rent of land, however, in all the improved parts of the country, has been tripled and quadrupled

since those ancient times; and this third or fourth part of the annual produce is, it seems, three or four times greater than the whole had been before. In the progress of improvement, rent, though it increases in proportion to the extent, diminishes in proportion to the produce of the land.

In the opulent countries of Europe, great capitals are at present employed in trade and manufactures. In the ancient state, the little trade that was stirring, and the few homely and coarse manufactures that were carried on, required but very small capitals. These, however, must have yielded very large profits. The rate of interest was nowhere less than ten per cent. and their profits must have been sufficient to afford this great interest. At present, the rate of interest, in the improved parts of Europe, is nowhere higher than six per cent.; and in some of the most improved, it is so low as four, three, and two per cent. Though that part of the revenue of the inhabitants which is derived from the profits of stock, is always much greater in rich than in poor countries, it is because the stock is much greater; in proportion to the stock, the profits are generally much less.

That part of the annual produce, therefore, which, as soon as it comes either from the ground, or from the hands of the productive labourers, is destined for replacing a capital, is not only much greater in rich than in poor countries, but bears a much greater proportion to that which is immediately destined for constituting a revenue either as rent or as profit. The funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour are not only much greater in the former than in the latter, but bear a much greater proportion to those which, though they may be employed to maintain either productive or unproductive hands, have generally a predilection for the latter.

The proportion between those different funds necessarily determines in every country the general character of the inhabitants as to industry or idleness. We are more industrious than our forefathers, because, in the present times, the funds destined for the maintenance of industry are much greater in proportion to those which are likely to be employed in the maintenance of idleness, than they were two or three centuries ago. Our ancestors were idle for want of a sufficient encouragement to industry. It is better, says the proverb, to play for nothing, than to work for nothing. In mercantile and manufacturing towns, where the inferior ranks of people are chiefly maintained by the employment of capital, they are in general industrious, sober, and thriving; as in many English, and in most Dutch towns. In those towns which are principally supported

by the constant or occasional residence of a court, and in which the inferior ranks of people are chiefly maintained by the spending of revenue, they are in general idle, dissolute, and poor; as at Rome, Versailles, Compeigne, and Fontainbleau. If you except Rouen and Bourdeaux, there is little trade or industry in any of the parliament towns of France; and the inferior ranks of people, being chiefly maintained by the expense of the members of the courts of justice, and of those who come to plead before them, are in general idle and poor. The great trade of Rouen and Bourdeaux seems to be altogether the effect of their situation. Rouen is necessarily the entrepot of almost all the goods which are brought either from foreign countries, or from the maritime provinces of France, for the consumption of the great city of Paris. Bourdeaux is, in the same manner, the entrepot of the wines which grow upon the banks of the Garronne, and of the rivers which run into it, one of the richest wine countries in the world, and which seems to produce the wine fittest for exportation, or best suited to the taste of foreign nations. Such advantageous situations necessarily attract a great capital by the great employment which they afford it; and the employment of this capital is the cause of the industry of those two cities. In the other parliament towns of France, very little more capital seems to be employed than what is necessary for supplying their own consumption; that is, little more than the smallest capital which can be employed in them. The same thing may be said of Paris, Madrid, and Vienna. Of those three cities, Paris is by far the most industrious, but Paris itself is the principal market of all the manufactures established at Paris, and its own consumption is the principal object of all the trade which it carries on. London, Lisbon, and Copenhagen, are, perhaps, the only three cities in Europe, which are both the constant residence of a court, and can at the same time be considered as trading cities, or as cities which trade not only for their own consumption, but for that of other cities and countries. The situation of all the three is extremely advantageous, and naturally fits them to be the entrepots of a great part of the goods destined for the consumption of distant places. In a city where a great revenue is spent, to employ with advantage a capital for any other purpose than for supplying the consumption of that city, is probably more difficult than in one in which the inferior ranks of people have no other maintenance but what they derive from the employment of such a capital. The idleness of the greater part of the people who are maintained by the expense of revenue, corrupts, it is probable, the industry of those who ought to be maintained by the employment of capital, and renders it less advantageous to employ

a capital there than in other places. There was little trade or industry in Edinburgh before the Union. When the Scotch parliament was no longer to be assembled in it, when it ceased to be the necessary residence of the principal nobility and gentry of Scotland, it became a city of some trade and industry. It still continues, however, to be the residence of the principal courts of justice in Scotland, of the boards of customs and excise, &c. A considerable revenue, therefore, still continues to be spent in it. In trade and industry, it is much inferior to Glasgow, of which the inhabitants are chiefly maintained by the employment of capital. The inhabitants of a large village, it has sometimes been observed, after having made considerable progress in manufactures, have become idle and poor, in consequence of a great lord's having taken up his residence in their neighbourhood.

The proportion between capital and revenue, therefore, seems everywhere to regulate the proportion between industry and idleness. Wherever capital predominates, industry prevails; wherever revenue, idleness. Every increase or diminution of capital, therefore, naturally tends to increase or diminish the real quantity of industry, the number of productive hands, and consequently the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, the real wealth and revenue of all its inhabitants.

Capitals are increased by parsimony, and diminished by prodigality and misconduct.

Whatever a person saves from his revenue he adds to his capital, and either employs it himself in maintaining an additional number of productive hands, or enables some other person to do so, by lending it to him for an interest, that is, for a share of the profits. As the capital of an individual can be increased only by what he saves from his annual revenue or his annual gains, so the capital of a society, which is the same with that of all the individuals who compose it, can be increased only in the same manner.

Parsimony, and not industry, is the immediate cause of the increase of capital. Industry, indeed, provides the subject which parsimony accumulates; but whatever industry might acquire, if parsimony did not save and store up, the capital would never be the greater.

Parsimony, by increasing the fund which is destined for the maintenance of productive hands, tends to increase the number of those hands whose labour adds to the value of the subject upon which it is bestowed. It tends, therefore, to increase the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country. It puts into motion

an additional quantity of industry, which gives an additional value to the annual produce.

What is annually saved, is as regularly consumed as what is annually spent, and nearly in the same time too; but it is consumed by a different set of people. That portion of his revenue which a rich man annually spends, is, in most cases, consumed by idle guests and menial servants, who leave nothing behind them in return for their consumption. That portion which he annually saves, as, for the sake of the profit, it is immediately employed as a capital, is consumed in the same manner, and nearly in the same time too, but by a different set of people: by labourers, manufacturers, and artificers, who re-produce, with a profit, the value of their annual consumption. His revenue, we shall suppose, is paid him in money. Had he spent the whole, the food, clothing, and lodging, which the whole could have purchased, would have been distributed among the former set of people. By saving a part of it, as that part is, for the sake of the profit, immediately employed as a capital, either by himself or by some other person, the food, clothing, and lodging, which may be purchased with it, are necessarily reserved for the latter. The consumption is the same, but the consumers are different.

By what a frugal man annually saves, he not only affords maintenance to an additional number of productive hands, for that of the ensuing year, but like the founder of a public work-house he establishes, as it were, a perpetual fund for the maintenance of an equal number in all times to come. The perpetual allotment and destination of this fund, indeed, is not always guarded by any positive law, by any trust-right or deed of mortmain. It is always guarded, however, by a very powerful principle, the plain and evident interest of every individual to whom any share of it shall ever belong. No part of it can ever afterwards be employed to maintain any but productive hands, without an evident loss to the person who thus perverts it from its proper destination.

The prodigal perverts it in this manner: By not confining his expense within his income, he encroaches upon his capital. Like him who perverts the revenues of some pious foundation to profane purposes, he pays the wages of idleness with those funds which the frugality of his forefathers had, as it were, consecrated to the maintenance of industry. By diminishing the funds destined for the employment of productive labour, he necessarily diminishes, so far as it depends upon him, the quantity of that labour which adds a value to the subject upon which it is bestowed, and, consequently, the value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the whole country, the real wealth and revenue of its

inhabitants. If the prodigality of some was not compensated by the frugality of others, the conduct of every prodigal, by feeding the idle with the bread of the industrious, tends not only to beggar himself, but to impoverish his country.

Though the expense of the prodigal should be altogether in home made, and no part of it in foreign commodities, its effect upon the productive funds of the society would still be the same. Every year there would still be a certain quantity of food and clothing, which ought to have maintained productive, employed in maintaining unproductive hands. Every year, therefore, there would still be some diminution in what would otherwise have been the value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country.

This expense, it may be said, indeed, not being in foreign goods, and not occasioning any exportation of gold and silver, the same quantity of money would remain in the country as before. But if the quantity of food and clothing, which were thus consumed by unproductive, had been distributed among productive hands, they would have reproduced, together with a profit, the full value of their consumption. The same quantity of money would, in this case, equally have remained in the country, and there would, besides, have been a reproduction of an equal value of consumable goods. There would have been two values instead of one.

The same quantity of money, besides, cannot long remain in any country in which the value of the annual produce diminishes. The sole use of money is to circulate consumable goods. By means of it, provisions, materials, and finished work, are bought and sold, and distributed to their proper consumers. The quantity of money, therefore, which can be annually employed in any country, must be determined by the value of the consumable goods annually circulated within it. These must consist, either in the immediate produce of the land and labour of the country itself, or in something which had been purchased with some part of that produce. Their value, therefore, must diminish as the value of that produce diminishes, and along with it the quantity of money which can be employed in circulating them. But the money which, by this annual diminution of produce, is annually thrown out of domestic circulation, will not be allowed to lie idle. The interest of whoever possesses it requires that it should be employed; but having no employment at home, it will, in spite of all laws and prohibitions, be sent abroad, and employed in purchasing consumable goods, which may be of some use at home. Its annual exportation will, in this manner, continue

for some time to add something to the annual consumption of the country beyond the value of its own annual produce. What in the days of its prosperity had been saved from that annual produce, and employed in purchasing gold and silver will contribute, for some little time, to support its consumption in adversity. The exportation of gold and silver is, in this case, not the cause, but the effect of its declension, and may even, for some little time, alleviate the misery of that declension.

The quantity of money, on the contrary, must in every country naturally increase as the value of the annual produce increases. The value of the consumable goods annually circulated within the society being greater, will require a greater quantity of money to circulate them. A part of the increased produce, therefore, will naturally be employed in purchasing, wherever it is to be had, the additional quantity of gold and silver necessary for circulating the rest. The increase of those metals will, in this case, be the effect, not the cause, of the public prosperity. Gold and silver are purchased everywhere in the same manner. The food, clothing, and lodging, the revenue and maintenance, of all those whose labour or stock is employed in bringing them from the mine to the market, is the price paid for them in Peru as well as in England. The country which has this price to pay, will never be long without the quantity of those metals which it has occasion for; and no country will ever long retain a quantity which it has no occasion for.

Whatever, therefore, we may imagine the real wealth and revenue of a country to consist in, whether in the value of the annual produce of its land and labour, as plain reason seems to dictate, or in the quantity of the precious metals which circulate within it, as vulgar prejudices suppose; in either view of the matter, every prodigal appears to be a public enemy, and every frugal man a public benefactor.

The effects of misconduct are often the same as those of prodigality. Every injudicious and unsuccessful project in agriculture, mines, fisheries, trade, or manufactures, tends in the same manner to diminish the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour. In every such project, though the capital is consumed by productive hands only, yet as, by the injudicious manner in which they are employed, they do not reproduce the full value of their consumption, there must always be some diminution in what would otherwise have been the productive funds of the society.

It can seldom happen, indeed, that the circumstances of a great nation can be much affected either by the prodigality or misconduct of

individuals; the profusion or imprudence of some being always more than compensated by the frugality and good conduct of others.

With regard to profusion, the principle which prompts to expense is the passion for present enjoyment; which, though sometimes violent and very difficult to be restrained, is in general only momentary occasional. But the principle which prompts to save, is the desire of bettering our condition; a desire which, though generally calm and dispassionate, comes with us from the womb, and never leaves us till we go into the grave. In the whole interval which separates those two moments, there is scarce, perhaps, a single instance, in which any man is so perfectly and completely satisfied with his situation, as to be without any wish of alteration or improvement of any kind. An augmentation of fortune is the means by which the greater part of men propose and wish to better their condition. It is the means the most vulgar and the most obvious; and the most likely way of augmenting their fortune, is to save and accumulate some part of what they acquire, either regularly and annually, or upon some extraordinary occasion. Though the principle of expense, therefore, prevails in almost all men upon some occasions, and in some men upon almost all occasions; yet in the greater part of men, taking the whole course of their life at an average, the principle of frugality seems not only to predominate, but to predominate very greatly.

With regard to misconduct, the number of prudent and successful undertakings is everywhere much greater than that of injudicious and unsuccessful ones. After all our complaints of the frequency of bankruptcies, the unhappy men who fall into this misfortune, make but a very small part of the whole number engaged in trade, and all other sorts of business; not much more, perhaps, than one in a thousand. Bankruptcy is, perhaps, the greatest and most humiliating calamity which can befal an innocent man. The greater part of men, therefore, are sufficiently careful to avoid it. Some, indeed, do not avoid it; as some do not avoid the gallows.

Great nations are never impoverished by private, though they sometimes are by public prodigality and misconduct. The whole, or almost the whole public revenue is, in most countries, employed in maintaining unproductive hands. Such are the people who compose a numerous and splendid court, a great ecclesiastical establishment, great fleets and armies, who in time of peace produce nothing, and in time of war acquire nothing which can compensate the expense of maintaining them, even while the war lasts. Such people, as they themselves produce nothing, are all maintained by the produce of other men’s labour. When

multiplied, therefore, to an unnecessary number, they may in a particular year consume so great a share of this produce, as not to leave a sufficiency for maintaining the productive labourers, who should reproduce it next year. The next year's produce, therefore, will be less than that of the foregoing; and if the same disorder should continue, that of the third year will be still less than that of the second. Those unproductive hands who should be maintained by a part only of the spare revenue of the people, may consume so great a share of their whole revenue, and thereby oblige so great a number to encroach upon their capitals, upon the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour, that all the frugality and good conduct of individuals may not be able to compensate the waste and degradation of produce occasioned by this violent and forced encroachment.

This frugality and good conduct, however, is upon most occasions, it appears from experience, sufficient to compensate, not only the private prodigality and misconduct of individuals, but the public extravagance of government. The uniform, constant, and uninterrupted effort of every man to better his condition, the principle from which public and national, as well as private opulence is originally derived, is frequently powerful enough to maintain the natural progress of things towards improvement, in spite both of the extravagance of government, and of the greatest errors of administration. Like the unknown principle of animal life, it frequently restores health and vigour to the constitution, in spite not only of the disease, but of the absurd prescriptions of the doctor.

The annual produce of the land and labour of any nation can be increasing in its value by no other means, but by increasing either the number of its productive labourers, or the productive powers of those labourers who had before been employed. The number of its productive labourers, it is evident, can never be much increased, but in consequence of an increase of capital, or of the funds destined for maintaining them. The productive powers of the same number of labourers cannot be increased, but in consequence either of some addition and improvement to those machines and instruments which facilitate and abridge labour, or of more proper division and distribution of employment. In either case, an additional capital is almost always required. It is by means of an additional capital only, that the undertaker of any work can either provide his workmen with better machinery, or make a more proper distribution of employment among them. When the work to be done consists of a number of parts, to keep every man constantly employed in one way, requires a much greater capital than where every man is

occasionally employed in every different part of the work. When we compare, therefore, the state of a nation at two different periods, and find that the annual produce of its land and labour is evidently greater at the latter than at the former, that its lands are better cultivated, its manufactures more numerous and more flourishing, and its trade more extensive; we may be assured that its capital must have increased during the interval between those two periods, and that more must have been added to it by the good conduct of some, than had been taken from it either by the private misconduct of others, or by the public extravagance of government. But we shall find this to have been the case of almost all nations, in all tolerably quiet and peaceable times, even of those who have not enjoyed the most prudent and parsimonious governments. To form a right judgment of it, indeed, we must compare the state of the country at periods somewhat distant from one another. The progress is frequently so gradual, that, at near periods, the improvement is not only not sensible, but, from the declension either of certain branches of industry, or of certain districts of the country, things which sometimes happen, though the country in general is in great prosperity, there frequently arises a suspicion, that the riches and industry of the whole are decaying.

The annual produce of the land and labour of England, for example, is certainly much greater than it was a little more than a century ago, at the restoration of Charles II. Though at present few people, I believe, doubt of this, yet during this period five years have seldom passed away, in which some book or pamphlet has not been published, written, too, with such abilities as to gain some authority with the public, and pretending to demonstrate that the wealth of the nation was fast declining; that the country was depopulated, agriculture neglected, manufactures decaying, and trade undone. Nor have these publications been all party pamphlets, the wretched offspring of falsehood and venality. Many of them have been written by very candid and very intelligent people, who wrote nothing but what they believed, and for no other reason but because they believed it.

The annual produce of the land and labour of England, again, was certainly much greater at the Restoration than we can suppose it to have been about a hundred years before, at the accession of Elizabeth. At this period, too, we have all reason to believe, the country was much more advanced in improvement, than it had been about a century before, towards the close of the dissensions between the houses of York and Lancaster. Even then it was, probably, in a better condition than it had

been at the Norman conquest: and at the Norman conquest, than during the confusion of the Saxon heptarchy. Even at this early period, it was certainly a more improved country than at the invasion of Julius Cæsar, when its inhabitants were nearly in the same state with the savages in North America.

In each of those periods, however, there was not only much private and public profusion, many expensive and unnecessary wars, great perversion of the annual produce from maintaining productive to maintain unproductive hands; but sometimes, in the confusion of civil discord, such absolute waste and destruction of stock, as might he supposed, not only to retard, as it certainly did, the natural accumulation of riches, but to have left the country, at the end of the period, poorer than at the beginning, Thus, in the happiest and most fortunate period of them all, that which has passed since the Restoration, how many disorders and misfortunes have occurred, which, could they have been foreseen, not only the impoverishment, but the total ruin of the country would have been expected from them? The fire and the plague of London, the two Dutch wars, the disorders of the revolution, the war in Ireland, the four expensive French wars of 1688, 1701, 1742, and 1756, together with the two rebellions of 1715 and 1745. In the course of the four French wars, the nation has contracted more than L.145,000,000 of debt, over and above all the other extraordinary annual expense which they occasioned; so that the whole cannot be computed at less than L.200,000,000. So great a share of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, has, since the Revolution, been employed upon different occasions, in maintaining an extraordinary number of unproductive hands. But had not those wars given this particular direction to so large a capital, the greater part of it would naturally have been employed in maintaining productive hands, whose labour would have replaced, with a profit, the whole value of their consumption. The value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country would have been considerably increased by it every year, and every year’s increase would have augmented still more that of the following year. More houses would have been built, more lands would have been improved, and those which had been improved before would have been better cultivated; more manufactures would have been established, and those which had been established before would have been more extended; and to what height the real wealth and revenue of the country might by this time have been raised, it is not perhaps very easy even to imagine.

But though the profusion of government must undoubtedly have retarded the natural progress of England towards wealth and improvement, it has not been able to stop it. The annual produce of its land and labour is undoubtedly much greater at present than it was either at the Restoration or at the Revolution. The capital, therefore, annually employed in cultivating this land, and in maintaining this labour, must likewise be much greater. In the midst of all the exactions of government, this capital has been silently and gradually accumulated by the private frugality and good conduct of individuals, by their universal, continual, and uninterrupted effort to better their own condition. It is this effort, protected by law, and allowed by liberty to exert itself in the manner that is most advantageous, which has maintained the progress of England towards opulence and improvement in almost all former times, and which, it is to be hoped, will do so in all future times. England, however, as it has never been blessed with a very parsimonious government, so parsimony has at no time been the characteristic virtue of its inhabitants. It is the highest impertinence and presumption, therefore, in kings and ministers to pretend to watch over the economy of private people, and to restrain their expense, either by sumptuary laws, or by prohibiting the importation of foreign luxuries. They are themselves always, and without any exception, the greatest spendthrifts in the society. Let them look well after their own expense, and they may safely trust private people with theirs. If their own extravagance does not ruin the state, that of the subject never will.

As frugality increases, and prodigality diminishes, the public capital, so the conduct of those whose expense just equals their revenue, without either accumulating or encroaching, neither increases nor diminishes it. Some modes of expense, however, seem to contribute more to the growth of public opulence than others.

The revenue of an individual may be spent, either in things which are consumed immediately, and in which one day’s expense can neither alleviate nor support that of another; or it may be spent in things more durable, which can therefore be accumulated, and in which every every day’s expense may, as he chooses, either alleviate, or support and heighten, the effect of that of the following day. A man of fortune, for example, may either spend his revenue in a profuse and sumptuous table, and in maintaining a great number of menial servants, and a multitude of dogs and horses; or, contenting himself with a frugal table, and few attendants, he may lay out the greater part of it in adorning his house or his country villa, in useful or ornamental buildings, in useful or

ornamental furniture, in collecting books, statues, pictures; or in things more frivolous, jewels, baubles, ingenious trinkets of different kinds; or, what is must trifling of all, in amassing a great wardrobe of fine clothes, like the favourite and minister of a great prince who died a few years ago. Were two men of equal fortune to spend their revenue, the one chiefly in the one way, the other in the other, the magnificence of the person whose expense had been chiefly in durable commodities, would be continually increasing, every day's expense contributing something to support and heighten the effect of that of the following day; that of the other, on the contrary, would be no greater at the end of the period than at the beginning. The former too would, at the end of the period, be the richer man of the two. He would have a stock of goods of some kind or other, which, though it might not be worth all that it cost, would always be worth something. No trace or vestige of the expense of the latter would remain, and the effects of ten or twenty years' profusion would be as completely annihilated as if they had never existed.

As the one mode of expense is more favourable than the other to the opulence of an individual, so is it likewise to that of a nation. The houses, the furniture, the clothing of the rich, in a little time, become useful to the inferior and middling ranks of people. They are able to purchase them when their superiors grow weary of them; and the general accommodation of the whole people is thus gradually improved, when this mode of expense becomes universal among men of fortune. In countries which have long been rich, you will frequently find the inferior ranks of people in possession both of houses and furniture perfectly good and entire, but of which neither the one could have been built, nor the other have been made for their use. What was formerly a seat of the family of Seymour, is now an inn upon the Bath road. The marriage-bed of James I. of Great Britain, which his queen brought with her from Denmark, as a present fit for a sovereign to make to a sovereign, was, a few years ago, the ornament of an alehouse at Dunfermline. In some ancient cities, which either have been long stationary, or have gone somewhat to decay, you will sometimes scarce find a single house which could have been built for its present inhabitants. If you go into those houses, too, you will frequently find many excellent, though antiquated pieces of furniture, which are still very fit for use, and which could as little have been made for them. Noble palaces, magnificent villas, great collections of books, statues, pictures, and other curiosities, are frequently both an ornament and an honour, not only to the neighbourhood, but to the whole country to which they belong. Versailles

is an ornament and an honour to France, Stowe and Wilton to England. Italy still continues to command some sort of veneration, by the number of monuments of this kind which it possesses, though the wealth which produced them has decayed, and though the genius which planned them seems to be extinguished, perhaps from not having the same employment.

The expense, too, which is laid out in durable commodities, is favourable not only to accumulation, but to frugality. If a person should at any time exceed in it, he can easily reform without exposing himself to the censure of the public. To reduce very much the number of his servants, to reform his table from great profusion to great frugality, to lay down his equipage after he has once set it up, are changes which cannot escape the observation of his neighbours, and which are supposed to imply some acknowledgment of preceding bad conduct. Few, therefore, of those who have once been so unfortunate as to launch out too far into this sort of expense, have afterwards the courage to reform, till ruin and bankruptcy oblige them. But if a person has, at any time, been at too great an expense in building, in furniture, in books, or pictures, no imprudence can be inferred from his changing his conduct. These are things in which further expense is frequently rendered unnecessary by former expense; and when a person stops short, he appears to do so, not because he has exceeded his fortune, but because he has satisfied his fancy.

The expense, besides, that is laid out in durable commodities, gives maintenance, commonly, to a greater number of people than that which is employed in the most profuse hospitality. Of two or three hundred weight of provisions, which may sometimes be served up at a great festival, one half, perhaps, is thrown to the dunghill, and there is always a great deal wasted and abused. But if the expense of this entertainment had been employed in setting to work masons, carpenters, upholsterers, mechanics, &c. a quantity of provisions of equal value would have been distributed among a still greater number of people, who would have bought them in pennyworths and pound weights, and not have lost or thrown away a single ounce of them. In the one way, besides, this expense maintains productive, in the other unproductive hands. In the one way, therefore, it increases, in the other it does not increase the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country.

I would not, however, by all this, be understood to mean, that the one species of expense always betokens a more liberal or generous spirit than

the other. When a man of fortune spends his revenue chiefly in hospitality, he shares the greater part of it with his friends and companions; but when he employs it in purchasing such durable commodities, he often spends the whole upon his own person, and gives nothing to any body without an equivalent. The latter species of expense, therefore, especially when directed towards frivolous objects, the little ornaments of dress and furniture, jewels, trinkets, gewgaws, frequently indicates, not only a trifling, but a base and selfish disposition. All that I mean is, that the one sort of expense, as it always occasions some accumulation of valuable commodities, as it is more favourable to private frugality, and, consequently, to the increase of the public capital, and as it maintains productive rather than unproductive hands, conduces more than the other to the growth of public opulence.

CHAP. IV. OF STOCK LENT AT INTEREST.

The stock which is lent at interest is always considered as a capital by the lender. He expects that in due time it is to be restored to him, and that, in the mean time, the borrower is to pay him a certain annual rent for the use of it. The borrower may use it either as a capital, or as a stock reserved for immediate consumption. If he uses it as a capital, he employs it in the maintenance of productive labourers, who reproduce the value, with a profit. He can, in this case, both restore the capital, and pay the interest, without alienating or encroaching upon any other source of revenue. If he uses it as a stock reserved for immediate consumption, he acts the part of a prodigal, and dissipates, in the maintenance of the idle, what was destined for the support of the industrious. He can, in this case, neither restore the capital nor pay the interest, without either alienating or encroaching upon some other source of revenues such as the property or the rent of land.

The stock which is lent at interest is, no doubt, occasionally employed in both these ways, but in the former much more frequently than in the latter. The man who borrows in order to spend will soon be ruined, and he who lends to him will generally have occasion to repent of his folly. To borrow or to lend for such a purpose, therefore, is, in all cases, where gross usury is out of the question, contrary to the interest of both parties; and though it no doubt happens sometimes, that people do both the one and the other, yet, from the regard that all men have for their own interest, we may be assured, that it cannot happen so very frequently as we are sometimes apt to imagine. Ask any rich man of common prudence, to which of the two sorts of people he has lent the greater part of his stock, to those who he thinks will employ it profitably, or to those who will spend it idly, and he will laugh at you for proposing the question. Even among borrowers, therefore, not the people in the world most famous for frugality, the number of the frugal and industrious surpasses considerably that of the prodigal and idle.

The only people to whom stock is commonly lent, without their being expected to make any very profitable use of it, are country gentlemen, who borrow upon mortgage. Even they scarce ever borrow merely to spend. What they borrow, one may say, is commonly spent before they borrow it. They have generally consumed so great a quantity of goods, advanced to them upon credit by shop-keepers and tradesmen, that they

find it necessary to borrow at interest, in order to pay the debt. The capital borrowed replaces the capitals of those shop-keepers and tradesmen which the country gentlemen could not have replaced from the rents of their estates. It is not properly borrowed in order to be spent, but in order to replace a capital which had been spent before.

Almost all loans at interest are made in money, either of paper, or of gold and silver; but what the borrower really wants, and what the lender readily supplies him with, is not the money, but the money's worth, or the goods which it can purchase. If he wants it as a stock for immediate consumption, it is those goods only which he can place in that stock. If he wants it as a capital for employing industry, it is from those goods only that the industrious can be furnished with the tools, materials, and maintenance necessary for carrying on their work. By means of the loan, the lender, as it were, assigns to the borrower his right to a certain portion of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, to be employed as the borrower pleases.

The quantity of stock, therefore, or, as it is commonly expressed, of money, which can be lent at interest in any country, is not regulated by the value of the money, whether paper or coin, which serves as the instrument of the different loans made in that country, but by the value of that part of the annual produce, which, as soon as it comes either from the ground, or from the hands of the productive labourers, is destined, not only for replacing a capital, but such a capital as the owner does not care to be at the trouble of employing himself. As such capitals are commonly lent out and paid back in money, they constitute what is called the monied interest. It is distinct, not only from the landed, but from the trading and manufacturing interests, as in these last the owners themselves employ their own capitals. Even in the monied interest, however, the money is, as it were, but the deed or assignment, which conveys from one hand to another those capitals which the owners do not care to employ themselves. Those capitals may be greater, in almost any proportion, than the amount of the money which serves as the instrument of their conveyance; the same pieces of money successively serving for many different loans, as well as for many different purchases. A, for example, lends to W L.1000, with which W immediately purchases of B L.1000 worth of goods. B having no occasion for the money himself, lends the identical pieces to X, with which X immediately purchases of C another L.1000 worth of goods. C, in the same manner, and for the same reason, lends them to Y, who again purchases goods with them of D. In this manner, the same pieces, either of coin or of paper, may, in the

course of a few days, serve as the instrument of three different loans, and of three different purchases, each of which is, in value, equal to the whole amount of those pieces. What the three monied men, A, B, and C, assigned to the three borrowers, W, X, and Y, is the power of making those purchases. In this power consist both the value and the use of the loans. The stock lent by the three monied men is equal to the value of the goods which can be purchased with it, and is three times greater than that of the money with which the purchases are made. Those loans, however, may be all perfectly well secured, the goods purchased by the different debtors being so employed as, in due time, to bring back, with a profit, an equal value either of coin or of paper. And as the same pieces of money can thus serve as the instrument of different loans to three, or, for the same reason, to thirty times their value, so they may likewise successively serve as the instrument of repayment.

A capital lent at interest may, in this manner, be considered as an assignment, from the lender to the borrower, of a certain considerable portion of the annual produce, upon condition that the borrower in return shall, during the continuation of the loan, annually assign to the lender a small portion, called the interest; and, at the end of it, a portion equally considerable with that which had originally been assigned to him, called the repayment. Though money, either coin or paper, serves generally as the deed of assignment, both to the smaller and to the more considerable portion, it is itself altogether different from what is assigned by it.

In proportion as that share of the annual produce which, as soon as it comes either from the ground, or from the hands of the productive labourers, is destined for replacing a capital, increases in any country, what is called the monied interest naturally increases with it. The increase of those particular capitals from which the owners wish to derive a revenue, without being at the trouble of employing them themselves, naturally accompanies the general increase of capitals; or, in other words, as stock increases, the quantity of stock to be lent at interest grows gradually greater and greater.

As the quantity of stock to be lent at interest increases, the interest, or the price which must be paid for the use of that stock, necessarily diminishes, not only from those general causes which make the market price of things commonly diminish as their quantity increases, but from other causes which are peculiar to this particular case. As capitals increase in any country, the profits which can be made by employing them necessarily diminish. It becomes gradually more and more difficult to find within the country a profitable method of employing any new

capital. There arises, in consequence, a competition between different capitals, the owner of one endeavouring to get possession of that employment which is occupied by another; but, upon most occasions, he can hope to justle that other out of this employment by no other means but by dealing upon more reasonable terms. He must not only sell what he deals in somewhat cheaper, but, in order to get it to sell, he must sometimes, too, buy it dearer. The demand for productive labour, by the increase of the funds which are destined for maintaining it, grows every day greater and greater. Labourers easily find employment; but the owners of capitals find it difficult to get labourers to employ. Their competition raises the wages of labour, and sinks the profits of stock. But when the profits which can be made by the use of a capital are in this manner diminished, as it were, at both ends, the price which can be paid for the use of it, that is, the rate of interest, must necessarily be diminished with them.

Mr Locke, Mr Lawe, and Mr Montesquieu, as well as many other writers, seem to have imagined that the increase of the quantity of gold and silver, in consequence of the discovery of the Spanish West Indies, was the real cause of the lowering of the rate of interest through the greater part of Europe. Those metals, they say, having become of less value themselves, the use of any particular portion of them necessarily became of less value too, and, consequently, the price which could be paid for it. This notion, which at first sight seems so plausible, has been so fully exposed by Mr Hume, that it is, perhaps, unnecessary to say any thing more about it. The following very short and plain argument, however, may serve to explain more distinctly the fallacy which seems to have misled those gentlemen.

Before the discovery of the Spanish West Indies, ten per cent. seems to have been the common rate of interest through the greater part of Europe. It has since that time, in different countries, sunk to six, five, four, and three per cent. Let us suppose, that in every particular country the value of silver has sunk precisely in the same proportion as the rate of interest; and that in those countries, for example, where interest has been reduced from ten to five per cent. the same quantity of silver can now purchase just half the quantity of goods which it could have purchased before. This supposition will not, I believe, be found anywhere agreeable to the truth; but it is the most favourable to the opinion which we are going to examine; and, even upon this supposition, it is utterly impossible that the lowering of the value of silver could have the smallest tendency to lower the rate of interest. If £100 are in those

countries now of no more value than £50 were then, £10 must now be of no more value than £5 were then. Whatever were the causes which lowered the value of the capital, the same must necessarily have lowered that of the interest, and exactly in the same proportion. The proportion between the value of the capital and that of the interest must have remained the same, though the rate had never been altered. By altering the rate, on the contrary, the proportion between those two values is necessarily altered. If L.100 now are worth no more than L.50 were then, L.5 now can be worth no more than L.2, 10s. were then. By reducing the rate of interest, therefore, from ten to five per cent. we give for the use of a capital, which is supposed to be equal to one half of its former value, an interest which is equal to one fourth only of the value of the former interest.

An increase in the quantity of silver, while that of the commodities circulated by means of it remained the same, could have no other effect than to diminish the value of that metal. The nominal value of all sorts of goods would be greater, but their real value would be precisely the same as before. They would be exchanged for a greater number of pieces of silver; but the quantity of labour which they could command, the number of people whom they could maintain and employ, would be precisely the same. The capital of the country would be the same, though a greater number of pieces might be requisite for conveying any equal portion of it from one hand to another. The deeds of assignment, like the conveyances of a verbose attorney, would be more cumbersome; but the thing assigned would be precisely the same as before, and could produce only the same effects. The funds for maintaining productive labour being the same, the demand for it would be the same. Its price or wages, therefore, though nominally greater, would really be the same. They would be paid in a greater number of pieces of silver, but they would purchase only the same quantity of goods. The profits of stock would be the same, both nominally and really. The wages of labour are commonly computed by the quantity of silver which is paid to the labourer. When that is increased, therefore, his wages appear to be increased, though they may sometimes be no greater than before. But the profits of stock are not computed by the number of pieces of silver with which they are paid, but by the proportion which those pieces bear to the whole capital employed. Thus, in a particular country, 5s. a-week are said to be the common wages of labour, and ten per cent. the common profits of stock; but the whole capital of the country being the same as before, the competition between the different capitals of individuals into which it was divided

would likewise be the same. They would all trade with the same advantages and disadvantages. The common proportion between capital and profit, therefore, would be the same, and consequently the common interest of money; what can commonly be given for the use of money being necessarily regulated by what can commonly be made by the use of it.

Any increase in the quantity of commodities annually circulated within the country, while that of the money which circulated them remained the same, would, on the contrary, produce many other important effects, besides that of raising the value of the money. The capital of the country, though it might nominally be the same, would really be augmented. It might continue to be expressed by the same quantity of money, but it would command a greater quantity of labour. The quantity of productive labour which it could maintain and employ would be increased, and consequently the demand for that labour. Its wages would naturally rise with the demand, and yet might appear to sink. They might be paid with a smaller quantity of money, but that smaller quantity might purchase a greater quantity of goods than a greater had done before. The profits of stock would be diminished, both really and in appearance. The whole capital of the country being augmented, the competition between the different capitals of which it was composed would naturally be augmented along with it. The owners of those particular capitals would be obliged to content themselves with a smaller proportion of the produce of that labour which their respective capitals employed. The interest of money, keeping pace always with the profits of stock, might, in this manner, be greatly diminished, though the value of money, or the quantity of goods which any particular sum could purchase, was greatly augmented.

In some countries the interest of money has been prohibited by law. But as something can everywhere be made by the use of money, something ought everywhere to be paid for the use of it. This regulation, instead of preventing, has been found from experience to increase the evil of usury. The debtor being obliged to pay, not only for the use of the money, but for the risk which his creditor runs by accepting a compensation for that use, he is obliged, if one may say so, to insure his creditor from the penalties of usury.

In countries where interest is permitted, the law in order to prevent the extortion of usury, generally fixes the highest rate which can be taken without incurring a penalty. This rate ought always to be somewhat above the lowest market price, or the price which is commonly paid for

the use of money by those who can give the most undoubted security. If this legal rate should be fixed below the lowest market rate, the effects of this fixation must be nearly the same as those of a total prohibition of interest. The creditor will not lend his money for less than the use of it is worth, and the debtor must pay him for the risk which he runs by accepting the full value of that use. If it is fixed precisely at the lowest market price, it ruins, with honest people who respect the laws of their country, the credit of all those who cannot give the very best security, and obliges them to have recourse to exorbitant usurers. In a country such as Great Britain, where money is lent to government at three per cent. and to private people, upon good security, at four and four and a-half, the present legal rate, five per cent. is perhaps as proper as any.

The legal rate, it is to be observed, though it ought to be somewhat above, ought not to be much above the lowest market rate. If the legal rate of interest in Great Britain, for example, was fixed so high as eight or ten per cent. the greater part of the money which was to be lent, would be lent to prodigals and projectors, who alone would be willing to give this high interest. Sober people, who will give for the use of money no more than a part of what they are likely to make by the use of it, would not venture into the competition. A great part of the capital of the country would thus be kept out of the hands which were most likely to make a profitable and advantageous use of it, and thrown into those which were most likely to waste and destroy it. Where the legal rate of interest, on the contrary, is fixed but a very little above the lowest market rate, sober people are universally preferred, as borrowers, to prodigals and projectors. The person who lends money gets nearly as much interest from the former as he dares to take from the latter, and his money is much safer in the hands of the one set of people than in those of the other. A great part of the capital of the country is thus thrown into the hands in which it is most likely to be employed with advantage.

No law can reduce the common rate of interest below the lowest ordinary market rate at the time when that law is made. Notwithstanding the edict of 1766, by which the French king attempted to reduce the rate of interest from five to four per cent. money continued to be lent in France at five per cent. the law being evaded in several different ways.

The ordinary market price of land, it is to be observed, depends everywhere upon the ordinary market rate of interest. The person who has a capital from which he wishes to derive a revenue, without taking the trouble to employ it himself, deliberates whether he should buy land with it, or lend it out at interest. The superior security of land, together

with some other advantages which almost everywhere attend upon this species of property, will generally dispose him to content himself with a smaller revenue from land, than what he might have by lending out his money at interest. These advantages are sufficient to compensate a certain difference of revenue; but they will compensate a certain difference only; and if the rent of land should fall short of the interest of money by a greater difference, nobody would buy land, which would soon reduce its ordinary price. On the contrary, if the advantages should much more than compensate the difference, everybody would buy land, which again would soon raise its ordinary price. When interest was at ten per cent. land was commonly sold for ten or twelve years purchase. As interest sunk to six, five, and four per cent. the price of land rose to twenty, five-and-twenty, and thirty years purchase. The market rate of interest is higher in France than in England, and the common price of land is lower. In England it commonly sells at thirty, in France at twenty years purchase.

CHAP. V. OF THE DIFFERENT EMPLOYMENTS OF CAPITALS.

Though all capitals are destined for the maintenance of productive labour only, yet the quantity of that labour which equal capitals are capable of putting into motion, varies extremely according to the diversity of their employment; as does likewise the value which that employment adds to the annual produce of the land and labour of the country.

A capital may be employed in four different ways; either, first, in procuring the rude produce annually required for the use and consumption of the society; or, secondly, in manufacturing and preparing that rude produce for immediate use and consumption; or, thirdly in transporting either the rude or manufactured produce from the places where they abound to those where they are wanted; or, lastly, in dividing particular portions of either into such small parcels as suit the occasional demands of those who want them. In the first way are employed the capitals of all those who undertake improvement or cultivation of lands, mines, or fisheries; in the second, those of all master manufacturers; in the third, those of all wholesale merchants; and in the fourth, those of all retailers. It is difficult to conceive that a capital should be employed in any way which may not be classed under some one or other of these four.

Each of those four methods of employing a capital is essentially necessary, either to the existence or extension of the other three, or to the general conveniency of the society.

Unless a capital was employed in furnishing rude produce to a certain degree of abundance, neither manufactures nor trade of any kind could exist.

Unless a capital was employed in manufacturing that part of the rude produce which requires a good deal of preparation before it can be fit for use and consumption, it either would never he produced, because there could be no demand for it; or if it was produced spontaneously, it would be of no value in exchange, and could add nothing to the wealth of the society.

Unless a capital was employed in transporting either the rude or manufactured produce from the places where it abounds to those where it is wanted, no more of either could be produced than was necessary for the consumption of the neighbourhood. The capital of the merchant

exchanges the surplus produce of one place for that of another, and thus encourages the industry, and increases the enjoyments of both.

Unless a capital was employed in breaking and dividing certain portions either of the rude or manufactured produce into such small parcels as suit the occasional demands of those who want them, every man would be obliged to purchase a greater quantity of the goods he wanted than his immediate occasions required. If there was no such trade as a butcher, for example, every man would be obliged to purchase a whole ox or a whole sheep at a time. This would generally be inconvenient to the rich, and much more so to the poor. If a poor workman was obliged to purchase a month's or six months' provisions at a time, a great part of the stock which he employs as a capital in the instruments of his trade, or in the furniture of his shop, and which yields him a revenue, he would be forced to place in that part of his stock which is reserved for immediate consumption, and which yields him no revenue. Nothing can be more convenient for such a person than to be able to purchase his subsistence from day to day, or even from hour to hour, as he wants it. He is thereby enabled to employ almost his whole stock as a capital. He is thus enabled to furnish work to a greater value; and the profit which he makes by it in this way much more than compensates the additional price which the profit of the retailer imposes upon the goods. The prejudices of some political writers against shopkeepers and tradesmen are altogether without foundation. So far is it from being necessary either to tax them, or to restrict their numbers, that they can never be multiplied so as to hurt the public, though they may so as to hurt one another. The quantity of grocery goods, for example, which can be sold in a particular town, is limited by the demand of that town and its neighbourhood. The capital, therefore, which can be employed in the grocery trade, cannot exceed what is sufficient to purchase that quantity. If this capital is divided between two different grocers, their competition will tend to make both of them sell cheaper than if it were in the hands of one only; and if it were divided among twenty, their competition would be just so much the greater, and the chance of their combining together, in order to raise the price, just so much the less. Their competition might, perhaps, ruin some of themselves; but to take care of this, is the business of the parties concerned, and it may safely be trusted to their discretion. It can never hurt either the consumer or the producer; on the contrary, it must tend to make the retailers both sell cheaper and buy dearer, than if the whole trade was monopolized by one or two persons. Some of them, perhaps,

may sometimes decoy a weak customer to buy what he has no occasion for. This evil, however, is of too little importance to deserve the public attention, nor would it necessarily be prevented by restricting their numbers. It is not the multitude of alehouses, to give the most suspicious example, that occasions a general disposition to drunkenness among the common people; but that disposition, arising from other causes, necessarily gives employment to a multitude of alehouses.

The persons whose capitals are employed in any of those four ways, are themselves productive labourers. Their labour, when properly directed, fixes and realizes itself in the subject or vendible commodity upon which it is bestowed, and generally adds to its price the value at least of their own maintenance and consumption. The profits of the farmer, of the manufacturer, of the merchant, and retailer, are all drawn from the price of the goods which the two first produce, and the two last buy and sell. Equal capitals, however, employed in each of those four different ways, will immediately put into motion very different quantities of productive labour; and augment, too, in very different proportions, the value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the society to which they belong.

The capital of the retailer replaces, together with its profits, that of the merchant of whom he purchases goods, and thereby enables him to continue his business. The retailer himself is the only productive labourer whom it immediately employs. In his profit consists the whole value which its employment adds to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society.

The capital of the wholesale merchant replaces, together with their profits, the capitals of the farmers and manufacturers of whom he purchases the rude and manufactured produce which he deals in, and thereby enables them to continue their respective trades. It is by this service chiefly that he contributes indirectly to support the productive labour of the society, and to increase the value of its annual produce. His capital employs, too, the sailors and carriers who transport his goods from one place to another; and it augments the price of those goods by the value, not only of his profits, but of their wages. This is all the productive labour which it immediately puts into motion, and all the value which it immediately adds to the annual produce. Its operation in both these respects is a good deal superior to that of the capital of the retailer.

Part of the capital of the master manufacturer is employed as a fixed capital in the instruments of his trade, and replaces, together with its

profits, that of some other artificer of whom he purchases them. Part of his circulating capital is employed in purchasing materials, and replaces, with their profits, the capitals of the farmers and miners of whom he purchases them. But a great part of it is always, either annually, or in a much shorter period, distributed among the different workmen whom he employs. It augments the value of these materials by their wages, and by their masters' profits upon the whole stock of wages, materials, and instruments of trade employed in the business. It puts immediately into motion, therefore, a much greater quantity of productive labour, and adds a much greater value to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society, than an equal capital in the hands of any wholesale merchant.

No equal capital puts into motion a greater quantity of productive labour than that of the farmer. Not only his labouring servants, but his labouring cattle, are productive labourers. In agriculture, too, Nature labours along with man; and though her labour cost no expense, its produce has its value, as well as that of the must expensive workmen. The most important operations of agriculture seem intended, not so much to increase, though they do that too, as to direct the fertility of Nature towards the production of the plants must profitable to man. A field overgrown with briars and brambles, may frequently produce as great a quantity of vegetables as the best cultivated vineyard or corn field. Planting and tillage frequently regulate more than they animate the active fertility of Nature; and after all their labour, a great part of the work always remains to be done by her. The labourers and labouring cattle, therefore, employed in agriculture, not only occasion, like the workmen in manufactures, the reproduction of a value equal to their own consumption, or to the capital which employs them, together with its owner's profits, but of a much greater value. Over and above the capital of the farmer, and all its profits, they regularly occasion the reproduction of the rent of the landlord. This rent may be considered as the produce of those powers of Nature, the use of which the landlord lends to the farmer. It is greater or smaller, according to the supposed extent of those powers, or, in other words, according to the supposed natural or improved fertility of the land. It is the work of Nature which remains, after deducting or compensating every thing which can be regarded as the work of man. It is seldom less than a fourth, and frequently more than a third, of the whole produce. No equal quantity of productive labour employed in manufactures, can ever occasion so great reproduction. In them Nature does nothing; man does all; and the reproduction must always be in proportion to the strength of the agents that occasion it. The

capital employed in agriculture, therefore, not only puts into motion a greater quantity of productive labour than any equal capital employed in manufactures; but in proportion, too, to the quantity of productive labour which it employs, it adds a much greater value to the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, to the real wealth and revenue of its inhabitants. Of all the ways in which a capital can be employed, it is by far the most advantageous to society.

The capitals employed in the agriculture and in the retail trade of any society, must always reside within that society. Their employment is confined almost to a precise spot, to the farm, and to the shop of the retailer. They must generally, too, though there are some exceptions to this, belong to resident members of the society.

The capital of a wholesale merchant, on the contrary, seems to have no fixed or necessary residence anywhere, but may wander about from place to place, according as it can either buy cheap or sell dear.

The capital of the manufacturer must, no doubt, reside where the manufacture is carried on; but where this shall be, is not always necessarily determined. It may frequently be at a great distance, both from the place where the materials grow, and from that where the complete manufacture is consumed. Lyons is very distant, both from the places which afford the materials of its manufactures, and from those which consume them. The people of fashion in Sicily are clothed in silks made in other countries, from the materials which their own produces. Part of the wool of Spain is manufactured in Great Britain, and some part of that cloth is afterwards sent back to Spain.

Whether the merchant whose capital exports the surplus produce of any society, be a native or a foreigner, is of very little importance. If he is a foreigner, the number of their productive labourers is necessarily less than if he had been a native, by one man only; and the value of their annual produce, by the profits of that one man. The sailors or carriers whom he employs, may still belong indifferently either to his country, or to their country, or to some third country, in the same manner as if he had been a native. The capital of a foreigner gives a value to their surplus produce equally with that of a native, by exchanging it for something for which there is a demand at home. It as effectually replaces the capital of the person who produces that surplus, and as effectually enables him to continue his business, the service by which the capital of a wholesale merchant chiefly contributes to support the productive labour, and to augment the value of the annual produce of the society to which he belongs.

It is of more consequence that the capital of the manufacturer should reside within the country. It necessarily puts into motion a greater quantity of productive labour, and adds a greater value to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. It may, however, be very useful to the country, though it should not reside within it. The capitals of the British manufacturers who work up the flax and hemp annually imported from the coasts of the Baltic, are surely very useful to the countries which produce them. Those materials are a part of the surplus produce of those countries, which, unless it was annually exchanged for something which is in demand there, would be of no value, and would soon cease to be produced. The merchants who export it, replace the capitals of the people who produce it, and thereby encourage them to continue the production; and the British manufacturers replace the capitals of those merchants.

A particular country, in the same manner as a particular person, may frequently not have capital sufficient both to improve cultivate all its lands, to manufacture and prepare their whole rude produce for immediate use and consumption, and to transport the surplus part either of the rude or manufactured produce to those distant markets, where it can be exchanged for something for which there is a demand at home. The inhabitants of many different parts of Great Britain have not capital sufficient to improve and cultivate all their lands. The wool of the southern counties of Scotland is, a great part of it, after a long land carriage through very bad roads, manufactured in Yorkshire, for want of a capital to manufacture it at home. There are many little manufacturing towns in Great Britain, of which the inhabitants have not capital sufficient to transport the produce of their own industry to those distant markets where there is demand and consumption for it. If there are any merchants among them, they are, properly, only the agents of wealthier merchants who reside in some of the great commercial cities.

When the capital of any country is not sufficient for all those three purposes, in proportion as a greater share of it is employed in agriculture, the greater will be the quantity of productive labour which it puts into motion within the country; as will likewise be the value which its employment adds to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. After agriculture, the capital employed in manufactures puts into motion the greatest quantity of productive labour, and adds the greatest value to the annual produce. That which is employed in the trade of exportation has the least effect of any of the three.

The country, indeed, which has not capital sufficient for all those three purposes, has not arrived at that degree of opulence for which it seems naturally destined. To attempt, however, prematurely, and with an insufficient capital, to do all the three, is certainly not the shortest way for a society, no more than it would be for an individual, to acquire a sufficient one. The capital of all the individuals of a nation has its limits, in the same manner as that of a single individual, and is capable of executing only certain purposes. The capital of all the individuals of a nation is increased in the same manner as that of a single individual, by their continually accumulating and adding to it whatever they save out of their revenue. It is likely to increase the fastest, therefore, when it is employed in the way that affords the greatest revenue to all the inhabitants of the country, as they will thus be enabled to make the greatest savings. But the revenue of all the inhabitants of the country is necessarily in proportion to the value of the annual produce of their land and labour.

It has been the principal cause of the rapid progress of our American colonies towards wealth and greatness, that almost their whole capitals have hitherto been employed in agriculture. They have no manufactures, those household and coarser manufactures excepted, which necessarily accompany the progress of agriculture, and which are the work of the women and children in every private family. The greater part, both of the exportation and coasting trade of America, is carried on by the capitals of merchants who reside in Great Britain. Even the stores and warehouses from which goods are retailed in some provinces, particularly in Virginia and Maryland, belong many of them to merchants who reside in the mother country, and afford one of the few instances of the retail trade of a society being carried on by the capitals of those who are not resident members of it. Were the Americans, either by combination, or by any other sort of violence, to stop the importation of European manufactures, and, by thus giving a monopoly to such of their own countrymen as could manufacture the like goods, divert any considerable part of their capital into this employment, they would retard, instead of accelerating, the further increase in the value of their annual produce, and would obstruct, instead of promoting, the progress of their country towards real wealth and greatness. This would be still more the case, were they to attempt, in the same manner, to monopolize to themselves their whole exportation trade.

The course of human prosperity, indeed, seems scarce ever to have been of so long continuance as to enable any great country to acquire

capital sufficient for all those three purposes; unless, perhaps, we give credit to the wonderful accounts of the wealth and cultivation of China, of those of ancient Egypt, and of the ancient state of Indostan. Even those three countries, the wealthiest, according to all accounts, that ever were in the world, are chiefly renowned for their superiority in agriculture and manufactures. They do not appear to have been eminent for foreign trade. The ancient Egyptians had a superstitious antipathy to the sea; a superstition nearly of the same kind prevails among the Indians; and the Chinese have never excelled in foreign commerce. The greater part of the surplus produce of all those three countries seems to have been always exported by foreigners, who gave in exchange for it something else, for which they found a demand there, frequently gold and silver.

It is thus that the same capital will in any country put into motion a greater or smaller quantity of productive labour, and add a greater or smaller value to the annual produce of its land and labour, according to the different proportions in which it is employed in agriculture, manufactures, and wholesale trade. The difference, too, is very great, according to the different sorts of wholesale trade in which any part of it is employed.

All wholesale trade, all buying in order to sell again by wholesale, may be reduced to three different sorts: the home trade, the foreign trade of consumption, and the carrying trade. The home trade is employed in purchasing in one part of the same country, and selling in another, the produce of the industry of that country. It comprehends both the inland and the coasting trade. The foreign trade of consumption is employed in purchasing foreign goods for home consumption. The carrying trade is employed in transacting the commerce of foreign countries, or in carrying the surplus produce of one to another.

The capital which is employed in purchasing in one part of the country, in order to sell in another, the produce of the industry of that country, generally replaces, by every such operation, two distinct capitals, that had both been employed in the agriculture or manufactures of that country, and thereby enables them to continue that employment. When it sends out from the residence of the merchant a certain value of commodities, it generally brings back in return at least an equal value of other commodities. When both are the produce of domestic industry, it necessarily replaces, by every such operation, two distinct capitals, which had both been employed in supporting productive labour, and thereby enables them to continue that support. The capital which sends

Scotch manufactures to London, and brings back English corn and manufactures to Edinburgh, necessarily replaces, by every such operation, two British capitals, which had both been employed in the agriculture or manufactures of Great Britain.

The capital employed in purchasing foreign goods for home consumption, when this purchase is made with the produce of domestic industry, replaces, too, by every such operation, two distinct capitals; but one of them only is employed in supporting domestic industry. The capital which sends British goods to Portugal, and brings back Portuguese goods to Great Britain, replaces, by every such operation, only one British capital. The other is a Portuguese one. Though the returns, therefore, of the foreign trade of consumption, should be as quick as those of the home trade, the capital employed in it will give but one half the encouragement to the industry or productive labour of the country.

But the returns of the foreign trade of consumption are very seldom so quick as those of the home trade. The returns of the home trade generally come in before the end of the year, and sometimes three or four times in the year. The returns of the foreign trade of consumption seldom come in before the end of the year, and sometimes not till after two or three years. A capital, therefore, employed in the home trade, will sometimes make twelve operations, or be sent out and returned twelve times, before a capital employed in the foreign trade of consumption has made one. If the capitals are equal, therefore, the one will give four-and-twenty times more encouragement and support to the industry of the country than the other.

The foreign goods for home consumption may sometimes be purchased, not with the produce of domestic industry, but with some other foreign goods. These last, however, must have been purchased, either immediately with the produce of domestic industry, or with something else that had been purchased with it; for, the case of war and conquest excepted, foreign goods can never be acquired, but in exchange for something that had been produced at home, either immediately, or after two or more different exchanges. The effects, therefore, of a capital employed in such a round-about foreign trade of consumption, are, in every respect, the same as those of one employed in the most direct trade of the same kind, except that the final returns are likely to be still more distant, as they must depend upon the returns of two or three distinct foreign trades. If the hemp and flax of Riga are purchased with the tobacco of Virginia, which had been purchased with British

manufactures, the merchant must wait for the returns of two distinct foreign trades, before he can employ the same capital in repurchasing a like quantity of British manufactures. If the tobacco of Virginia had been purchased, not with British manufactures, but with the sugar and rum of Jamaica, which had been purchased with those manufactures, he must wait for the returns of three. If those two or three distinct foreign trades should happen to be carried on by two or three distinct merchants, of whom the second buys the goods imported by the first, and the third buys those imported by the second, in order to export them again, each merchant, indeed, will, in this case, receive the returns of his own capital more quickly; but the final returns of the whole capital employed in the trade will be just as slow as ever. Whether the whole capital employed in such a round-about trade belong to one merchant or to three, can make no difference with regard to the country, though it may with regard to the particular merchants. Three times a greater capital must in both cases be employed, in order to exchange a certain value of British manufactures for a certain quantity of flax and hemp, than would have been necessary, had the manufactures and the flax and hemp been directly exchanged for one another. The whole capital employed, therefore, in such a round-about foreign trade of consumption, will generally give less encouragement and support to the productive labour of the country, than an equal capital employed in a more direct trade of the same kind.

Whatever be the foreign commodity with which the foreign goods for home consumption are purchased, it can occasion no essential difference, either in the nature of the trade, or in the encouragement and support which it can give to the productive labour of the country from which it is carried on. If they are purchased with the gold of Brazil, for example, or with the silver of Peru, this gold and silver, like the tobacco of Virginia, must have been purchased with something that either was the produce of the industry of the country, or that had been purchased with something else that was so. So far, therefore, as the productive labour of the country is concerned, the foreign trade of consumption, which is carried on by means of gold and silver, has all the advantages and all the inconveniences of any other equally round-about foreign trade of consumption; and will replace, just as fast, or just as slow, the capital which is immediately employed in supporting that productive labour. It seems even to have one advantage over any other equally round-about foreign trade. The transportation of those metals from one place to another, on account of their small bulk and great value, is less expensive than that of almost any other foreign goods of equal value. Their freight

is much less, and their insurance not greater; and no goods, besides, are less liable to suffer by the carriage. An equal quantity of foreign goods, therefore, may frequently be purchased with a smaller quantity of the produce of domestic industry, by the intervention of gold and silver, than by that of any other foreign goods. The demand of the country may frequently, in this manner, be supplied more completely, and at a smaller expense, than in any other. Whether, by the continual exportation of those metals, a trade of this kind is likely to impoverish the country from which it is carried on in any other way, I shall have occasion to examine at great length hereafter.

That part of the capital of any country which is employed in the carrying trade, is altogether withdrawn from supporting the productive labour of that particular country, to support that of some foreign countries. Though it may replace, by every operation, two distinct capitals, yet neither of them belongs to that particular country. The capital of the Dutch merchant, which carries the corn of Poland to Portugal, and brings back the fruits and wines of Portugal to Poland, replaces by every such operation two capitals, neither of which had been employed in supporting the productive labour of Holland; but one of them in supporting that of Poland, and the other that of Portugal. The profits only return regularly to Holland, and constitute the whole addition which this trade necessarily makes to the annual produce of the land and labour of that country. When, indeed, the carrying trade of any particular country is carried on with the ships and sailors of that country, that part of the capital employed in it which pays the freight is distributed among, and puts into motion, a certain number of productive labourers of that country. Almost all nations that have had any considerable share of the carrying trade have, in fact, carried it on in this manner. The trade itself has probably derived its name from it, the people of such countries being the carriers to other countries. It does not, however, seem essential to the nature of the trade that it should be so. A Dutch merchant may, for example, employ his capital in transacting the commerce of Poland and Portugal, by carrying part of the surplus produce of the one to the other, not in Dutch, but in British bottoms. It may be presumed, that he actually does so upon some particular occasions. It is upon this account, however, that the carrying trade has been supposed peculiarly advantageous to such a country as Great Britain, of which the defence and security depend upon the number of its sailors and shipping. But the same capital may employ as many sailors and shipping, either in the foreign trade of consumption, or even in the

home trade, when carried on by coasting vessels, as it could in the carrying trade. The number of sailors and shipping which any particular capital can employ, does not depend upon the nature of the trade, but partly upon the bulk of the goods, in proportion to their value, and partly upon the distance of the ports between which they are to be carried; chiefly upon the former of those two circumstances. The coal trade from Newcastle to London, for example, employs more shipping than all the carrying trade of England, though the ports are at no great distance. To force, therefore, by extraordinary encouragements, a larger share of the capital of any country into the carrying trade, than what would naturally go to it, will not always necessarily increase the shipping of that country.

The capital, therefore, employed in the home trade of any country, will generally give encouragement and support to a greater quantity of productive labour in that country, and increase the value of its annual produce, more than an equal capital employed in the foreign trade of consumption; and the capital employed in this latter trade has, in both these respects, a still greater advantage over an equal capital employed in the carrying trade. The riches, and so far as power depends upon riches, the power of every country must always be in proportion to the value of its annual produce, the fund from which all taxes must ultimately be paid. But the great object of the political economy of every country, is to increase the riches and power of that country. It ought, therefore, to give no preference nor superior encouragement to the foreign trade of consumption above the home trade, nor to the carrying trade above either of the other two. It ought neither to force nor to allure into either of those two channels a greater share of the capital of the country, than what would naturally flow into them of its own accord.

Each of those different branches of trade, however, is not only advantageous, but necessary and unavoidable, when the course of things, without any constraint or violence, naturally introduces it.

When the produce of any particular branch of industry exceeds what the demand of the country requires, the surplus must be sent abroad, and exchanged for something for which there is a demand at home. Without such exportation, a part of the productive labour of the country must cease, and the value of its annual produce diminish. The land and labour of Great Britain produce generally more corn, woollens, and hardware, than the demand of the home market requires. The surplus part of them, therefore, must be sent abroad, and exchanged for something for which there is a demand at home. It is only by means of such exportation, that this surplus can acquire a value sufficient to compensate the labour and

expense of producing it. The neighbourhood of the sea-coast, and the banks of all navigable rivers, are advantageous situations for industry, only because they facilitate the exportation and exchange of such surplus produce for something else which is more in demand there.

When the foreign goods which are thus purchased with the surplus produce of domestic industry exceed the demand of the home market, the surplus part of them must be sent abroad again, and exchanged for something more in demand at home. About 96,000 hogsheads of tobacco are annually purchased in Virginia and Maryland with a part of the surplus produce of British industry. But the demand of Great Britain does not require, perhaps, more than 14,000. If the remaining 82,000, therefore, could not be sent abroad, and exchanged for something more in demand at home, the importation of them must cease immediately, and with it the productive labour of all those inhabitants of Great Britain who are at present employed in preparing the goods with which these 82,000 hogsheads are annually purchased. Those goods, which are part of the produce of the land and labour of Great Britain, having no market at home, and being deprived of that which they had abroad, must cease to be produced. The most round-about foreign trade of consumption, therefore, may, upon some occasions, be as necessary for supporting the productive labour of the country, and the value of its annual produce, as the most direct.

When the capital stock of any country is increased to such a degree that it cannot be all employed in supplying the consumption, and supporting the productive labour of that particular country, the surplus part of it naturally disgorges itself into the carrying trade, and is employed in performing the same offices to other countries. The carrying trade is the natural effect and symptom of great national wealth; but it does not seem to be the natural cause of it. Those statesmen who have been disposed to favour it with particular encouragement, seem to have mistaken the effect and symptom for the cause. Holland, in proportion to the extent of the land and the number of its inhabitants, by far the richest country in Europe, has accordingly the greatest share of the carrying trade of Europe. England, perhaps the second richest country of Europe, is likewise supposed to have a considerable share in it; though what commonly passes for the carrying trade of England will frequently, perhaps, be found to be no more than a round-about foreign trade of consumption. Such are, in a great measure, the trades which carry the goods of the East and West Indies and of America to the different European markets. Those goods are generally purchased, either

immediately with the produce of British industry, or with something else which had been purchased with that produce, and the final returns of those trades are generally used or consumed in Great Britain. The trade which is carried on in British bottoms between the different ports of the Mediterranean, and some trade of the same kind carried on by British merchants between the different parts of India, make, perhaps, the principal branches of what is properly the carrying trade of Great Britain.

The extent of the home trade, and of the capital which can be employed in it, is necessarily limited by the value of the surplus produce of all those distant places within the country which have occasion to exchange their respective productions with one another; that of the foreign trade of consumption, by the value of the surplus produce of the whole country, and of what can be purchased with it; that of the carrying trade, by the value of the surplus produce of all the different countries in the world. Its possible extent, therefore, is in a manner infinite in comparison of that of the other two, and is capable of absorbing the greatest capitals.

The consideration of his own private profit is the sole motive which determines the owner of any capital to employ it either in agriculture, in manufactures, or in some particular branch of the wholesale or retail trade. The different quantities of productive labour which it may put into motion, and the different values which it may add to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society, according as it is employed in one or other of those different ways, never enter into his thoughts. In countries, therefore, where agriculture is the most profitable of all employments, and farming and improving the most direct roads to a splendid fortune, the capitals of individuals will naturally be employed in the manner most advantageous to the whole society. The profits of agriculture, however, seem to have no superiority over those of other employments in any part of Europe. Projectors, indeed, in every corner of it, have, within these few years, amused the public with most magnificent accounts of the profits to be made by the cultivation and improvement of land. Without entering into any particular discussion of their calculations, a very simple observation may satisfy us that the result of them must be false. We see, every day, the most splendid fortunes, that have been acquired in the course of a single life, by trade and manufactures, frequently from a very small capital, sometimes from no capital. A single instance of such a fortune, acquired by agriculture in the same time, and from such a capital, has not, perhaps, occurred in Europe, during the course of the present century. In all the great countries of

Europe, however, much good land still remains uncultivated; and the greater part of what is cultivated, is far from being improved to the degree of which it is capable. Agriculture, therefore, is almost everywhere capable of absorbing a much greater capital than has ever yet been employed in it. What circumstances in the policy of Europe have given the trades which are carried on in towns so great an advantage over that which is carried on in the country, that private persons frequently find it more for their advantage to employ their capitals in the most distant carrying trades of Asia and America, than in the improvement and cultivation of the most fertile fields in their own neighbourhood, I shall endeavour to explain at full length in the two following books.

BOOK III. OF THE DIFFERENT PROGRESS OF OPULENCE IN DIFFERENT NATIONS

CHAP. I. OF THE NATURAL PROGRESS OF OPULENCE.

The great commerce of every civilized society is that carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country. It consists in the exchange of rude for manufactured produce, either immediately, or by the intervention of money, or of some sort of paper which represents money. The country supplies the town with the means of subsistence and the materials of manufacture. The town repays this supply, by sending back a part of the manufactured produce to the inhabitants of the country. The town, in which there neither is nor can be any reproduction of substances, may very properly be said to gain its whole wealth and subsistence from the country. We must not, however, upon this account, imagine that the gain of the town is the loss of the country. The gains of both are mutual and reciprocal, and the division of labour is in this, as in all other cases, advantageous to all the different persons employed in the various occupations into which it is subdivided. The inhabitants of the country purchase of the town a greater quantity of manufactured goods with the produce of a much smaller quantity of their own labour, than they must have employed had they attempted to prepare them themselves. The town affords a market for the surplus produce of the country, or what is over and above the maintenance of the cultivators; and it is there that the inhabitants of the country exchange it for something else which is in demand among them. The greater the number and revenue of the inhabitants of the town, the more extensive is the market which it affords to those of the country; and the more extensive that market, it is always the more advantageous to a great number. The corn which grows within a mile of the town, sells there for the same price with that which comes from twenty miles distance. But the price of the latter must, generally, not only pay the expense of raising it and bringing it to market, but afford, too, the ordinary profits of agriculture to the farmer. The proprietors and cultivators of the country, therefore, which lies in the neighbourhood of the town, over and above the ordinary profits of agriculture, gain, in the price of what they sell, the whole value of the carriage of the like produce that is brought from more distant parts; and they save, besides, the whole value of this carriage in the price of what they buy. Compare the cultivation of the lands in the neighbourhood of any considerable town, with that of those which lie at

some distance from it, and you will easily satisfy yourself how much the country is benefited by the commerce of the town. Among all the absurd speculations that have been propagated concerning the balance of trade, it has never been pretended that either the country loses by its commerce with the town, or the town by that with the country which maintains it.

As subsistence is, in the nature of things, prior to conveniency and luxury, so the industry which procures the former, must necessarily be prior to that which ministers to the latter. The cultivation and improvement of the country, therefore, which affords subsistence, must, necessarily, be prior to the increase of the town, which furnishes only the means of conveniency and luxury. It is the surplus produce of the country only, or what is over and above the maintenance of the cultivators, that constitutes the subsistence of the town, which can therefore increase only with the increase of the surplus produce. The town, indeed, may not always derive its whole subsistence from the country in its neighbourhood, or even from the territory to which it belongs, but from very distant countries; and this, though it forms no exception from the general rule, has occasioned considerable variations in the progress of opulence in different ages and nations.

That order of things which necessity imposes, in general, though not in every particular country, is in every particular country promoted by the natural inclinations of man. If human institutions had never thwarted those natural inclinations, the towns could nowhere have increased beyond what the improvement and cultivation of the territory in which they were situated could support; till such time, at least, as the whole of that territory was completely cultivated and improved. Upon equal, or nearly equal profits, most men will choose to employ their capitals, rather in the improvement and cultivation of land, than either in manufactures or in foreign trade. The man who employs his capital in land, has it more under his view and command; and his fortune is much less liable to accidents than that of the trader, who is obliged frequently to commit it, not only to the winds and the waves, but to the more uncertain elements of human folly and injustice, by giving great credits, in distant countries, to men with whose character and situation he can seldom be thoroughly acquainted. The capital of the landlord, on the contrary, which is fixed in the improvement of his land, seems to be as well secured as the nature of human affairs can admit of. The beauty of the country, besides, the pleasure of a country life, the tranquillity of mind which it promises, and, wherever the injustice of human laws does not disturb it, the independency which it really affords, have charms that,

more or less, attract everybody; and as to cultivate the ground was the original destination of man, so, in every stage of his existence, he seems to retain a predilection for this primitive employment.

Without the assistance of some artificers, indeed, the cultivation of land cannot be carried on, but with great inconveniency and continual interruption. Smiths, carpenters, wheelwrights and ploughwrights, masons and bricklayers, tanners, shoemakers, and tailors, are people whose service the farmer has frequent occasion for. Such artificers, too, stand occasionally in need of the assistance of one another; and as their residence is not, like that of the farmer, necessarily tied down to a precise spot, they naturally settle in the neighbourhood of one another, and thus form a small town or village. The butcher, the brewer, and the baker, soon join them, together with many other artificers and retailers, necessary or useful for supplying their occasional wants, and who contribute still further to augment the town. The inhabitants of the town, and those of the country, are mutually the servants of one another. The town is a continual fair or market, to which the inhabitants of the country resort, in order to exchange their rude for manufactured produce. It is this commerce which supplies the inhabitants of the town, both with the materials of their work, and the means of their subsistence. The quantity of the finished work which they sell to the inhabitants of the country, necessarily regulates the quantity of the materials and provisions which they buy. Neither their employment nor subsistence, therefore, can augment, but in proportion to the augmentation of the demand from the country for finished work; and this demand can augment only in proportion to the extension of improvement and cultivation. Had human institutions, therefore, never disturbed the natural course of things, the progressive wealth and increase of the towns would, in every political society, be consequential, and in proportion to the improvement and cultivation of the territory or country.

In our North American colonies, where uncultivated land is still to be had upon easy terms, no manufactures for distant sale have ever yet been established in any of their towns. When an artificer has acquired a little more stock than is necessary for carrying on his own business in supplying the neighbouring country, he does not, in North America, attempt to establish with it a manufacture for more distant sale, but employs it in the purchase and improvement of uncultivated land. From artificer he becomes planter; and neither the large wages nor the easy subsistence which that country affords to artificers, can bribe him rather to work for other people than for himself. He feels that an artificer is the

servant of his customers, from whom he derives his subsistence; but that a planter who cultivates his own land, and derives his necessary subsistence from the labour of his own family, is really a master, and independent of all the world.

In countries, on the contrary, where there is either no uncultivated land, or none that can be had upon easy terms, every artificer who has acquired more stock than he can employ in the occasional jobs of the neighbourhood, endeavours to prepare work for more distant sale. The smith erects some sort of iron, the weaver some sort of linen or woollen manufactory. Those different manufactures come, in process of time, to be gradually subdivided, and thereby improved and refined in a great variety of ways, which may easily be conceived, and which it is therefore unnecessary to explain any further.

In seeking for employment to a capital, manufactures are, upon equal or nearly equal profits, naturally preferred to foreign commerce, for the same reason that agriculture is naturally preferred to manufactures. As the capital of the landlord or farmer is more secure than that of the manufacturer, so the capital of the manufacturer, being at all times more within his view and command, is more secure than that of the foreign merchant. In every period, indeed, of every society, the surplus part both of the rude and manufactured produce, or that for which there is no demand at home, must be sent abroad, in order to be exchanged for something for which there is some demand at home. But whether the capital which carries this surplus produce abroad be a foreign or a domestic one, is of very little importance. If the society has not acquired sufficient capital, both to cultivate all its lands, and to manufacture in the completest manner the whole of its rude produce, there is even a considerable advantage that the rude produce should be exported by a foreign capital, in order that the whole stock of the society may be employed in more useful purposes. The wealth of ancient Egypt, that of China and Indostan, sufficiently demonstrate that a nation may attain a very high degree of opulence, though the greater part of its exportation trade be carried on by foreigners. The progress of our North American and West Indian colonies, would have been much less rapid, had no capital but what belonged to themselves been employed in exporting their surplus produce.

According to the natural course of things, therefore, the greater part of the capital of every growing society is, first, directed to agriculture, afterwards to manufactures, and, last of all, to foreign commerce. This order of things is so very natural, that in every society that had any

territory, it has always, I believe, been in some degree observed. Some of their lands must have been cultivated before any considerable towns could be established, and some sort of coarse industry of the manufacturing kind must have been carried on in those towns, before they could well think of employing themselves in foreign commerce.

But though this natural order of things must have taken place in some degree in every such society, it has, in all the modern states of Europe, been in many respects entirely inverted. The foreign commerce of some of their cities has introduced all their finer manufactures, or such as were fit for distant sale; and manufactures and foreign commerce together have given birth to the principal improvements of agriculture. The manners and customs which the nature of their original government introduced, and which remained after that government was greatly altered, necessarily forced them into this unnatural and retrograde order.

CHAP. II. OF THE DISCOURAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE ANCIENT STATE OF EUROPE, AFTER THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

When the German and Scythian nations overran the western provinces of the Roman empire, the confusions which followed so great a revolution lasted for several centuries. The rapine and violence which the barbarians exercised against the ancient inhabitants, interrupted the commerce between the towns and the country. The towns were deserted, and the country was left uncultivated; and the western provinces of Europe, which had enjoyed a considerable degree of opulence under the Roman empire, sunk into the lowest state of poverty and barbarism. During the continuance of those confusions, the chiefs and principal leaders of those nations acquired, or usurped to themselves, the greater part of the lands of those countries. A great part of them was uncultivated; but no part of them, whether cultivated or uncultivated, was left without a proprietor. All of them were engrossed, and the greater part by a few great proprietors.

This original engrossing of uncultivated lands, though a great, might have been but a transitory evil. They might soon have been divided again, and broke into small parcels, either by succession or by alienation. The law of primogeniture hindered them from being divided by succession; the introduction of entails prevented their being broke into small parcels by alienation.

When land, like moveables, is considered as the means only of subsistence and enjoyment, the natural law of succession divides it, like them, among all the children of the family; of all of whom the subsistence and enjoyment may be supposed equally dear to the father. This natural law of succession, accordingly, took place among the Romans, who made no more distinction between elder and younger, between male and female, in the inheritance of lands, than we do in the distribution of moveables. But when land was considered as the means, not of subsistence merely, but of power and protection, it was thought better that it should descend undivided to one. In those disorderly times, every great landlord was a sort of petty prince. His tenants were his subjects. He was their judge, and in some respects their legislator in

peace and their leader in war. He made war according to his own discretion, frequently against his neighbours, and sometimes against his sovereign. The security of a landed estate, therefore, the protection which its owner could afford to those who dwelt on it, depended upon its greatness. To divide it was to ruin it, and to expose every part of it to be oppressed and swallowed up by the incursions of its neighbours. The law of primogeniture, therefore, came to take place, not immediately indeed, but in process of time, in the succession of landed estates, for the same reason that it has generally taken place in that of monarchies, though not always at their first institution. That the power, and consequently the security of the monarchy, may not be weakened by division, it must descend entire to one of the children. To which of them so important a preference shall be given, must be determined by some general rule, founded not upon the doubtful distinctions of personal merit, but upon some plain and evident difference which can admit of no dispute. Among the children of the same family there can be no indisputable differences but that of sex, and that of age. The male sex is universally preferred to the female; and when all other things are equal, the elder everywhere takes place of the younger. Hence the origin of the right of primogeniture, and of what is called lineal succession.

Laws frequently continue in force long after the circumstances which first gave occasion to them, and which could alone render them reasonable, are no more. In the present state of Europe, the proprietor of a single acre of land is as perfectly secure in his possession as the proprietor of 100,000. The right of primogeniture, however, still continues to be respected; and as of all institutions it is the fittest to support the pride of family distinctions, it is still likely to endure for many centuries. In every other respect, nothing can be more contrary to the real interest of a numerous family, than a right which, in order to enrich one, beggars all the rest of the children.

Entails are the natural consequences of the law of primogeniture. They were introduced to preserve a certain lineal succession, of which the law of primogeniture first gave the idea, and to hinder any part of the original estate from being carried out of the proposed line, either by gift, or device, or alienation; either by the folly, or by the misfortune of any of its successive owners. They were altogether unknown to the Romans. Neither their substitutions, nor fidei-commisses, bear any resemblance to entails, though some French lawyers have thought proper to dress the modern institution in the language and garb of those ancient ones.

When great landed estates were a sort of principalities, entails might not be unreasonable. Like what are called the fundamental laws of some monarchies, they might frequently hinder the security of thousands from being endangered by the caprice or extravagance of one man. But in the present state of Europe, when small as well as great estates derive their security from the laws of their country, nothing can be more completely absurd. They are founded upon the most absurd of all suppositions, the supposition that every successive generation of men have not an equal right to the earth, and to all that it possesses; but that the property of the present generation should be restrained and regulated according to the the fancy of those who died, perhaps five hundred years ago. Entails, however, are still respected, through the greater part of Europe; in those countries, particularly, in which noble birth is a necessary qualification for the enjoyment either of civil or military honours. Entails are thought necessary for maintaining this exclusive privilege of the nobility to the great offices and honours of their country; and that order having usurped one unjust advantage over the rest of their fellow-citizens, lest their poverty should render it ridiculous, it is thought reasonable that they should have another. The common law of England, indeed, is said to abhor perpetuities, and they are accordingly more restricted there than in any other European monarchy; though even England is not altogether without them. In Scotland, more than one fifth, perhaps more one third part of the whole lands in the country, are at present supposed to be under strict entail.

Great tracts of uncultivated land were in this manner not only engrossed by particular families, but the possibility of their being divided again was as much as possible precluded for ever. It seldom happens, however, that a great proprietor is a great improver. In the disorderly times which gave birth to those barbarous institutions, the great proprietor was sufficiently employed in defending his own territories, or in extending his jurisdiction and authority over those of his neighbours. He had no leisure to attend to the cultivation and improvement of land. When the establishment of law and order afforded this leisure, he often wanted the inclination, and almost always the requisite abilities. If the expense of his house and person either equalled or exceeded his revenue, as it did very frequently, he had no stock to employ in this manner. If he was an economist, he generally found it more profitable to employ his annual savings in new purchases than in the improvement of his old estate. To improve land with profit, like all other commercial projects, requires an exact attention to small savings and small gains, of which a

man born to a great fortune, even though naturally frugal, is very seldom capable. The situation of such a person naturally disposes him to attend rather to ornament, which pleases his fancy, than to profit, for which he has so little occasion. The elegance of his dress, of his equipage, of his house and household furniture, are objects which, from his infancy, he has been accustomed to have some anxiety about. The turn of mind which this habit naturally forms, follows him when he comes to think of the improvement of land. He embellishes, perhaps, four or five hundred acres in the neighbourhood of his house, at ten times the expense which the land is worth after all his improvements; and finds, that if he was to improve his whole estate in the same manner, and he has little taste for any other, he would be a bankrupt before he had finished the tenth part of it. There still remain, in both parts of the united kingdom, some great estates which have continued, without interruption, in the hands of the same family since the times of feudal anarchy. Compare the present condition of those estates with the possessions of the small proprietors in their neighbourhood, and you will require no other argument to convince you how unfavourable such extensive property is to improvement.

If little improvement was to be expected from such great proprietors, still less was to be hoped for from those who occupied the land under them. In the ancient state of Europe, the occupiers of land were all tenants at will. They were all, or almost all, slaves, but their slavery was of a milder kind than that known among the ancient Greeks and Romans, or even in our West Indian colonies. They were supposed to belong more directly to the land than to their master. They could, therefore, be sold with it, but not separately. They could marry, provided it was with the consent of their master; and he could not afterwards dissolve the marriage by selling the man and wife to different persons. If he maimed or murdered any of them, he was liable to some penalty, though generally but to a small one. They were not, however, capable of acquiring property. Whatever they acquired was acquired to their master, and he could take it from them at pleasure. Whatever cultivation and improvement could be carried on by means of such slaves, was properly carried on by their master. It was at his expense. The seed, the cattle, and the instruments of husbandry, were all his. It was for his benefit. Such slaves could acquire nothing but their daily maintenance. It was properly the proprietor himself, therefore, that in this case occupied his own lands, and cultivated them by his own bondmen. This species of slavery still subsists in Russia, Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, and other parts

of Germany. It is only in the western and south-western provinces of Europe that it has gradually been abolished altogether.

But if great improvements are seldom to be expected from great proprietors, they are least of all to be expected when they employ slaves for their workmen. The experience of all ages and nations, I believe, demonstrates that the work done by slaves, though it appears to cost only their maintenance, is in the end the dearest of any. A person who can acquire no property can have no other interest but to eat as much and to labour as little as possible. Whatever work he does beyond what is sufficient to purchase his own maintenance, can be squeezed out of him by violence only, and not by any interest of his own. In ancient Italy, how much the cultivation of corn degenerated, how unprofitable it became to the master, when is fell under the management of slaves, is remarked both by Pliny and Columella. In the time of Aristotle, it had not been much better in ancient Greece. Speaking of the ideal republic described in the laws of Plato, to maintain 5000 idle men (the number of warriors supposed necessary for its defence), together with their women and servants, would require, he says, a territory of boundless extent and fertility, like the plains of Babylon.

The pride of man makes him love to domineer, and nothing mortifies him to much as to be obliged to condescend to persuade his inferiors. Wherever the law allows it, and the nature of the work can afford it, therefore, he will generally prefer the service of slaves to that of freemen. The planting of sugar and tobacco can afford the expense of slave cultivation. The raising of corn, it seems, in the present times, cannot. In the English colonies, of which the principal produce is corn, the far greater part of the work is done by freemen. The late resolution of the Quakers in Pennsylvania, to set at liberty all their negro slaves, may satisfy us that their number cannot be very great. Had they made any considerable part of their property, such a resolution could never have been agreed to. In our sugar colonies, on the contrary, the whole work is done by slaves, and in our tobacco colonies a very great part of it. The profits of a sugar plantation in any of our West Indian colonies, are generally much greater than those of any other cultivation that is known either in Europe or America; and the profits of a tobacco plantation, though inferior to those of sugar, are superior to those of corn, as has already been observed. Both can afford the expense of slave cultivation, but sugar can afford it still better than tobacco. The number of negroes, accordingly, is much greater, in proportion to that of whites, in our sugar than in our tobacco colonies.

To the slave cultivators of ancient times, gradually succeeded a species of farmers, known at present in France by the name of metayers. They are called in Latin *Coloni Partiarii*. They have been so long in disuse in England, that at present I know no English name for them. The proprietor furnished them with the seed, cattle, and instruments of husbandry, the whole stock, in short, necessary for cultivating the farm. The produce was divided equally between the proprietor and the farmer, after setting aside what was judged necessary for keeping up the stock, which was restored to the proprietor, when the farmer either quitted or was turned out of the farm.

Land occupied by such tenants is properly cultivated at the expense of the proprietors, as much as that occupied by slaves. There is, however, one very essential difference between them. Such tenants being freemen, are capable of acquiring property; and having a certain proportion of the produce of the land, they have a plain interest that the whole produce should be as great as possible, in order that their own proportion may be so. A slave, on the contrary, who can acquire nothing but his maintenance, consults his own ease, by making the land produce as little as possible over and above that maintenance. It is probable that it was partly upon account of this advantage, and partly upon account of the encroachments which the sovereigns, always jealous of the great lords, gradually encouraged their villains to make upon their authority, and which seem, at least, to have been such as rendered this species of servitude altogether inconvenient, that tenure in villanage gradually wore out through the greater part of Europe. The time and manner, however, in which so important a revolution was brought about, is one of the most obscure points in modern history. The church of Rome claims great merit in it; and it is certain, that so early as the twelfth century, Alexander III. published a bull for the general emancipation of slaves. It seems, however, to have been rather a pious exhortation, than a law to which exact obedience was required from the faithful. Slavery continued to take place almost universally for several centuries afterwards, till it was gradually abolished by the joint operation of the two interests above mentioned; that of the proprietor on the one hand, and that of the sovereign on the other. A villain, enfranchised, and at the same time allowed to continue in possession of the land, having no stock of his own, could cultivate it only by means of what the landlord advanced to him, and must therefore have been what the French call a metayer.

It could never, however, be the interest even of this last species of cultivators, to lay out, in the further improvement of the land, any part of

the little stock which they might save from their own share of the produce; because the landlord, who laid out nothing, was to get one half of whatever it produced. The tithe, which is but a tenth of the produce, is found to be a very great hindrance to improvement. A tax, therefore, which amounted to one half, must have been an effectual bar to it. It might be the interest of a metayer to make the land produce as much as could be brought out of it by means of the stock furnished by the proprietor; but it could never be his interest to mix any part of his own with it. In France, where five parts out of six of the whole kingdom are said to be still occupied by this species of cultivators, the proprietors complain, that their metayers take every opportunity of employing their master's cattle rather in carriage than in cultivation; because, in the one case, they get the whole profits to themselves, in the other they share them with their landlord. This species of tenants still subsists in some parts of Scotland. They are called steel-bow tenants. Those ancient English tenants, who are said by Chief-Baron Gilbert and Dr Blackstone to have been rather bailiffs of the landlord than farmers, properly so called, were probably of the same kind.

To this species of tenantry succeeded, though by very slow degrees, farmers, properly so called, who cultivated the land with their own stock, paying a rent certain to the landlord. When such farmers have a lease for a term of years, they may sometimes find it for their interest to lay out part of their capital in the further improvement of the farm; because they may sometimes expect to recover it, with a large profit, before the expiration of the lease. The possession, even of such farmers, however, was long extremely precarious, and still is so in many parts of Europe. They could, before the expiration of their term, be legally ousted of their leases by a new purchaser; in England, even, by the fictitious action of a common recovery. If they were turned out illegally by the violence of their master, the action by which they obtained redress was extremely imperfect. It did not always reinstate them in the possession of the land, but gave them damages, which never amounted to a real loss. Even in England, the country, perhaps of Europe, where the yeomanry has always been most respected, it was not till about the 14th of Henry VII. that the action of ejectment was invented, by which the tenant recovers, not damages only, but possession, and in which his claim is not necessarily concluded by the uncertain decision of a single assize. This action has been found so effectual a remedy, that, in the modern practice, when the landlord has occasion to sue for the possession of the land, he seldom makes use of the actions which properly belong to him as a landlord, the

writ of right or the writ of entry, but sues in the name of his tenant, by the writ of ejectment. In England, therefore the security of the tenant is equal to that of the proprietor. In England, besides, a lease for life of forty shillings a-year value is a freehold, and entitles the lessee to a vote for a member of parliament; and as a great part of the yeomanry have freeholds of this kind, the whole order becomes respectable to their landlords, on account of the political consideration which this gives them. There is, I believe, nowhere in Europe, except in England, any instance of the tenant building upon the land of which he had no lease, and trusting that the honour of his landlord would take no advantage of so important an improvement. Those laws and customs, so favourable to the yeomanry, have perhaps contributed more to the present grandeur of England, than all their boasted regulations of commerce taken together.

The law which secures the longest leases against successors of every kind, is, so far as I know, peculiar to Great Britain. It was introduced into Scotland so early as 1449, by a law of James II. Its beneficial influence, however, has been much obstructed by entails; the heirs of entail being generally restrained from letting leases for any long term of years, frequently for more than one year. A late act of parliament has, in this respect, somewhat slackened their fetters, though they are still by much too strait. In Scotland, besides, as no leasehold gives a vote for a member of parliament, the yeomanry are upon this account less respectable to their landlords than in England.

In other parts of Europe, after it was found convenient to secure tenants both against heirs and purchasers, the term of their security was still limited to a very short period; in France, for example, to nine years from the commencement of the lease. It has in that country, indeed, been lately extended to twenty-seven, a period still too short to encourage the tenant to make the most important improvements. The proprietors of land were anciently the legislators of every part of Europe. The laws relating to land, therefore, were all calculated for what they supposed the interest of the proprietor. It was for his interest, they had imagined, that no lease granted by any of his predecessors should hinder him from enjoying, during a long term of years, the full value of his land. Avarice and injustice are always short-sighted, and they did not foresee how much this regulation must obstruct improvement, and thereby hurt, in the long-run, the real interest of the landlord.

The farmers, too, besides paying the rent, were anciently, it was supposed, bound to perform a great number of services to the landlord, which were seldom either specified in the lease, or regulated by any

precise rule, but by the use and wont of the manor or barony. These services, therefore, being almost entirely arbitrary, subjected the tenant to many vexations. In Scotland the abolition of all services not precisely stipulated in the lease, has, in the course of a few years, very much altered for the better the condition of the yeomanry of that country.

The public services to which the yeomanry were bound, were not less arbitrary than the private ones. To make and maintain the high roads, a servitude which still subsists, I believe, everywhere, though with different degrees of oppression in different countries, was not the only one. When the king's troops, when his household, or his officers of any kind, passed through any part of the country, the yeomanry were bound to provide them with horses, carriages, and provisions, at a price regulated by the purveyor. Great Britain is, I believe, the only monarchy in Europe where the oppression of purveyance has been entirely abolished. It still subsists in France and Germany.

The public taxes, to which they were subject, were as irregular and oppressive as the services. The ancient lords, though extremely unwilling to grant, themselves, any pecuniary aid to their sovereign, easily allowed him to tallage, as they called it, their tenants, and had not knowledge enough to foresee how much this must, in the end, affect their own revenue. The taille, as it still subsists in France, may serve as an example of those ancient tallages. It is a tax upon the supposed profits of the farmer, which they estimate by the stock that he has upon the farm. It is his interest, therefore, to appear to have as little as possible, and consequently to employ as little as possible in its cultivation, and none in its improvement. Should any stock happen to accumulate in the hands of a French farmer, the taille is almost equal to a prohibition of its ever being employed upon the land. This tax, besides, is supposed to dishonour whoever is subject to it, and to degrade him below, not only the rank of a gentleman, but that of a burgher; and whoever rents the lands of another becomes subject to it. No gentleman, nor even any burgher, who has stock, will submit to this degradation. This tax, therefore, not only hinders the stock which accumulates upon the land from being employed in its improvement, but drives away all other stock from it. The ancient tenths and fifteenths, so usual in England in former times, seem, so far as they affected the land, to have been taxes of the same nature with the taille.

Under all these discouragements, little improvement could be expected from the occupiers of land. That order of people, with all the liberty and security which law can give, must always improve under

great disadvantage. The farmer, compared with the proprietor, is as a merchant who trades with borrowed money, compared with one who trades with his own. The stock of both may improve; but that of the one, with only equal good conduct, must always improve more slowly than that of the other, on account of the large share of the profits which is consumed by the interest of the loan. The lands cultivated by the farmer must, in the same manner, with only equal good conduct, be improved more slowly than those cultivated by the proprietor, on account of the large share of the produce which is consumed in the rent, and which, had the farmer been proprietor, he might have employed in the further improvement of the land. The station of a farmer, besides, is, from the nature of things, inferior to that of a proprietor. Through the greater part of Europe, the yeomanry are regarded as an inferior rank of people, even to the better sort of tradesmen and mechanics, and in all parts of Europe to the great merchants and master manufacturers. It can seldom happen, therefore, that a man of any considerable stock should quit the superior, in order to place himself in an inferior station. Even in the present state of Europe, therefore, little stock is likely to go from any other profession to the improvement of land in the way of farming. More does, perhaps, in Great Britain than in any other country, though even there the great stocks which are in some places employed in farming, have generally been acquired by farming, the trade, perhaps, in which, of all others, stock is commonly acquired most slowly. After small proprietors, however, rich and great farmers are in every country the principal improvers. There are more such, perhaps, in England than in any other European monarchy. In the republican governments of Holland, and of Berne in Switzerland, the farmers are said to be not inferior to those of England.

The ancient policy of Europe was, over and above all this, unfavourable to the improvement and cultivation of land, whether carried on by the proprietor or by the farmer; first, by the general prohibition of the exportation of corn, without a special licence, which seems to have been a very universal regulation; and, secondly, by the restraints which were laid upon the inland commerce, not only of corn, but of almost every other part of the produce of the farm, by the absurd laws against engrossers, regraters, and forestallers, and by the privileges of fairs and markets. It has already been observed in what manner the prohibition of the exportation of corn, together with some encouragement given to the importation of foreign corn, obstructed the cultivation of ancient Italy, naturally the most fertile country in Europe, and at that time the seat of

the greatest empire in the world. To what degree such restraints upon the inland commerce of this commodity, joined to the general prohibition of exportation, must have discouraged the cultivation of countries less fertile, and less favourably circumstanced, it is not, perhaps, very easy to imagine.

CHAP. III. OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF CITIES AND TOWNS, AFTER THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

The inhabitants of cities and towns were, after the fall of the Roman empire, not more favoured than those of the country. They consisted, indeed, of a very different order of people from the first inhabitants of the ancient republics of Greece and Italy. These last were composed chiefly of the proprietors of lands, among whom the public territory was originally divided, and who found it convenient to build their houses in the neighbourhood of one another, and to surround them with a wall, for the sake of common defence. After the fall of the Roman empire, on the contrary, the proprietors of land seem generally to have lived in fortified castles on their own estates, and in the midst of their own tenants and dependents. The towns were chiefly inhabited by tradesmen and mechanics, who seem, in those days, to have been of servile, or very nearly of servile condition. The privileges which we find granted by ancient charters to the inhabitants of some of the principal towns in Europe, sufficiently show what they were before those grants. The people to whom it is granted as a privilege, that they might give away their own daughters in marriage without the consent of their lord, that upon their death their own children, and not their lord, should succeed to their goods, and that they might dispose of their own effects by will, must, before those grants, have been either altogether, or very nearly, in the same state of villanage with the occupiers of land in the country.

They seem, indeed, to have been a very poor, mean set of people, who seemed to travel about with their goods from place to place and from fair to fair, like the hawkers and pedlars of the present times. In all the different countries of Europe then, in the same manner as in several of the Tartar governments of Asia at present, taxes used to be levied upon the persons and goods of travellers, when they passed through certain manors, when they went over certain bridges, when they carried about their goods from place to place in a fair, when they erected in it a booth or stall to sell them in. These different taxes were known in England by the names of passage, pontage, lastage, and stallage. Sometimes the king, sometimes a great lord, who had, it seems, upon some occasions, authority to do this, would grant to particular traders, to such particularly as lived in their own demesnes, a general exemption from such taxes.

Such traders, though in other respects of servile, or very nearly of servile condition, were upon this account called free traders. They, in return, usually paid to their protector a sort of annual poll-tax. In those days protection was seldom granted without a valuable consideration, and this tax might perhaps be considered as compensation for what their patrons might lose by their exemption from other taxes. At first, both those poll-taxes and those exemptions seem to have been altogether personal, and to have affected only particular individuals, during either their lives, or the pleasure of their protectors. In the very imperfect accounts which have been published from Doomsday-book, of several of the towns of England, mention is frequently made, sometimes of the tax which particular burghers paid, each of them, either to the king, or to some other great lord, for this sort of protection, and sometimes of the general amount only of all those taxes.[31]*

But how servile soever may have been originally the condition of the inhabitants of the towns, it appears evidently, that they arrived at liberty and independency much earlier than the occupiers of land in the country. That part of the king's revenue which arose from such poll-taxes in any particular town, used commonly to be let in farm, during a term of years, for a rent certain, sometimes to the sheriff of the county, and sometimes to other persons. The burghers themselves frequently got credit enough to be admitted to farm the revenues of this sort which arose out of their own town, they becoming jointly and severally answerable for the whole rent.[32]* To let a farm in this manner, was quite agreeable to the usual economy of, I believe, the sovereigns of all the different countries of Europe, who used frequently to let whole manors to all the tenants of those manors, they becoming jointly and severally answerable for the whole rent; but in return being allowed to collect it in their own way, and to pay it into the king's exchequer by the hands of their own bailiff, and being thus altogether freed from the insolence of the king's officers; a circumstance in those days regarded as of the greatest importance.

At first, the farm of the town was probably let to the burghers, in the same manner as it had been to other farmers, for a term of years only. In process of time, however, it seems to have become the general practice to grant it to them in fee, that is for ever, reserving a rent certain, never afterwards to be augmented. The payment having thus became perpetual, the exemptions, in return, for which it was made, naturally became perpetual too. Those exemptions, therefore, ceased to be personal, and could not afterwards be considered as belonging to individuals, as individuals, but as burghers of a particular burgh, which, upon this

account, was called a free burgh, for the same reason that they had been called free burghers or free traders.

Along with this grant, the important privileges, above mentioned, that they might give away their own daughters in marriage, that their children should succeed to them, and that they might dispose of their own effects by will, were generally bestowed upon the burghers of the town to whom it was given. Whether such privileges had before been usually granted, along with the freedom of trade, to particular burghers, as individuals, I know not. I reckon it not improbable that they were, though I cannot produce any direct evidence of it. But however this may have been, the principal attributes of villanage and slavery being thus taken away from them, they now at least became really free, in our present sense of the word freedom.

Nor was this all. They were generally at the same time erected into a commonalty or corporation, with the privilege of having magistrates and a town-council of their own, of making bye-laws for their own government, of building walls for their own defence, and of reducing all their inhabitants under a sort of military discipline, by obliging them to watch and ward; that is, as anciently understood, to guard and defend those walls against all attacks and surprises, by night as well as by day. In England they were generally exempted from suit to the hundred and county courts; and all such pleas as should arise among them, the pleas of the crown excepted, were left to the decision of their own magistrates. In other countries, much greater and more extensive jurisdictions were frequently granted to them.[33*]

It might, probably, be necessary to grant to such towns as were admitted to farm their own revenues, some sort of compulsive jurisdiction to oblige their own citizens to make payment. In those disorderly times, it might have been extremely inconvenient to have left them to seek this sort of justice from any other tribunal. But it must seem extraordinary, that the sovereigns of all the different countries of Europe should have exchanged in this manner for a rent certain, never more to be augmented, that branch of their revenue, which was, perhaps, of all others, the most likely to be improved by the natural course of things, without either expense or attention of their own; and that they should, besides, have in this manner voluntarily erected a sort of independent republics in the heart of their own dominions.

In order to understand this, it must be remembered, that, in those days, the sovereign of perhaps no country in Europe was able to protect, through the whole extent of his dominions, the weaker part of his

subjects from the oppression of the great lords. Those whom the law could not protect, and who were not strong enough to defend themselves, were obliged either to have recourse to the protection of some great lord, and in order to obtain it, to become either his slaves or vassals; or to enter into a league of mutual defence for the common protection of one another. The inhabitants of cities and burghs, considered as single individuals, had no power to defend themselves; but by entering into a league of mutual defence with their neighbours, they were capable of making no contemptible resistance. The lords despised the burghers, whom they considered not only as a different order, but as a parcel of emancipated slaves, almost of a different species from themselves. The wealth of the burghers never failed to provoke their envy and indignation, and they plundered them upon every occasion without mercy or remorse. The burghers naturally hated and feared the lords. The king hated and feared them too; but though, perhaps, he might despise, he had no reason either to hate or fear the burghers. Mutual interest, therefore, disposed them to support the king, and the king to support them against the lords. They were the enemies of his enemies, and it was his interest to render them as secure and independent of those enemies as he could. By granting them magistrates of their own, the privilege of making bye-laws for their own government, that of building walls for their own defence, and that of reducing all their inhabitants under a sort of military discipline, he gave them all the means of security and independency of the barons which it was in his power to bestow. Without the establishment of some regular government of this kind, without some authority to compel their inhabitants to act according to some certain plan or system, no voluntary league of mutual defence could either have afforded them any permanent security, or have enabled them to give the king any considerable support. By granting them the farm of their own town in fee, he took away from those whom he wished to have for his friends, and, if one may say so, for his allies, all ground of jealousy and suspicion, that he was ever afterwards to oppress them, either by raising the farm-rent of their town, or by granting it to some other farmer.

The princes who lived upon the worst terms with their barons, seem accordingly to have been the most liberal in grants of this kind to their burghs. King John of England, for example, appears to have been a most munificent benefactor to his towns.[34*] Philip I. of France lost all authority over his barons. Towards the end of his reign, his son Lewis, known afterwards by the name of Lewis the Fat, consulted, according to Father Daniel, with the bishops of the royal demesnes, concerning the most

proper means of restraining the violence of the great lords. Their advice consisted of two different proposals. One was to erect a new order of jurisdiction, by establishing magistrates and a town-council in every considerable town of his demesnes. The other was to form a new militia, by making the inhabitants of those towns, under the command of their own magistrates, march out upon proper occasions to the assistance of the king. It is from this period, according to the French antiquarians, that we are to date the institution of the magistrates and councils of cities in France. It was during the unprosperous reigns of the princes of the house of Suabia, that the greater part of the free towns of Germany received the first grants of their privileges, and that the famous Hanseatic league first became formidable.[35*]

The militia of the cities seems, in those times, not to have been inferior to that of the country; and as they could be more readily assembled upon any sudden occasion, they frequently had the advantage in their disputes with the neighbouring lords. In countries such as Italy or Switzerland, in which, on account either of their distance from the principal seat of government, of the natural strength of the country itself, or of some other reason, the sovereign came to lose the whole of his authority; the cities generally became independent republics, and conquered all the nobility in their neighbourhood; obliging them to pull down their castles in the country, and to live, like other peaceable inhabitants, in the city. This is the short history of the republic of Berne, as well as of several other cities in Switzerland. If you except Venice, for of that city the history is somewhat different, it is the history of all the considerable Italian republics, of which so great a number arose and perished between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the sixteenth century.

In countries such as France and England, where the authority of the sovereign, though frequently very low, never was destroyed altogether, the cities had no opportunity of becoming entirely independent. They became, however, so considerable, that the sovereign could impose no tax upon them, besides the stated farm-rent of the town, without their own consent. They were, therefore, called upon to send deputies to the general assembly of the states of the kingdom, where they might join with the clergy and the barons in granting, upon urgent occasions, some extraordinary aid to the king. Being generally, too, more favourable to his power, their deputies seem sometimes to have been employed by him as a counterbalance in these assemblies to the authority of the great lords.

Hence the origin of the representation of burghs in the states-general of all great monarchies in Europe.

Order and good government, and along with them the liberty and security of individuals, were in this manner established in cities, at a time when the occupiers of land in the country, were exposed to every sort of violence. But men in this defenceless state naturally content themselves with their necessary subsistence; because, to acquire more, might only tempt the injustice of their oppressors. On the contrary, when they are secure of enjoying the fruits of their industry, they naturally exert it to better their condition, and to acquire not only the necessaries, but the conveniencies and elegancies of life. That industry, therefore, which aims at something more than necessary subsistence, was established in cities long before it was commonly practised by the occupiers of land in the country. If, in the hands of a poor cultivator, oppressed with the servitude of villanage, some little stock should accumulate, he would naturally conceal it with great care from his master, to whom it would otherwise have belonged, and take the first opportunity of running away to a town. The law was at that time so indulgent to the inhabitants of towns, and so desirous of diminishing the authority of the lords over those of the country, that if he could conceal himself there from the pursuit of his lord for a year, he was free for ever. Whatever stock, therefore, accumulated in the hands of the industrious part of the inhabitants of the country, naturally took refuge in cities, as the only sanctuaries in which it could be secure to the person that acquired it.

The inhabitants of a city, it is true, must always ultimately derive their subsistence, and the whole materials and means of their industry, from the country. But those of a city, situated near either the sea-coast or the banks of a navigable river, are not necessarily confined to derive them from the country in their neighbourhood. They have a much wider range, and may draw them from the most remote corners of the world, either in exchange for the manufactured produce of their own industry, or by performing the office of carriers between distant countries, and exchanging the produce of one for that of another. A city might, in this manner, grow up to great wealth and splendour, while not only the country in its neighbourhood, but all those to which it traded, were in poverty and wretchedness. Each of those countries, perhaps, taken singly, could afford it but a small part, either of its subsistence or of its employment; but all of them taken together, could afford it both a great subsistence and a great employment. There were, however, within the narrow circle of the commerce of those times, some countries that were

opulent and industrious. Such was the Greek empire as long as it subsisted, and that of the Saracens during the reigns of the Abassides. Such, too, was Egypt till it was conquered by the Turks, some part of the coast of Barbary, and all those provinces of Spain which were under the government of the Moors.

The cities of Italy seem to have been the first in Europe which were raised by commerce to any considerable degree of opulence. Italy lay in the centre of what was at that time the improved and civilized part of the world. The crusades, too, though, by the great waste of stock and destruction of inhabitants which they occasioned, they must necessarily have retarded the progress of the greater part of Europe, were extremely favourable to that of some Italian cities. The great armies which marched from all parts to the conquest of the Holy Land, gave extraordinary encouragement to the shipping of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, sometimes in transporting them thither, and always in supplying them with provisions. They were the commissaries, if one may say so, of those armies; and the most destructive frenzy that ever befel the European nations, was a source of opulence to those republics.

The inhabitants of trading cities, by importing the improved manufactures and expensive luxuries of richer countries, afforded some food to the vanity of the great proprietors, who eagerly purchased them with great quantities of the rude produce of their own lands. The commerce of a great part of Europe in those times, accordingly, consisted chiefly in the exchange of their own rude, for the manufactured produce of more civilized nations. Thus the wool of England used to be exchanged for the wines of France, and the fine cloths of Flanders, in the same manner as the corn in Poland is at this day, exchanged for the wines and brandies of France, and for the silks and velvets of France and Italy.

A taste for the finer and more improved manufactures was, in this manner, introduced by foreign commerce into countries where no such works were carried on. But when this taste became so general as to occasion a considerable demand, the merchants, in order to save the expense of carriage, naturally endeavoured to establish some manufactures of the same kind in their own country. Hence the origin of the first manufactures for distant sale, that seem to have been established in the western provinces of Europe, after the fall of the Roman empire.

No large country, it must be observed, ever did or could subsist without some sort of manufactures being carried on in it; and when it is said of any such country that it has no manufactures, it must always be understood of the finer and more improved, or of such as are fit for

distant sale. In every large country, both the clothing and household furniture of the far greater part of the people, are the produce of their own industry. This is even more universally the case in those poor countries which are commonly said to have no manufactures, than in those rich ones that are said to abound in them. In the latter you will generally find, both in the clothes and household furniture of the lowest rank of people, a much greater proportion of foreign productions than in the former.

Those manufactures which are fit for distant sale, seem to have been introduced into different countries in two different ways.

Sometimes they have been introduced in the manner above mentioned, by the violent operation, if one may say so, of the stocks of particular merchants and undertakers, who established them in imitation of some foreign manufactures of the same kind. Such manufactures, therefore, are the offspring of foreign commerce; and such seem to have been the ancient manufactures of silks, velvets, and brocades, which flourished in Lucca during the thirteenth century. They were banished from thence by the tyranny of one of Machiavel's heroes, Castruccio Castracani. In 1810, nine hundred families were driven out of Lucca, of whom thirty-one retired to Venice, and offered to introduce there the silk manufacture.[36*] Their offer was accepted, many privileges were conferred upon them, and they began the manufacture with three hundred workmen. Such, too, seem to have been the manufactures of fine cloths that anciently flourished in Flanders, and which were introduced into England in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, and such are the present silk manufactures of Lyons and Spitalfields. Manufactures introduced in this manner are generally employed upon foreign materials, being imitations of foreign manufactures. When the Venetian manufacture was first established, the materials were all brought from Sicily and the Levant. The more ancient manufacture of Lucca was likewise carried on with foreign materials. The cultivation of mulberry trees, and the breeding of silk-worms, seem not to have been common in the northern parts of Italy before the sixteenth century. Those arts were not introduced into France till the reign of Charles IX. The manufactures of Flanders were carried on chiefly with Spanish and English wool. Spanish wool was the material, not of the first woollen manufacture of England, but of the first that was fit for distant sale. More than one half the materials of the Lyons manufacture is at this day foreign silk; when it was first established, the whole, or very nearly the whole, was so. No part of the materials of the Spitalfields manufacture is ever likely to be

the produce of England. The seat of such manufactures, as they are generally introduced by the scheme and project of a few individuals, is sometimes established in a maritime city, and sometimes in an inland town, according as their interest, judgment, or caprice, happen to determine.

At other times, manufactures for distant sale grow up naturally, and as it were of their own accord, by the gradual refinement of those household and coarser manufactures which must at all times be carried on even in the poorest and rudest countries. Such manufactures are generally employed upon the materials which the country produces, and they seem frequently to have been first refined and improved in such inland countries as were not, indeed, at a very great, but at a considerable distance from the sea-coast, and sometimes even from all water carriage. An inland country, naturally fertile and easily cultivated, produces a great surplus of provisions beyond what is necessary for maintaining the cultivators; and on account of the expense of land carriage, and inconveniency of river navigation, it may frequently be difficult to send this surplus abroad. Abundance, therefore, renders provisions cheap, and encourages a great number of workmen to settle in the neighbourhood, who find that their industry can there procure them more of the necessaries and conveniences of life than in other places. They work up the materials of manufacture which the land produces, and exchange their finished work, or, what is the same thing, the price of it, for more materials and provisions. They give a new value to the surplus part of the rude produce, by saving the expense of carrying it to the water-side, or to some distant market; and they furnish the cultivators with something in exchange for it, that is either useful or agreeable to them, upon easier terms than they could have obtained it before. The cultivators get a better price for their surplus produce, and can purchase cheaper other conveniences which they have occasion for. They are thus both encouraged and enabled to increase this surplus produce by a further improvement and better cultivation of the land; and as the fertility of the land had given birth to the manufacture, so the progress of the manufacture re-acts upon the land, and increases still further its fertility. The manufacturers first supply the neighbourhood, and afterwards, as their work improves and refines, more distant markets. For though neither the rude produce, nor even the coarse manufacture, could, without the greatest difficulty, support the expense of a considerable land-carriage, the refined and improved manufacture easily may. In a small bulk it frequently contains the price of a great quantity of rude

produce. A piece of fine cloth, for example which weighs only eighty pounds, contains in it the price, not only of eighty pounds weight of wool, but sometimes of several thousand weight of corn, the maintenance of the different working people, and of their immediate employers. The corn which could with difficulty have been carried abroad in its own shape, is in this manner virtually exported in that of the complete manufacture, and may easily be sent to the remotest corners of the world. In this manner have grown up naturally, and, as it were, of their own accord, the manufactures of Leeds, Halifax, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Wolverhampton. Such manufactures are the offspring of agriculture. In the modern history of Europe, their extension and improvement have generally been posterior to those which were the offspring of foreign commerce. England was noted for the manufacture of fine cloths made of Spanish wool, more than a century before any of those which now flourish in the places above mentioned were fit for foreign sale. The extension and improvement of these last could not take place but in consequence of the extension and improvement of agriculture, the last and greatest effect of foreign commerce, and of the manufactures immediately introduced by it, and which I shall now proceed to explain.

CHAP. IV. HOW THE COMMERCE OF TOWNS CONTRIBUTED TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

The increase and riches of commercial and manufacturing towns contributed to the improvement and cultivation of the countries to which they belonged, in three different ways:

First, by affording a great and ready market for the rude produce of the country, they gave encouragement to its cultivation and further improvement. This benefit was not even confined to the countries in which they were situated, but extended more or less to all those with which they had any dealings. To all of them they afforded a market for some part either of their rude or manufactured produce, and, consequently, gave some encouragement to the industry and improvement of all. Their own country, however, on account of its neighbourhood, necessarily derived the greatest benefit from this market. Its rude produce being charged with less carriage, the traders could pay the growers a better price for it, and yet afford it as cheap to the consumers as that of more distant countries.

Secondly, the wealth acquired by the inhabitants of cities was frequently employed in purchasing such lands as were to be sold, of which a great part would frequently be uncultivated. Merchants are commonly ambitious of becoming country gentlemen, and, when they do, they are generally the best of all improvers. A merchant is accustomed to employ his money chiefly in profitable projects; whereas a mere country gentleman is accustomed to employ it chiefly in expense. The one often sees his money go from him, and return to him again with a profit; the other, when once he parts with it, very seldom expects to see any more of it. Those different habits naturally affect their temper and disposition in every sort of business. The merchant is commonly a bold, a country gentleman a timid undertaker. The one is not afraid to lay out at once a large capital upon the improvement of his land, when he has a probable prospect of raising the value of it in proportion to the expense; the other, if he has any capital, which is not always the case, seldom ventures to employ it in this manner. If he improves at all, it is commonly not with a capital, but with what he can save out of his annual revenue. Whoever has had the fortune to live in a mercantile town, situated in an unimproved country, must have frequently observed how

much more spirited the operations of merchants were in this way, than those of mere country gentlemen. The habits, besides, of order, economy, and attention, to which mercantile business naturally forms a merchant, render him much fitter to execute, with profit and success, any project of improvement.

Thirdly, and lastly, commerce and manufactures gradually introduced order and good government, and with them the liberty and security of individuals, among the inhabitants of the country, who had before lived almost in a continual state of war with their neighbours, and of servile dependency upon their superiors. This, though it has been the least observed, is by far the most important of all their effects. Mr Hume is the only writer who, so far as I know, has hitherto taken notice of it.

In a country which has neither foreign commerce nor any of the finer manufactures, a great proprietor, having nothing for which he can exchange the greater part of the produce of his lands which is over and above the maintenance of the cultivators, consumes the whole in rustic hospitality at home. If this surplus produce is sufficient to maintain a hundred or a thousand men, he can make use of it in no other way than by maintaining a hundred or a thousand men. He is at all times, therefore, surrounded with a multitude of retainers and dependents, who, having no equivalent to give in return for their maintenance, but being fed entirely by his bounty, must obey him, for the same reason that soldiers obey the prince who pays them. Before the extension of commerce and manufactures in Europe, the hospitality of the rich and the great, from the sovereign down to the smallest baron, exceeded every thing which, in the present times, we can easily form a notion of. Westminster-hall was the dining-room of William Rufus, and might frequently, perhaps, not be too large for his company. It was reckoned a piece of magnificence in Thomas Becket, that he strewed the floor of his hall with clean hay or rushes in the season, in order that the knights and squires, who could not get seats, might not spoil their fine clothes when they sat down on the floor to eat their dinner. The great Earl of Warwick is said to have entertained every day, at his different manors, 30,000 people; and though the number here may have been exaggerated, it must, however, have been very great to admit of such exaggeration. A hospitality nearly of the same kind was exercised not many years ago in many different parts of the Highlands of Scotland. It seems to be common in all nations to whom commerce and manufactures are little known. I have seen, says Doctor Pocock, an Arabian chief dine in the streets of a town where he had come to sell his cattle, and invited all

passengers, even common beggars, to sit down with him and partake of his banquet.

The occupiers of land were in every respect as dependent upon the great proprietor as his retainers. Even such of them as were not in a state of villanage, were tenants at will, who paid a rent in no respect equivalent to the subsistence which the land afforded them. A crown, half a crown, a sheep, a lamb, was some years ago, in the Highlands of Scotland, a common rent for lands which maintained a family. In some places it is so at this day; nor will money at present purchase a greater quantity of commodities there than in other places. In a country where the surplus produce of a large estate must be consumed upon the estate itself, it will frequently be more convenient for the proprietor, that part of it be consumed at a distance from his own house, provided they who consume it are as dependent upon him as either his retainers or his menial servants. He in thereby saved from the embarrassment of either too large a company, or too large a family. A tenant at will, who possesses land sufficient to maintain his family for little more than a quit-rent, is as dependent upon the proprietor as any servant or retainer whatever, and must obey him with as little reserve. Such a proprietor, as he feeds his servants and retainers at his own house, so he feeds his tenants at their houses. The subsistence of both is derived from his bounty, and its continuance depends upon his good pleasure.

Upon the authority which the great proprietors necessarily had, in such a state of things, over their tenants and retainers, was founded the power of the ancient barons. They necessarily became the judges in peace, and the leaders in war, of all who dwelt upon their estates. They could maintain order, and execute the law, within their respective demesnes, because each of them could there turn the whole force of all the inhabitants against the injustice of any one. No other person had sufficient authority to do this. The king, in particular, had not. In those ancient times, he was little more than the greatest proprietor in his dominions, to whom, for the sake of common defence against their common enemies, the other great proprietors paid certain respects. To have enforced payment of a small debt within the lands of a great proprietor, where all the inhabitants were armed, and accustomed to stand by one another, would have cost the king, had he attempted it by his own authority, almost the same effort as to extinguish a civil war. He was, therefore, obliged to abandon the administration of justice, through the greater part of the country, to those who were capable of

administering it; and, for the same reason, to leave the command of the country militia to those whom that militia would obey.

It is a mistake to imagine that those territorial jurisdictions took their origin from the feudal law. Not only the highest jurisdictions, both civil and criminal, but the power of levying troops, of coining money, and even that of making bye-laws for the government of their own people, were all rights possessed allodially by the great proprietors of land, several centuries before even the name of the feudal law was known in Europe. The authority and jurisdiction of the Saxon lords in England appear to have been as great before the Conquest as that of any of the Norman lords after it. But the feudal law is not supposed to have become the common law of England till after the Conquest. That the most extensive authority and jurisdictions were possessed by the great lords in France allodially, long before the feudal law was introduced into that country, is a matter of fact that admits of no doubt. That authority, and those jurisdictions, all necessarily flowed from the state of property and manners just now described. Without remounting to the remote antiquities of either the French or English monarchies, we may find, in much later times, many proofs that such effects must always flow from such causes. It is not thirty years ago since Mr Cameron of Lochiel, a gentleman of Lochaber in Scotland, without any legal warrant whatever, not being what was then called a lord of regality, nor even a tenant in chief, but a vassal of the Duke of Argyll, and without being so much as a justice of peace, used, notwithstanding, to exercise the highest criminal jurisdictions over his own people. He is said to have done so with great equity, though without any of the formalities of justice; and it is not improbable that the state of that part of the country at that time made it necessary for him to assume this authority, in order to maintain the public peace. That gentleman, whose rent never exceeded L.500 a-year, carried, in 1745, 800 of his own people into the rebellion with him.

The introduction of the feudal law, so far from extending, may be regarded as an attempt to moderate, the authority of the great allodial lords. It established a regular subordination, accompanied with a long train of services and duties, from the king down to the smallest proprietor. During the minority of the proprietor, the rent, together with the management of his lands, fell into the hands of his immediate superior; and, consequently, those of all great proprietors into the hands of the king, who was charged with the maintenance and education of the pupil, and who, from his authority as guardian, was supposed to have a right of disposing of him in marriage, provided it was in a manner not

unsuitable to his rank. But though this institution necessarily tended to strengthen the authority of the king, and to weaken that of the great proprietors, it could not do either sufficiently for establishing order and good government among the inhabitants of the country; because it could not alter sufficiently that state of property and manners from which the disorders arose. The authority of government still continued to be, as before, too weak in the head, and too strong in the inferior members; and the excessive strength of the inferior members was the cause of the weakness of the head. After the institution of feudal subordination, the king was as incapable of restraining the violence of the great lords as before. They still continued to make war according to their own discretion, almost continually upon one another, and very frequently upon the king; and the open country still continued to be a scene of violence, rapine, and disorder.

But what all the violence of the feudal institutions could never have effected, the silent and insensible operation of foreign commerce and manufactures gradually brought about. These gradually furnished the great proprietors with something for which they could exchange the whole surplus produce of their lands, and which they could consume themselves, without sharing it either with tenants or retainers. All for ourselves, and nothing for other people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind. As soon, therefore, as they could find a method of consuming the whole value of their rents themselves, they had no disposition to share them with any other persons. For a pair of diamond buckles, perhaps, or for something as frivolous and useless, they exchanged the maintenance, or, what in the same thing, the price of the maintenance of 1000 men for a year, and with it the whole weight and authority which it could give them. The buckles, however, were to be all their own, and no other human creature was to have any share of them; whereas, in the more ancient method of expense, they must have shared with at least 1000 people. With the judges that were to determine the preference, this difference was perfectly decisive; and thus, for the gratification of the most childish, the meanest, and the most sordid of all vanities they gradually bartered their whole power and authority.

In a country where there is no foreign commerce, nor any of the finer manufactures, a man of L.10,000 a-year cannot well employ his revenue in any other way than in maintaining, perhaps, 1000 families, who are all of them necessarily at his command. In the present state of Europe, a man of L.10,000 a-year can spend his whole revenue, and he generally

does so, without directly maintaining twenty people, or being able to command more than ten footmen, not worth the commanding. Indirectly, perhaps, he maintains as great, or even a greater number of people, than he could have done by the ancient method of expense. For though the quantity of precious productions for which he exchanges his whole revenue be very small, the number of workmen employed in collecting and preparing it must necessarily have been very great. Its great price generally arises from the wages of their labour, and the profits of all their immediate employers. By paying that price, he indirectly pays all those wages and profits, and thus indirectly contributes to the maintenance of all the workmen and their employers. He generally contributes, however, but a very small proportion to that of each; to a very few, perhaps, not a tenth, to many not a hundredth, and to some not a thousandth, or even a ten thousandth part of their whole annual maintenance. Though he contributes, therefore, to the maintenance of them all, they are all more or less independent of him, because generally they can all be maintained without him.

When the great proprietors of land spend their rents in maintaining their tenants and retainers, each of them maintains entirely all his own tenants and all his own retainers. But when they spend them in maintaining tradesmen and artificers, they may, all of them taken together, perhaps maintain as great, or, on account of the waste which attends rustic hospitality, a greater number of people than before. Each of them, however, taken singly, contributes often but a very small share to the maintenance of any individual of this greater number. Each tradesman or artificer derives his subsistence from the employment, not of one, but of a hundred or a thousand different customers. Though in some measure obliged to them all, therefore, he is not absolutely dependent upon any one of them.

The personal expense of the great proprietors having in this manner gradually increased, it was impossible that the number of their retainers should not as gradually diminish, till they were at last dismissed altogether. The same cause gradually led them to dismiss the unnecessary part of their tenants. Farms were enlarged, and the occupiers of land, notwithstanding the complaints of depopulation, reduced to the number necessary for cultivating it, according to the imperfect state of cultivation and improvement in those times. By the removal of the unnecessary mouths, and by exacting from the farmer the full value of the farm, a greater surplus, or, what is the same thing, the price of a greater surplus, was obtained for the proprietor, which the merchants and manufacturers

soon furnished him with a method of spending upon his own person, in the same manner as he had done the rest. The cause continuing to operate, he was desirous to raise his rents above what his lands, in the actual state of their improvement, could afford. His tenants could agree to this upon one condition only, that they should be secured in their possession for such a term of years as might give them time to recover, with profit, whatever they should lay out in the further improvement of the land. The expensive vanity of the landlord made him willing to accept of this condition; and hence the origin of long leases.

Even a tenant at will, who pays the full value of the land, is not altogether dependent upon the landlord. The pecuniary advantages which they receive from one another are mutual and equal, and such a tenant will expose neither his life nor his fortune in the service of the proprietor. But if he has a lease for a long term of years, he is altogether independent; and his landlord must not expect from him even the most trifling service, beyond what is either expressly stipulated in the lease, or imposed upon him by the common and known law of the country.

The tenants having in this manner become independent, and the retainers being dismissed, the great proprietors were no longer capable of interrupting the regular execution of justice, or of disturbing the peace of the country. Having sold their birth-right, not like Esau, for a mess of pottage in time of hunger and necessity, but, in the wantonness of plenty, for trinkets and baubles, fitter to be the playthings of children than the serious pursuits of men, they became as insignificant as any substantial burgher or tradesmen in a city. A regular government was established in the country as well as in the city, nobody having sufficient power to disturb its operations in the one, any more than in the other.

It does not, perhaps, relate to the present subject, but I cannot help remarking it, that very old families, such as have possessed some considerable estate from father to son for many successive generations, are very rare in commercial countries. In countries which have little commerce, on the contrary, such as Wales, or the Highlands of Scotland, they are very common. The Arabian histories seem to be all full of genealogies; and there is a history written by a Tartar Khan, which has been translated into several European languages, and which contains scarce any thing else; a proof that ancient families are very common among those nations. In countries where a rich man can spend his revenue in no other way than by maintaining as many people as it can maintain, he is apt to run out, and his benevolence, it seems, is seldom so violent as to attempt to maintain more than he can afford. But where he

can spend the greatest revenue upon his own person, he frequently has no bounds to his expense, because he frequently has no bounds to his vanity, or to his affection for his own person. In commercial countries, therefore, riches, in spite of the most violent regulations of law to prevent their dissipation, very seldom remain long in the same family. Among simple nations, on the contrary, they frequently do, without any regulations of law; for among nations of shepherds, such as the Tartars and Arabs, the consumable nature of their property necessarily renders all such regulations impossible.

A revolution of the greatest importance to the public happiness, was in this manner brought about by two different orders of people, who had not the least intention to serve the public. To gratify the most childish vanity was the sole motive of the great proprietors. The merchants and artificers, much less ridiculous, acted merely from a view to their own interest, and in pursuit of their own pedlar principle of turning a penny wherever a penny was to be got. Neither of them had either knowledge or foresight of that great revolution which the folly of the one, and the industry of the other, was gradually bringing about.

It was thus, that, through the greater part of Europe, the commerce and manufactures of cities, instead of being the effect, have been the cause and occasion of the improvement and cultivation of the country.

This order, however, being contrary to the natural course of things, is necessarily both slow and uncertain. Compare the slow progress of those European countries of which the wealth depends very much upon their commerce and manufactures, with the rapid advances of our North American colonies, of which the wealth is founded altogether in agriculture. Through the greater part of Europe, the number of inhabitants is not supposed to double in less than five hundred years. In several of our North American colonies, it is found to double in twenty or five-and-twenty years. In Europe, the law of primogeniture, and perpetuities of different kinds, prevent the division of great estates, and thereby hinder the multiplication of small proprietors. A small proprietor, however, who knows every part of his little territory, views it with all the affection which property, especially small property, naturally inspires, and who upon that account takes pleasure, not only in cultivating, but in adorning it, is generally of all improvers the most industrious, the most intelligent, and the most successful. The same regulations, besides, keep so much land out of the market, that there are always more capitals to buy than there is land to sell, so that what is sold always sells at a monopoly price. The rent never pays the interest of the purchase money,

and is, besides, burdened with repairs and other occasional charges, to which the interest of money is not liable. To purchase land, is, everywhere in Europe, a most unprofitable employment of a small capital. For the sake of the superior security, indeed, a man of moderate circumstances, when he retires from business, will sometimes choose to lay out his little capital in land. A man of profession, too, whose revenue is derived from another source, often loves to secure his savings in the same way. But a young man, who, instead of applying to trade or to some profession, should employ a capital of two or three thousand pounds in the purchase and cultivation of a small piece of land, might indeed expect to live very happily and very independently, but must bid adieu for ever to all hope of either great fortune or great illustration, which, by a different employment of his stock, he might have had the same chance of acquiring with other people. Such a person, too, though he cannot aspire at being a proprietor, will often disdain to be a farmer. The small quantity of land, therefore, which is brought to market, and the high price of what is brought thither, prevents a great number of capitals from being employed in its cultivation and improvement, which would otherwise have taken that direction. In North America, on the contrary, fifty or sixty pounds is often found a sufficient stock to begin a plantation with. The purchase and improvement of uncultivated land is there the most profitable employment of the smallest as well as of the greatest capitals, and the most direct road to all the fortune and illustration which can be acquired in that country. Such land, indeed, is in North America to be had almost for nothing, or at a price much below the value of the natural produce; a thing impossible in Europe, or indeed in any country where all lands have long been private property. If landed estates, however, were divided equally among all the children, upon the death of any proprietor who left a numerous family, the estate would generally be sold. So much land would come to market, that it could no longer sell at a monopoly price. The free rent of the land would go no nearer to pay the interest of the purchase-money, and a small capital might be employed in purchasing land as profitable as in any other way.

England, on account of the natural fertility of the soil, of the great extent of the sea-coast in proportion to that of the whole country, and of the many navigable rivers which run through it, and afford the conveniency of water carriage to some of the most inland parts of it, is perhaps as well fitted by nature as any large country in Europe to be the seat of foreign commerce, of manufactures for distant sale, and of all the improvements which these can occasion. From the beginning of the reign

of Elizabeth, too, the English legislature has been peculiarly attentive to the interest of commerce and manufactures, and in reality there is no country in Europe, Holland itself not excepted, of which the law is, upon the whole, more favourable to this sort of industry. Commerce and manufactures have accordingly been continually advancing during all this period. The cultivation and improvement of the country has, no doubt, been gradually advancing too; but it seems to have followed slowly, and at a distance, the more rapid progress of commerce and manufactures. The greater part of the country must probably have been cultivated before the reign of Elizabeth; and a very great part of it still remains uncultivated, and the cultivation of the far greater part much inferior to what it might be. The law of England, however, favours agriculture, not only indirectly, by the protection of commerce, but by several direct encouragements. Except in times of scarcity, the exportation of corn is not only free, but encouraged by a bounty. In times of moderate plenty, the importation of foreign corn is loaded with duties that amount to a prohibition. The importation of live cattle, except from Ireland, is prohibited at all times; and it is but of late that it was permitted from thence. Those who cultivate the land, therefore, have a monopoly against their countrymen for the two greatest and most important articles of land produce, bread and butcher’s meat. These encouragements, though at bottom, perhaps, as I shall endeavour to show hereafter, altogether illusory, sufficiently demonstrate at least the good intention of the legislature to favour agriculture. But what is of much more importance than all of them, the yeomanry of England are rendered as secure, as independent, and as respectable, as law can make them. No country, therefore, in which the right of primogeniture takes place, which pays tithes, and where perpetuities, though contrary to the spirit of the law, are admitted in some cases, can give more encouragement to agriculture than England. Such, however, notwithstanding, is the state of its cultivation. What would it have been, had the law given no direct encouragement to agriculture besides what arises indirectly from the progress of commerce, and had left the yeomanry in the same condition as in most other countries of Europe? It is now more than two hundred years since the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, a period as long as the course of human prosperity usually endures.

France seems to have had a considerable share of foreign commerce, near a century before England was distinguished as a commercial country. The marine of France was considerable, according to the notions of the times, before the expedition of Charles VIII. to Naples. The

cultivation and improvement of France, however, is, upon the whole, inferior to that of England. The law of the country has never given the same direct encouragement to agriculture.

The foreign commerce of Spain and Portugal to the other parts of Europe, though chiefly carried on in foreign ships, is very considerable. That to their colonies is carried on in their own, and is much greater, on account of the great riches and extent of those colonies. But it has never introduced any considerable manufactures for distant sale into either of those countries, and the greater part of both still remains uncultivated. The foreign commerce of Portugal is of older standing than that of any great country in Europe, except Italy.

Italy is the only great country of Europe which seems to have been cultivated and improved in every part, by means of foreign commerce and manufactures for distant sale. Before the invasion of Charles VIII., Italy, according to Guicciardini, was cultivated not less in the most mountainous and barren parts of the country, than in the plainest and most fertile. The advantageous situation of the country, and the great number of independent states which at that time subsisted in it, probably contributed not a little to this general cultivation. It is not impossible, too, notwithstanding this general expression of one of the most judicious and reserved of modern historians, that Italy was not at that time better cultivated than England is at present.

The capital, however, that is acquired to any country by commerce and manufactures, is always a very precarious and uncertain possession, till some part of it has been secured and realized in the cultivation and improvement of its lands. A merchant, it has been said very properly, is not necessarily the citizen of any particular country. It is in a great measure indifferent to him from what place he carries on his trade; and a very trifling disgust will make him remove his capital, and, together with it, all the industry which it supports, from one country to another. No part of it can be said to belong to any particular country, till it has been spread, as it were, over the face of that country, either in buildings, or in the lasting improvement of lands. No vestige now remains of the great wealth said to have been possessed by the greater part of the Hanse Towns, except in the obscure histories of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is even uncertain where some of them were situated, or to what towns in Europe the Latin names given to some of them belong. But though the misfortunes of Italy, in the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, greatly diminished the commerce and manufactures of the cities of Lombardy and Tuscany, those countries

still continue to be among the most populous and best cultivated in Europe. The civil wars of Flanders, and the Spanish government which succeeded them, chased away the great commerce of Antwerp, Ghent, and Bruges. But Flanders still continues to be one of the richest, best cultivated, and most populous provinces of Europe. The ordinary revolutions of war and government easily dry up the sources of that wealth which arises from commerce only. That which arises from the more solid improvements of agriculture is much more durable, and cannot be destroyed but by those more violent convulsions occasioned by the depredations of hostile and barbarous nations continued for a century or two together; such as those that happened for some time before and after the fall of the Roman empire in the western provinces of Europe.

BOOK IV. OF SYSTEMS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY.

INTRODUCTION.

Political economy, considered as a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator, proposes two distinct objects; first, to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or, more properly, to enable them to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the public services. It proposes to enrich both the people and the sovereign.

The different progress of opulence in different ages and nations, has given occasion to two different systems of political economy, with regard to enriching the people. The one may be called the system of commerce, the other that of agriculture. I shall endeavour to explain both as fully and distinctly as I can, and shall begin with the system of commerce. It is the modern system, and is best understood in our own country and in our own times.

CHAP. I. OF THE PRINCIPLE OF THE COMMERCIAL OR MERCANTILE SYSTEM.

That wealth consists in money, or in gold and silver, is a popular notion which naturally arises from the double function of money, as the instrument of commerce, and as the measure of value. In consequence of its being the instrument of commerce, when we have money we can more readily obtain whatever else we have occasion for, than by means of any other commodity. The great affair, we always find, is to get money. When that is obtained, there is no difficulty in making any subsequent purchase. In consequence of its being the measure of value, we estimate that of all other commodities by the quantity of money which they will exchange for. We say of a rich man, that he is worth a great deal, and of a poor man, that he is worth very little money. A frugal man, or a man eager to be rich, is said to love money; and a careless, a generous, or a profuse man, is said to be indifferent about it. To grow rich is to get money; and wealth and money, in short, are, in common language, considered as in every respect synonymous.

A rich country, in the same manner as a rich man, is supposed to be a country abounding in money; and to heap up gold and silver in any country is supposed to be the readiest way to enrich it. For some time after the discovery of America, the first inquiry of the Spaniards, when they arrived upon any unknown coast, used to be, if there was any gold or silver to be found in the neighbourhood? By the information which they received, they judged whether it was worth while to make a settlement there, or if the country was worth the conquering. Plano Carpino, a monk sent ambassador from the king of France to one of the sons of the famous Gengis Khan, says, that the Tartars used frequently to ask him, if there was plenty of sheep and oxen in the kingdom of France? Their inquiry had the same object with that of the Spaniards. They wanted to know if the country was rich enough to be worth the conquering. Among the Tartars, as among all other nations of shepherds, who are generally ignorant of the use of money, cattle are the instruments of commerce and the measures of value. Wealth, therefore, according to them, consisted in cattle, as, according to the Spaniards, it consisted in gold and silver. Of the two, the Tartar notion, perhaps, was the nearest to the truth.

Mr Locke remarks a distinction between money and other moveable goods. All other moveable goods, he says, are of so consumable a nature, that the wealth which consists in them cannot be much depended on; and a nation which abounds in them one year may, without any exportation, but merely by their own waste and extravagance, be in great want of them the next. Money, on the contrary, is a steady friend, which, though it may travel about from hand to hand, yet if it can be kept from going out of the country, is not very liable to be wasted and consumed. Gold and silver, therefore, are, according to him, the most solid and substantial part of the moveable wealth of a nation; and to multiply those metals ought, he thinks, upon that account, to be the great object of its political economy.

Others admit, that if a nation could be separated from all the world, it would be of no consequence how much or how little money circulated in it. The consumable goods, which were circulated by means of this money, would only be exchanged for a greater or a smaller number of pieces; but the real wealth or poverty of the country, they allow, would depend altogether upon the abundance or scarcity of those consumable goods. But it is otherwise, they think, with countries which have connections with foreign nations, and which are obliged to carry on foreign wars, and to maintain fleets and armies in distant countries. This, they say, cannot be done, but by sending abroad money to pay them with; and a nation cannot send much money abroad, unless it has a good deal at home. Every such nation, therefore, must endeavour, in time of peace, to accumulate gold and silver, that when occasion requires, it may have wherewithal to carry on foreign wars.

In consequence of these popular notions, all the different nations of Europe have studied, though to little purpose, every possible means of accumulating gold and silver in their respective countries. Spain and Portugal, the proprietors of the principal mines which supply Europe with those metals, have either prohibited their exportation under the severest penalties, or subjected it to a considerable duty. The like prohibition seems anciently to have made a part of the policy of most other European nations. It is even to be found, where we should least of all expect to find it, in some old Scotch acts of Parliament, which forbid, under heavy penalties, the carrying gold or silver *forth of the kingdom*. The like policy anciently took place both in France and England.

When those countries became commercial, the merchants found this prohibition, upon many occasions, extremely inconvenient. They could frequently buy more advantageously with gold and silver, than with any

other commodity, the foreign goods which they wanted, either to import into their own, or to carry to some other foreign country. They remonstrated, therefore, against this prohibition as hurtful to trade.

They represented, first, that the exportation of gold and silver, in order to purchase foreign goods, did not always diminish the quantity of those metals in the kingdom; that, on the contrary, it might frequently increase the quantity; because, if the consumption of foreign goods was not thereby increased in the country, those goods might be re-exported to foreign countries, and being there sold for a large profit, might bring back much more treasure than was originally sent out to purchase them. Mr Mun compares this operation of foreign trade to the seed-time and harvest of agriculture. ‘If we only behold,’ says he, ‘the actions of the husbandman in the seed-time, when he casteth away much good corn into the ground, we shall account him rather a madman than a husbandman. But when we consider his labours in the harvest, which is the end of his endeavours, we shall find the worth and plentiful increase of his actions.’

They represented, secondly, that this prohibition could not hinder the exportation of gold and silver, which, on account of the smallness of their bulk in proportion to their value, could easily be smuggled abroad. That this exportation could only be prevented by a proper attention to what they called the balance of trade. That when the country exported to a greater value than it imported, a balance became due to it from foreign nations, which was necessarily paid to it in gold and silver, and thereby increased the quantity of those metals in the kingdom. But that when it imported to a greater value than it exported, a contrary balance became due to foreign nations, which was necessarily paid to them in the same manner, and thereby diminished that quantity: that in this case, to prohibit the exportation of those metals, could not prevent it, but only, by making it more dangerous, render it more expensive: that the exchange was thereby turned more against the country which owed the balance, than it otherwise might have been; the merchant who purchased a bill upon the foreign country being obliged to pay the banker who sold it, not only for the natural risk, trouble, and expense of sending the money thither, but for the extraordinary risk arising from the prohibition; but that the more the exchange was against any country, the more the balance of trade became necessarily against it; the money of that country becoming necessarily of so much less value, in comparison with that of the country to which the balance was due. That if the exchange between England and Holland, for example, was five per cent. against England, it

would require 105 ounces of silver in England to purchase a bill for 100 ounces of silver in Holland: that 105 ounces of silver in England, therefore, would be worth only 100 ounces of silver in Holland, and would purchase only a proportionable quantity of Dutch goods; but that 100 ounces of silver in Holland, on the contrary, would be worth 105 ounces in England, and would purchase a proportionable quantity of English goods; that the English goods which were sold to Holland would be sold so much cheaper, and the Dutch goods which were sold to England so much dearer, by the difference of the exchange: that the one would draw so much less Dutch money to England, and the other so much more English money to Holland, as this difference amounted to: and that the balance of trade, therefore, would necessarily be so much more against England, and would require a greater balance of gold and silver be exported to Holland.

Those arguments were partly solid and some partly sophistical. They were solid, so far as they asserted that the exportation of gold and silver in trade might frequently be advantageous to the country. They were solid, too, in asserting that no prohibition could prevent their exportation, when private people found any advantage in exporting them. But they were sophistical, in supposing, that either to preserve or to augment the quantity of those metals required more the attention of government, than to preserve or to augment the quantity of any other useful commodities, which the freedom of trade, without any such attention, never fails to supply in the proper quantity. They were sophistical, too, perhaps, in asserting that the high price of exchange necessarily increased what they called the unfavourable balance of trade, or occasioned the exportation of a greater quantity of gold and silver. That high price, indeed, was extremely disadvantageous to the merchants who had any money to pay in foreign countries. They paid so much dearer for the bills which their bankers granted them upon those countries. But though the risk arising from the prohibition might occasion some extraordinary expense to the bankers, it would not necessarily carry any more money out of the country. This expense would generally be all laid out in the country, in smuggling the money out of it, and could seldom occasion the exportation of a single sixpence beyond the precise sum drawn for. The high price of exchange, too, would naturally dispose the merchants to endeavour to make their exports nearly balance their imports, in order that they might have this high exchange to pay upon as small a sum as possible. The high price of exchange, besides, must necessarily have operated as a tax, in raising the price of foreign goods, and thereby

diminishing their consumption. It would tend, therefore, not to increase, but to diminish, what they called the unfavourable balance of trade, and consequently the exportation of gold and silver.

Such as they were, however, those arguments convinced the people to whom they were addressed. They were addressed by merchants to parliaments and to the councils of princes, to nobles, and to country gentlemen; by those who were supposed to understand trade, to those who were conscious to themselves that they knew nothing about the matter. That foreign trade enriched the country, experience demonstrated to the nobles and country gentlemen, as well as to the merchants; but how, or in what manner, none of them well knew. The merchants knew perfectly in what manner it enriched themselves, it was their business to know it. But to know in what manner it enriched the country, was no part of their business. The subject never came into their consideration, but when they had occasion to apply to their country for some change in the laws relating to foreign trade. It then became necessary to say something about the beneficial effects of foreign trade, and the manner in which those effects were obstructed by the laws as they then stood. To the judges who were to decide the business, it appeared a most satisfactory account of the matter, when they were told that foreign trade brought money into the country, but that the laws in question hindered it from bringing so much as it otherwise would do. Those arguments, therefore, produced the wished-for effect. The prohibition of exporting gold and silver was, in France and England, confined to the coin of those respective countries. The exportation of foreign coin and of bullion was made free. In Holland, and in some other places, this liberty was extended even to the coin of the country. The attention of government was turned away from guarding against the exportation of gold and silver, to watch over the balance of trade, as the only cause which could occasion any augmentation or diminution of these metals. From one fruitless care, it was turned away to another care much more intricate, much more embarrassing, and just equally fruitless. The title of Mun’s book, England’s Treasure in Foreign Trade, became a fundamental maxim in the political economy, not of England only, but of all other commercial countries. The inland or home trade, the most important of all, the trade in which an equal capital affords the greatest revenue, and creates the greatest employment to the people of the country, was considered as subsidiary only to foreign trade. It neither brought money into the country, it was said, nor carried any out of it. The country, therefore, could never become either richer or poorer by means of it,

except so far as its prosperity or decay might indirectly influence the state of foreign trade.

A country that has no mines of its own, must undoubtedly draw its gold and silver from foreign countries, in the same manner as one that has no vineyards of its own must draw its wines. It does not seem necessary, however, that the attention of government should be more turned towards the one than towards the other object. A country that has wherewithal to buy wine, will always get the wine which it has occasion for; and a country that has wherewithal to buy gold and silver, will never be in want of those metals. They are to be bought for a certain price, like all commodities; and as they are the price of all other commodities, so all other commodities are the price of those metals. We trust, with perfect security, that the freedom of trade, without any attention of government, will always supply us with the wine which we have occasion for; and we may trust, with equal security, that it will always supply us with all the gold and silver which we can afford to purchase or to employ, either in circulating our commodities or in other uses.

The quantity of every commodity which human industry can either purchase or produce, naturally regulates itself in every country according to the effectual demand, or according to the demand of those who are willing to pay the whole rent, labour, and profits, which must be paid in order to prepare and bring it to market. But no commodities regulate themselves more easily or more exactly, according to this effectual demand, than gold and silver; because, on account of the small bulk and great value of those metals, no commodities can be more easily transported from one place to another; from the places where they are cheap, to those where they are dear; from the places where they exceed, to those where they fall short of this effectual demand. If there were in England, for example, an effectual demand for an additional quantity of gold, a packet-boat could bring from Lisbon, or from wherever else it was to be had, fifty tons of gold, which could be coined into more than five millions of guineas. But if there were an effectual demand for grain to the same value, to import it would require, at five guineas a-ton, a million of tons of shipping, or a thousand ships of a thousand tons each. The navy of England would not be sufficient.

When the quantity of gold and silver imported into any country exceeds the effectual demand, no vigilance of government can prevent their exportation. All the sanguinary laws of Spain and Portugal are not able to keep their gold and silver at home. The continual importations from Peru and Brazil exceed the effectual demand of those countries, and

sink the price of those metals there below that in the neighbouring countries. If, on the contrary, in any particular country, their quantity fell short of the effectual demand, so as to raise their price above that of the neighbouring countries, the government would have no occasion to take any pains to import them. If it were even to take pains to prevent their importation, it would not be able to effectuate it. Those metals, when the Spartans had got wherewithal to purchase them, broke through all the barriers which the laws of Lycurgus opposed to their entrance into Lacedæmon. All the sanguinary laws of the customs are not able to prevent the importation of the teas of the Dutch and Gottenburg East India companies; because somewhat cheaper than those of the British company. A pound of tea, however, is about a hundred times the bulk of one of the highest prices, sixteen shillings, that is commonly paid for it in silver, and more than two thousand times the bulk of the same price in gold, and, consequently, just so many times more difficult to smuggle.

It is partly owing to the easy transportation of gold and silver, from the places where they abound to those where they are wanted, that the price of those metals does not fluctuate continually, like that of the greater part of other commodities, which are hindered by their bulk from shifting their situation, when the market happens to be either over or understocked with them. The price of those metals, indeed, is not altogether exempted from variation; but the changes to which it is liable are generally slow, gradual, and uniform. In Europe, for example, it is supposed, without much foundation, perhaps, that during the course of the present and preceding century, they have been constantly, but gradually, sinking in their value, on account of the continual importations from the Spanish West Indies. But to make any sudden change in the price of gold and silver, so as to raise or lower at once, sensibly and remarkably, the money price of all other commodities, requires such a revolution in commerce as that occasioned by the discovery of America.

If, notwithstanding all this, gold and silver should at any time fall short in a country which has wherewithal to purchase them, there are more expedients for supplying their place, than that of almost any other commodity. If the materials of manufacture are wanted, industry must stop. If provisions are wanted, the people must starve. But if money is wanted, barter will supply its place, though with a good deal of inconveniency. Buying and selling upon credit, and the different dealers compensating their credits with one another, once a-month, or once a-year, will supply it with less inconveniency. A well-regulated paper-money will supply it not only without any inconveniency, but, in some

cases, with some advantage. Upon every account, therefore, the attention of government never was so unnecessarily employed, as when directed to watch over the preservation or increase of the quantity of money in any country.

No complaint, however, is more common than that of a scarcity of money. Money, like wine, must always be scarce with those who have neither wherewithal to buy it, nor credit to borrow it. Those who have either, will seldom be in want either of the money, or of the wine which they have occasion for. This complaint, however, of the scarcity of money, is not always confined to improvident spendthrifts. It is sometimes general through a whole mercantile town and the country in its neighbourhood. Over-trading is the common cause of it. Sober men, whose projects have been disproportioned to their capitals, are as likely to have neither wherewithal to buy money, nor credit to borrow it, as prodigals, whose expense has been disproportioned to their revenue. Before their projects can be brought to bear, their stock is gone, and credit with it. They run about everywhere to borrow money, and everybody tells them that they have none to lend. Even such general complaints of the scarcity of money do not always prove that the usual number of gold and silver pieces are not circulating in the country, but that many people want those pieces who have nothing to give for them. When the profits of trade happen to be greater than ordinary over-trading becomes a general error, both among great and small dealers. They do not always send more money abroad than usual, but they buy upon credit, both at home and abroad, an unusual quantity of goods, which they send to some distant market, in hopes that the returns will come in before the demand for payment. The demand comes before the returns, and they have nothing at hand with which they can either purchase money or give solid security for borrowing. It is not any scarcity of gold and silver, but the difficulty which such people find in borrowing, and which their creditor find in getting payment, that occasions the general complaint of the scarcity of money.

It would be too ridiculous to go about seriously to prove, that wealth does not consist in money, or in gold and silver; but in what money purchases, and is valuable only for purchasing. Money, no doubt, makes always a part of the national capital; but it has already been shown that it generally makes but a small part, and always the most unprofitable part of it.

It is not because wealth consists more essentially in money than in goods, that the merchant finds it generally more easy to buy goods with

money, than to buy money with goods; but because money is the known and established instrument of commerce, for which every thing is readily given in exchange, but which is not always with equal readiness to be got in exchange for every thing. The greater part of goods, besides, are more perishable than money, and he may frequently sustain a much greater loss by keeping them. When his goods are upon hand, too, he is more liable to such demands for money as he may not be able to answer, than when he has got their price in his coffers. Over and above all this, his profit arises more directly from selling than from buying; and he is, upon all these accounts, generally much more anxious to exchange his goods for money than his money for goods. But though a particular merchant, with abundance of goods in his warehouse, may sometimes be ruined by not being able to sell them in time, a nation or country is not liable to the same accident. The whole capital of a merchant frequently consists in perishable goods destined for purchasing money. But it is but a very small part of the annual produce of the land and labour of a country, which can ever be destined for purchasing gold and silver from their neighbours. The far greater part is circulated and consumed among themselves; and even of the surplus which is sent abroad, the greater part is generally destined for the purchase of other foreign goods. Though gold and silver, therefore, could not be had in exchange for the goods destined to purchase them, the nation would not be ruined. It might, indeed, suffer some loss and inconveniency, and be forced upon some of those expedients which are necessary for supplying the place of money. The annual produce of its land and labour, however, would be the same, or very nearly the same as usual; because the same, or very nearly the same consumable capital would be employed in maintaining it. And though goods do not always draw money so readily as money draws goods, in the long-run they draw it more necessarily than even it draws them. Goods can serve many other purposes besides purchasing money, but money can serve no other purpose besides purchasing goods. Money, therefore, necessarily runs after goods, but goods do not always necessarily run after money. The man who buys, does not always mean to sell again, but frequently to use or to consume; whereas he who sells always means to buy again. The one may frequently have done the whole, but the other can never have done more than the one half of his business. It is not for its own sake that men desire money, but for the sake of what they can purchase with it.

Consumable commodities, it is said, are soon destroyed; whereas gold and silver are of a the more durable nature, and were it not for this

continual exportation, might be accumulated for ages together, to the incredible augmentation of the real wealth of the country. Nothing, therefore, it is pretended, can be more disadvantageous to any country, than the trade which consists in the exchange of such lasting for such perishable commodities. We do not, however, reckon that trade disadvantageous, which consists in the exchange of the hardware of England for the wines of France, and yet hardware is a very durable commodity, and were it not for this continual exportation, might too be accumulated for ages together, to the incredible augmentation of the pots and pans of the country. But it readily occurs, that the number of such utensils is in every country necessarily limited by the use which there is for them; that it would be absurd to have more pots and pans than were necessary for cooking the victuals usually consumed there; and that, if the quantity of victuals were to increase, the number of pots and pans would readily increase along with it; a part of the increased quantity of victuals being employed in purchasing them, or in maintaining an additional number of workmen whose business it was to make them. It should as readily occur, that the quantity of gold and silver is in every country limited by the use which there is for those metals; that their use consists in circulating commodities, as coin, and in affording a species of household furniture, as plate; that the quantity of coin in every country is regulated by the value of the commodities which are to be circulated by it; increase that value, and immediately a part of it will be sent abroad to purchase, wherever it is to be had, the additional quantity of coin requisite for circulating them: that the quantity of plate is regulated by the number and wealth of those private families who choose to indulge themselves in that sort of magnificence; increase the number and wealth of such families, and a part of this increased wealth will most probably be employed in purchasing, wherever it is to be found, an additional quantity of plate; that to attempt to increase the wealth of any country, either by introducing or by detaining in it an unnecessary quantity of gold and silver, is as absurd as it would be to attempt to increase the good cheer of private families, by obliging them to keep an unnecessary number of kitchen utensils. As the expense of purchasing those unnecessary utensils would diminish, instead of increasing, either the quantity or goodness of the family provisions; so the expense of purchasing an unnecessary quantity of gold and silver must, in every country, as necessarily diminish the wealth which feeds, clothes, and lodges, which maintains and employs the people. Gold and silver, whether in the shape of coin or of plate, are utensils, it must be

remembered, as much as the furniture of the kitchen. Increase the use of them, increase the consumable commodities which are to be circulated, managed, and prepared by means of them, and you will infallibly increase the quantity; but if you attempt by extraordinary means to increase the quantity, you will as infallibly diminish the use, and even the quantity too, which in these metals can never he greater than what the use requires. Were they ever to be accumulated beyond this quantity, their transportation is so easy, and the loss which attends their lying idle and unemployed so great, that no law could prevent their being immediately sent out of the country.

It is not always necessary to accumulate gold and silver, in order to enable a country to carry on foreign wars, and to maintain fleets and armies in distant countries. Fleets and armies are maintained, not with gold and silver, but with consumable goods. The nation which, from the annual produce of its domestic industry, from the annual revenue arising out of its lands, and labour, and consumable stock, has wherewithal to purchase those consumable goods in distant countries, can maintain foreign wars there.

A nation may purchase the pay and provisions of an army in a distant country three different ways; by sending abroad either, first, some part of its accumulated gold and silver; or, secondly, some part of the annual produce of its manufactures; or, last of all, some part of its annual rude produce.

The gold and silver which can properly be considered as accumulated, or stored up in any country, may be distinguished into three parts; first, the circulating money; secondly, the plate of private families; and, last of all, the money which may have been collected by many years parsimony, and laid up in the treasury of the prince.

It can seldom happen that much can be spared from the circulating money of the country; because in that there can seldom be much redundancy. The value of goods annually bought and sold in any country requires a certain quantity of money to circulate and distribute them to their proper consumers, and can give employment to no more.

The channel of circulation necessarily draws to itself a sum sufficient to fill it, and never admits any more. Something, however, is generally withdrawn from this channel in the case of foreign war. By the great number of people who are maintained abroad, fewer are maintained at home. Fewer goods are circulated there, and less money becomes necessary to circulate them. An extraordinary quantity of paper money of some sort or other, too, such as exchequer notes, navy bills, and bank

bills, in England, is generally issued upon such occasions, and, by supplying the place of circulating gold and silver, gives an opportunity of sending a greater quantity of it abroad. All this, however, could afford but a poor resource for maintaining a foreign war, of great expense, and several years duration.

The melting down of the plate of private families has, upon every occasion, been found a still more insignificant one. The French, in the beginning of the last war, did not derive so much advantage from this expedient as to compensate the loss of the fashion.

The accumulated treasures of the prince have in former times afforded a much greater and more lasting resource. In the present times, if you except the king of Prussia, to accumulate treasure seems to be no part of the policy of European princes.

The funds which maintained the foreign wars of the present century, the most expensive perhaps which history records, seem to have had little dependency upon the exportation either of the circulating money, or of the plate of private families, or of the treasure of the prince. The last French war cost Great Britain upwards of £90,000,000, including not only the £75,000,000 of new debt that was contracted, but the additional 2s. in the pound land-tax, and what was annually borrowed of the sinking fund. More than two-thirds of this expense were laid out in distant countries; in Germany, Portugal, America, in the ports of the Mediterranean, in the East and West Indies. The kings of England had no accumulated treasure. We never heard of any extraordinary quantity of plate being melted down. The circulating gold and silver of the country had not been supposed to exceed L.18,000,000. Since the late recoinage of the gold, however, it is believed to have been a good deal under-rated. Let us suppose, therefore, according to the most exaggerated computation which I remember to have either seen or heard of, that, gold and silver together, it amounted to L.30,000,000. Had the war been carried on by means of our money, the whole of it must, even according to this computation, have been sent out and returned again, at least twice in a period of between six and seven years. Should this be supposed, it would afford the most decisive argument, to demonstrate how unnecessary it is for government to watch over the preservation of money, since, upon this supposition, the whole money of the country must have gone from it, and returned to it again, two different times in so short a period, without any body’s knowing any thing of the matter. The channel of circulation, however, never appeared more empty than usual during any part of this period. Few people wanted money who had

wherewithal to pay for it. The profits of foreign trade, indeed, were greater than usual during the whole war, but especially towards the end of it. This occasioned, what it always occasions, a general over-trading in all the ports of Great Britain; and this again occasioned the usual complaint of the scarcity of money, which always follows over-trading. Many people wanted it, who had neither wherewithal to buy it, nor credit to borrow it; and because the debtors found it difficult to borrow, the creditors found it difficult to get payment. Gold and silver, however, were generally to be had for their value, by those who had that value to give for them.

The enormous expense of the late war, therefore, must have been chiefly defrayed, not by the exportation of gold and silver, but by that of British commodities of some kind or other. When the government, or those who acted under them, contracted with a merchant for a remittance to some foreign country, he would naturally endeavour to pay his foreign correspondent, upon whom he granted a bill, by sending abroad rather commodities than gold and silver. If the commodities of Great Britain were not in demand in that country, he would endeavour to send them to some other country in which he could purchase a bill upon that country. The transportation of commodities, when properly suited to the market, is always attended with a considerable profit; whereas that of gold and silver is scarce ever attended with any. When those metals are sent abroad in order to purchase foreign commodities, the merchant’s profit arises, not from the purchase, but from the sale of the returns. But when they are sent abroad merely to pay a debt, he gets no returns, and consequently no profit. He naturally, therefore, exerts his invention to find out a way of paying his foreign debts, rather by the exportation of commodities, than by that of gold and silver. The great quantity of British goods, exported during the course of the late war, without bringing back any returns, is accordingly remarked by the author of the Present State of the Nation.

Besides the three sorts of gold and silver above mentioned, there is in all great commercial countries a good deal of bullion alternately imported and exported, for the purposes of foreign trade. This bullion, as it circulates among different commercial countries, in the same manner as the national coin circulates in every country, may be considered as the money of the great mercantile republic. The national coin receives its movement and direction from the commodities circulated within the precincts of each particular country; the money in the mercantile republic, from those circulated between different countries. Both are

employed in facilitating exchanges, the one between different individuals of the same, the other between those of different nations. Part of this money of the great mercantile republic may have been, and probably was, employed in carrying on the late war. In time of a general war, it is natural to suppose that a movement and direction should be impressed upon it, different from what it usually follows in profound peace, that it should circulate more about the seat of the war, and be more employed in purchasing there, and in the neighbouring countries, the pay and provisions of the different armies. But whatever part of this money of the mercantile republic Great Britain may have annually employed in this manner, it must have been annually purchased, either with British commodities, or with something else that had been purchased with them; which still brings us back to commodities, to the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, as the ultimate resources which enabled us to carry on the war. It is natural, indeed, to suppose, that so great an annual expense must have been defrayed from a great annual produce. The expense of 1761, for example, amounted to more than £19,000,000. No accumulation could have supported so great an annual profusion. There is no annual produce, even of gold and silver, which could have supported it. The whole gold and silver annually imported into both Spain and Portugal, according to the best accounts, does not commonly much exceed £6,000,000 sterling, which, in some years, would scarce have paid four months expense of the late war.

The commodities most proper for being transported to distant countries, in order to purchase there either the pay and provisions of an army, or some part of the money of the mercantile republic to be employed in purchasing them, seem to be the finer and more improved manufactures; such as contain a great value in a small bulk, and can therefore be exported to a great distance at little expense. A country whose industry produces a great annual surplus of such manufactures, which are usually exported to foreign countries, may carry on for many years a very expensive foreign war, without either exporting any considerable quantity of gold and silver, or even having any such quantity to export. A considerable part of the annual surplus of its manufactures must, indeed, in this case, be exported without bringing back any returns to the country, though it does to the merchant; the government purchasing of the merchant his bills upon foreign countries, in order to purchase there the pay and provisions of an army. Some part of this surplus, however, may still continue to bring back a return. The manufacturers during the war will have a double demand upon them, and

be called upon first to work up goods to be sent abroad, for paying the bills drawn upon foreign countries for the pay and provisions of the army; and, secondly, to work up such as are necessary for purchasing the common returns that had usually been consumed in the country. In the midst of the most destructive foreign war, therefore, the greater part of manufactures may frequently flourish greatly; and, on the contrary, they may decline on the return of peace. They may flourish amidst the ruin of their country, and begin to decay upon the return of its prosperity. The different state of many different branches of the British manufactures during the late war, and for some time after the peace, may serve as an illustration of what has been just now said.

No foreign war, of great expense or duration, could conveniently be carried on by the exportation of the rude produce of the soil. The expense of sending such a quantity of it into a foreign country as might purchase the pay and provisions of an army would be too great. Few countries, too, produce much more rude produce than what is sufficient for the subsistence of their own inhabitants. To send abroad any great quantity of it, therefore, would be to send abroad a part of the necessary subsistence of the people. It is otherwise with the exportation of manufactures. The maintenance of the people employed in them is kept at home, and only the surplus part of their work is exported. Mr Hume frequently takes notice of the inability of the ancient kings of England to carry on, without interruption, any foreign war of long duration. The English in those days had nothing wherewithal to purchase the pay and provisions of their armies in foreign countries, but either the rude produce of the soil, of which no considerable part could be spared from the home consumption, or a few manufactures of the coarsest kind, of which, as well as of the rude produce, the transportation was too expensive. This inability did not arise from the want of money, but of the finer and more improved manufactures. Buying and selling was transacted by means of money in England then as well as now. The quantity of circulating money must have borne the same proportion to the number and value of purchases and sales usually transacted at that time, which it does to those transacted at present; or, rather, it must have borne a greater proportion, because there was then no paper, which now occupies a great part of the employment of gold and silver. Among nations to whom commerce and manufactures are little known, the sovereign, upon extraordinary occasions, can seldom draw any considerable aid from his subjects, for reasons which shall be explained hereafter. It is in such countries, therefore, that he generally endeavours

to accumulate a treasure, as the only resource against such emergencies. Independent of this necessity, he is, in such a situation, naturally disposed to the parsimony requisite for accumulation. In that simple state, the expense even of a sovereign is not directed by the vanity which delights in the gaudy finery of a court, but is employed in bounty to his tenants, and hospitality to his retainers. But bounty and hospitality very seldom lead to extravagance; though vanity almost always does. Every Tartar chief, accordingly, has a treasure. The treasures of Mazepa, chief of the Cossacks in the Ukraine, the famous ally of Charles XII., are said to have been very great. The French kings of the Merovingian race had all treasures. When they divided their kingdom among their different children, they divided their treasure too. The Saxon princes, and the first kings after the Conquest, seem likewise to have accumulated treasures. The first exploit of every new reign was commonly to seize the treasure of the preceding king, as the most essential measure for securing the succession. The sovereigns of improved and commercial countries are not under the same necessity of accumulating treasures, because they can generally draw from their subjects extraordinary aids upon extraordinary occasions. They are likewise less disposed to do so. They naturally, perhaps necessarily, follow the mode of the times; and their expense comes to be regulated by the same extravagant vanity which directs that of all the other great proprietors in their dominions. The insignificant pageantry of their court becomes every day more brilliant; and the expense of it not only prevents accumulation, but frequently encroaches upon the funds destined for more necessary expenses. What Dercyllidas said of the court of Persia, may be applied to that of several European princes, that he saw there much splendour, but little strength, and many servants, but few soldiers.

The importation of gold and silver is not the principal, much less the sole benefit, which a nation derives from its foreign trade. Between whatever places foreign trade is carried on, they all of them derive two distinct benefits from it. It carries out that surplus part of the produce of their land and labour for which there is no demand among them, and brings back in return for it something else for which there is a demand. It gives a value to their superfluities, by exchanging them for something else, which may satisfy a part of their wants and increase their enjoyments. By means of it, the narrowness of the home market does not hinder the division of labour in any particular branch of art or manufacture from being carried to the highest perfection. By opening a more extensive market for whatever part of the produce of their labour

may exceed the home consumption, it encourages them to improve its productive power, and to augment its annual produce to the utmost, and thereby to increase the real revenue and wealth of the society. These great and important services foreign trade is continually occupied in performing to all the different countries between which it is carried on. They all derive great benefit from it, though that in which the merchant resides generally derives the greatest, as he is generally more employed in supplying the wants, and carrying out the superfluities of his own, than of any other particular country. To import the gold and silver which may be wanted into the countries which have no mines, is, no doubt, a part of the business of foreign commerce. It is, however, a most insignificant part of it. A country which carried on foreign trade merely upon this account, could scarce have occasion to freight a ship in a century.

It is not by the importation of gold and silver that the discovery of America has enriched Europe. By the abundance of the American mines, those metals have become cheaper. A service of plate can now be purchased for about a third part of the corn, or a third part of the labour, which it would have cost in the fifteenth century. With the same annual expense of labour and commodities, Europe can annually purchase about three times the quantity of plate which it could have purchased at that time. But when a commodity comes to be sold for a third part of what had been its usual price, not only those who purchased it before can purchase three times their former quantity, but it is brought down to the level of a much greater number of purchasers, perhaps to more than ten, perhaps to more than twenty times the former number. So that there may be in Europe at present, not only more than three times, but more than twenty or thirty times the quantity of plate which would have been in it, even in its present state of improvement, had the discovery of the American mines never been made. So far Europe has, no doubt, gained a real conveniency, though surely a very trifling one. The cheapness of gold and silver renders those metals rather less fit for the purposes of money than they were before. In order to make the same purchases, we must load ourselves with a greater quantity of them, and carry about a shilling in our pocket, where a groat would have done before. It is difficult to say which is most trifling, this inconveniency, or the opposite conveniency. Neither the one nor the other could have made any very essential change in the state of Europe. The discovery of America, however, certainly made a most essential one. By opening a new and inexhaustible market to all the commodities of Europe, it gave occasion

to new divisions of labour and improvements of art, which in the narrow circle of the ancient commerce could never have taken place, for want of a market to take off the greater part of their produce. The productive powers of labour were improved, and its produce increased in all the different countries of Europe, and together with it the real revenue and wealth of the inhabitants. The commodities of Europe were almost all new to America, and many of those of America were new to Europe. A new set of exchanges, therefore, began to take place, which had never been thought of before, and which should naturally have proved as advantageous to the new, as it certainly did to the old continent. The savage injustice of the Europeans rendered an event, which ought to have been beneficial to all, ruinous and destructive to several of those unfortunate countries.

The discovery of a passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, which happened much about the same time, opened perhaps a still more extensive range to foreign commerce, than even that of America, notwithstanding the greater distance. There were but two nations in America, in any respect, superior to the savages, and these were destroyed almost as soon as discovered. The rest were mere savages. But the empires of China, Indostan, Japan, as well as several others in the East Indies, without having richer mines of gold or silver, were, in every other respect, much richer, better cultivated, and more advanced in all arts and manufactures, than either Mexico or Peru, even though we should credit, what plainly deserves no credit, the exaggerated accounts of the Spanish writers concerning the ancient state of those empires. But rich and civilized nations can always exchange to a much greater value with one another, than with savages and barbarians. Europe, however, has hitherto derived much less advantage from its commerce with the East Indies, than from that with America. The Portuguese monopolized the East India trade to themselves for about a century; and it was only indirectly, and through them, that the other nations of Europe could either send out or receive any goods from that country. When the Dutch, in the beginning of the last century, began to encroach upon them, they vested their whole East India commerce in an exclusive company. The English, French, Swedes, and Danes, have all followed their example; so that no great nation of Europe has ever yet had the benefit of a free commerce to the East Indies. No other reason need be assigned why it has never been so advantageous as the trade to America, which, between almost every nation of Europe and its own colonies, is free to all its subjects. The exclusive privileges of those East India companies, their

great riches, the great favour and protection which these have procured them from their respective governments, have excited much envy against them. This envy has frequently represented their trade as altogether pernicious, on account of the great quantities of silver which it every year exports from the countries from which it is carried on. The parties concerned have replied, that their trade by this continual exportation of silver, might indeed tend to impoverish Europe in general, but not the particular country from which it was carried on; because, by the exportation of a part of the returns to other European countries, it annually brought home a much greater quantity of that metal than it carried out. Both the objection and the reply are founded in the popular notion which I have been just now examining. It is therefore unnecessary to say any thing further about either. By the annual exportation of silver to the East Indies, plate is probably somewhat dearer in Europe than it otherwise might have been; and coined silver probably purchases a larger quantity both of labour and commodities. The former of these two effects is a very small loss, the latter a very small advantage; both too insignificant to deserve any part of the public attention. The trade to the East Indies, by opening a market to the commodities of Europe, or, what comes nearly to the same thing, to the gold and silver which is purchased with those commodities, must necessarily tend to increase the annual production of European commodities, and consequently the real wealth and revenue of Europe. That it has hitherto increased them so little, is probably owing to the restraints which it everywhere labours under.

I thought it necessary, though at the hazard of being tedious, to examine at full length this popular notion, that wealth consists in money or in gold and silver. Money, in common language, as I have already observed, frequently signifies wealth; and this ambiguity of expression has rendered this popular notion so familiar to us, that even they who are convinced of its absurdity, are very apt to forget their own principles, and, in the course of their reasonings, to take it for granted as a certain and undeniable truth. Some of the best English writers upon commerce set out with observing, that the wealth of a country consists, not in its gold and silver only, but in its lands, houses, and consumable goods of all different kinds. In the course of their reasonings, however, the lands, houses, and consumable goods, seem to slip out of their memory; and the strain of their argument frequently supposes that all wealth consists in gold and silver, and that to multiply those metals is the great object of national industry and commerce.

The two principles being established, however, that wealth consisted in gold and silver, and that those metals could be brought into a country which had no mines, only by the balance of trade, or by exporting to a greater value than it imported; it necessarily became the great object of political economy to diminish as much as possible the importation of foreign goods for home consumption, and to increase as much as possible the exportation of the produce of domestic industry. Its two great engines for enriching the country, therefore, were restraints upon importation, and encouragement to exportation.

The restraints upon importation were of two kinds.

First, restraints upon the importation of such foreign goods for home consumption as could be produced at home, from whatever country they were imported.

Secondly, restraints upon the importation of goods of almost all kinds, from those particular countries with which the balance of trade was supposed to be disadvantageous.

Those different restraints consisted sometimes in high duties, and sometimes in absolute prohibitions.

Exportation was encouraged sometimes by drawbacks, sometimes by bounties, sometimes by advantageous treaties of commerce with foreign states, and sometimes by the establishment of colonies in distant countries.

Drawbacks were given upon two different occasions. When the home manufactures were subject to any duty or excise, either the whole or a part of it was frequently drawn back upon their exportation; and when foreign goods liable to a duty were imported, in order to be exported again, either the whole or a part of this duty was sometimes given back upon such exportation.

Bounties were given for the encouragement, either of some beginning manufactures, or of such sorts of industry of other kinds as were supposed to deserve particular favour.

By advantageous treaties of commerce, particular privileges were procured in some foreign state for the goods and merchants of the country, beyond what were granted to those of other countries.

By the establishment of colonies in distant countries, not only particular privileges, but a monopoly was frequently procured for the goods and merchants of the country which established them.

The two sorts of restraints upon importation above mentioned, together with these four encouragements to exportation, constitute the six principal means by which the commercial system proposes to increase

the quantity of gold and silver in any country, by turning the balance of trade in its favour. I shall consider each of them in a particular chapter, and, without taking much farther notice of their supposed tendency to bring money into the country, I shall examine chiefly what are likely to be the effects of each of them upon the annual produce of its industry. According as they tend either to increase or diminish the value of this annual produce, they must evidently tend either to increase or diminish the real wealth and revenue of the country.

CHAP. II. OF RESTRAINTS UPON IMPORTATION FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES OF SUCH GOODS AS CAN BE PRODUCED AT HOME.

By restraining, either by high duties, or by absolute prohibitions, the importation of such goods from foreign countries as can be produced at home, the monopoly of the home market is more or less secured to the domestic industry employed in producing them. Thus the prohibition of importing either live cattle or salt provisions from foreign countries, secures to the graziers of Great Britain the monopoly of the home market for butcher’s meat. The high duties upon the importation of corn, which, in times of moderate plenty, amount to a prohibition, give a like advantage to the growers of that commodity. The prohibition of the importation of foreign woollens is equally favourable to the woollen manufacturers. The silk manufacture, though altogether employed upon foreign materials, has lately obtained the same advantage. The linen manufacture has not yet obtained it, but is making great strides towards it. Many other sorts of manufactures have, in the same manner obtained in Great Britain, either altogether, or very nearly, a monopoly against their countrymen. The variety of goods, of which the importation into Great Britain is prohibited, either absolutely, or under certain circumstances, greatly exceeds what can easily be suspected by those who are not well acquainted with the laws of the customs.

That this monopoly of the home market frequently gives great encouragement to that particular species of industry which enjoys it, and frequently turns towards that employment a greater share of both the labour and stock of the society than would otherwise have gone to it, cannot be doubted. But whether it tends either to increase the general industry of the society, or to give it the most advantageous direction, is not, perhaps, altogether so evident.

The general industry of the society can never exceed what the capital of the society can employ. As the number of workmen that can be kept in employment by any particular person must bear a certain proportion to his capital, so the number of those that can be continually employed by all the members of a great society must bear a certain proportion to the whole capital of the society, and never can exceed that proportion. No

regulation of commerce can increase the quantity of industry in any society beyond what its capital can maintain. It can only divert a part of it into a direction into which it might not otherwise have gone; and it is by no means certain that this artificial direction is likely to be more advantageous to the society, than that into which it would have gone of its own accord.

Every individual is continually exerting himself to find out the most advantageous employment for whatever capital he can command. It is his own advantage, indeed, and not that of the society, which he has in view. But the study of his own advantage naturally, or rather necessarily, leads him to prefer that employment which is most advantageous to the society.

First, every individual endeavours to employ his capital as near home as he can, and consequently as much as he can in the support of domestic industry, provided always that he can thereby obtain the ordinary, or not a great deal less than the ordinary profits of stock.

Thus, upon equal, or nearly equal profits, every wholesale merchant naturally prefers the home trade to the foreign trade of consumption, and the foreign trade of consumption to the carrying trade. In the home trade, his capital is never so long out of his sight as it frequently is in the foreign trade of consumption. He can know better the character and situation of the persons whom he trusts; and if he should happen to be deceived, he knows better the laws of the country from which he must seek redress. In the carrying trade, the capital of the merchant is, as it were, divided between two foreign countries, and no part of it is ever necessarily brought home, or placed under his own immediate view and command. The capital which an Amsterdam merchant employs in carrying corn from Koningsberg to Lisbon, and fruit and wine from Lisbon to Koningsberg, must generally be the one half of it at Koningsberg, and the other half at Lisbon. No part of it need ever come to Amsterdam. The natural residence of such a merchant should either be at Koningsberg or Lisbon; and it can only be some very particular circumstances which can make him prefer the residence of Amsterdam. The uneasiness, however, which he feels at being separated so far from his capital, generally determines him to bring part both of the Koningsberg goods which he destines for the market of Lisbon, and of the Lisbon goods which he destines for that of Koningsberg, to Amsterdam; and though this necessarily subjects him to a double charge of loading and unloading as well as to the payment of some duties and customs, yet, for the sake of having some part of his capital always under

his own view and command, he willingly submits to this extraordinary charge; and it is in this manner that every country which has any considerable share of the carrying trade, becomes always the emporium, or general market, for the goods of all the different countries whose trade it carries on. The merchant, in order to save a second loading and unloading, endeavours always to sell in the home market, as much of the goods of all those different countries as he can; and thus, so far as he can, to convert his carrying trade into a foreign trade of consumption. A merchant, in the same manner, who is engaged in the foreign trade of consumption, when he collects goods for foreign markets, will always be glad, upon equal or nearly equal profits, to sell as great a part of them at home as he can. He saves himself the risk and trouble of exportation, when, so far as he can, he thus converts his foreign trade of consumption into a home trade. Home is in this manner the centre, if I may say so, round which the capitals of the inhabitants of every country are continually circulating, and towards which they are always tending, though, by particular causes, they may sometimes be driven off and repelled from it towards more distant employments. But a capital employed in the home trade, it has already been shown, necessarily puts into motion a greater quantity of domestic industry, and gives revenue and employment to a greater number of the inhabitants of the country, than an equal capital employed in the foreign trade of consumption; and one employed in the foreign trade of consumption has the same advantage over an equal capital employed in the carrying trade. Upon equal, or only nearly equal profits, therefore, every individual naturally inclines to employ his capital in the manner in which it is likely to afford the greatest support to domestic industry, and to give revenue and employment to the greatest number of people of his own country.

Secondly, every individual who employs his capital in the support of domestic industry, necessarily endeavours so to direct that industry, that its produce may be of the greatest possible value.

The produce of industry is what it adds to the subject or materials upon which it is employed. In proportion as the value of this produce is great or small, so will likewise be the profits of the employer. But it is only for the sake of profit that any man employs a capital in the support of industry; and he will always, therefore, endeavour to employ it in the support of that industry of which the produce is likely to be of the greatest value, or to exchange for the greatest quantity either of money or of other goods.

But the annual revenue of every society is always precisely equal to the exchangeable value of the whole annual produce of its industry, or rather is precisely the same thing with that exchangeable value. As every individual, therefore, endeavours as much as he can, both to employ his capital in the support of domestic industry, and so to direct that industry that its produce may be of the greatest value; every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own security; and by directing that industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain; and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest, he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good. It is an affectation, indeed, not very common among merchants, and very few words need be employed in dissuading them from it.

What is the species of domestic industry which his capital can employ, and of which the produce is likely to be of the greatest value, every individual, it is evident, can in his local situation judge much better than any statesman or lawgiver can do for him. The statesman, who should attempt to direct private people in what manner they ought to employ their capitals, would not only load himself with a most unnecessary attention, but assume an authority which could safely be trusted, not only to no single person, but to no council or senate whatever, and which would nowhere be as dangerous as in the hands of a man who had folly and presumption enough to fancy himself fit to exercise it.

To give the monopoly of the home market to the produce of domestic industry, in any particular art or manufacture, is in some measure to direct private people in what manner they ought to employ their capitals, and must in almost all cases be either a useless or a hurtful regulation. If the produce of domestic can be brought there as cheap as that of foreign industry, the regulation is evidently useless. If it cannot, it must generally be hurtful. It is the maxim of every prudent master of a family, never to attempt to make at home what it will cost him more to make than to buy. The tailor does not attempt to make his own shoes, but buys them of the

shoemaker. The shoemaker does not attempt to make his own clothes, but employs a tailor. The farmer attempts to make neither the one nor the other, but employs those different artificers. All of them find it for their interest to employ their whole industry in a way in which they have some advantage over their neighbours, and to purchase with a part of its produce, or, what is the same thing, with the price of a part of it, whatever else they have occasion for.

What is prudence in the conduct of every private family, can scarce be folly in that of a great kingdom. If a foreign country can supply us with a commodity cheaper than we ourselves can make it, better buy it of them with some part of the produce of our own industry, employed in a way in which we have some advantage. The general industry of the country being always in proportion to the capital which employs it, will not thereby be diminished, no more than that of the above-mentioned artificers; but only left to find out the way in which it can be employed with the greatest advantage. It is certainly not employed to the greatest advantage, when it is thus directed towards an object which it can buy cheaper than it can make. The value of its annual produce is certainly more or less diminished, when it is thus turned away from producing commodities evidently of more value than the commodity which it is directed to produce. According to the supposition, that commodity could be purchased from foreign countries cheaper than it can be made at home; it could therefore have been purchased with a part only of the commodities, or, what is the same thing, with a part only of the price of the commodities, which the industry employed by an equal capital would have produced at home, had it been left to follow its natural course. The industry of the country, therefore, is thus turned away from a more to a less advantageous employment; and the exchangeable value of its annual produce, instead of being increased, according to the intention of the lawgiver, must necessarily be diminished by every such regulation.

By means of such regulations, indeed, a particular manufacture may sometimes be acquired sooner than it could have been otherwise, and after a certain time may be made at home as cheap, or cheaper, than in the foreign country. But though the industry of the society may be thus carried with advantage into a particular channel sooner than it could have been otherwise, it will by no means follow that the sum-total, either of its industry, or of its revenue, can ever be augmented by any such regulation. The industry of the society can augment only in proportion as its capital augments, and its capital can augment only in proportion to what can be gradually saved out of its revenue. But the immediate effect

of every such regulation is to diminish its revenue; and what diminishes its revenue is certainly not very likely to augment its capital faster than it would have augmented of its own accord, had both capital and industry been left to find out their natural employments.

Though, for want of such regulations, the society should never acquire the proposed manufacture, it would not upon that account necessarily be the poorer in any one period of its duration. In every period of its duration its whole capital and industry might still have been employed, though upon different objects, in the manner that was most advantageous at the time. In every period its revenue might have been the greatest which its capital could afford, and both capital and revenue might have been augmented with the greatest possible rapidity.

The natural advantages which one country has over another, in producing particular commodities, are sometimes so great, that it is acknowledged by all the world to be in vain to struggle with them. By means of glasses, hot-beds, and hot-walls, very good grapes can be raised in Scotland, and very good wine, too, be made of them, at about thirty times the expense for which at least equally good can be brought from foreign countries. Would it be a reasonable law to prohibit the importation of all foreign wines, merely to encourage the making of claret and Burgundy in Scotland? But if there would be a manifest absurdity in turning towards any employment thirty times more of the capital and industry of the country than would be necessary to purchase from foreign countries an equal quantity of the commodities wanted, there must be an absurdity, though not altogether so glaring, yet exactly of the same kind, in turning towards any such employment a thirtieth, or even a three hundredth part more of either. Whether the advantages which one country has over another be natural or acquired, is in this respect of no consequence. As long as the one country has those advantages, and the other wants them, it will always be more advantageous for the latter rather to buy of the former than to make. It is an acquired advantage only, which one artificer has over his neighbour, who exercises another trade; and yet they both find it more advantageous to buy of one another, than to make what does not belong to their particular trades.

Merchants and manufacturers are the people who derive the greatest advantage from this monopoly of the home market. The prohibition of the importation of foreign cattle and of salt provisions, together with the high duties upon foreign corn, which in times of moderate plenty amount to a prohibition, are not near so advantageous to the graziers and farmers

of Great Britain, as other regulations of the same kind are to its merchants and manufacturers. Manufactures, those of the finer kind especially, are more easily transported from one country to another than corn or cattle. It is in the fetching and carrying manufactures, accordingly, that foreign trade is chiefly employed. In manufactures, a very small advantage will enable foreigners to undersell our own workmen, even in the home market. It will require a very great one to enable them to do so in the rude produce of the soil. If the free importation of foreign manufactures were permitted, several of the home manufactures would probably suffer, and some of them perhaps go to ruin altogether, and a considerable part of the stock and industry at present employed in them, would be forced to find out some other employment. But the freest importation of the rude produce of the soil could have no such effect upon the agriculture of the country.

If the importation of foreign cattle, for example, were made ever so free, so few could be imported, that the grazing trade of Great Britain could be little affected by it. Live cattle are, perhaps, the only commodity of which the transportation is more expensive by sea than by land. By land they carry themselves to market. By sea, not only the cattle, but their food and their water too, must be carried at no small expense and inconveniency. The short sea between Ireland and Great Britain, indeed, renders the importation of Irish cattle more easy. But though the free importation of them, which was lately permitted only for a limited time, were rendered perpetual, it could have no considerable effect upon the interest of the graziers of Great Britain. Those parts of Great Britain which border upon the Irish sea are all grazing countries. Irish cattle could never be imported for their use, but must be drove through those very extensive countries, at no small expense and inconveniency, before they could arrive at their proper market. Fat cattle could not be drove so far. Lean cattle, therefore, could only be imported; and such importation could interfere not with the interest of the feeding or fattening countries, to which, by reducing the price of lean cattle it would rather be advantageous, but with that of the breeding countries only. The small number of Irish cattle imported since their importation was permitted, together with the good price at which lean cattle still continue to sell, seem to demonstrate, that even the breeding countries of Great Britain are never likely to be much affected by the free importation of Irish cattle. The common people of Ireland, indeed, are said to have sometimes opposed with violence the exportation of their cattle. But if the exporters had found any great advantage in continuing the trade, they

could easily, when the law was on their side, have conquered this mobbish opposition.

Feeding and fattening countries, besides, must always be highly improved, whereas breeding countries are generally uncultivated. The high price of lean cattle, by augmenting the value of uncultivated land, is like a bounty against improvement. To any country which was highly improved throughout, it would be more advantageous to import its lean cattle than to breed them. The province of Holland, accordingly, is said to follow this maxim at present. The mountains of Scotland, Wales, and Northumberland, indeed, are countries not capable of much improvement, and seem destined by nature to be the breeding countries of Great Britain. The freest importation of foreign cattle could have no other effect than to hinder those breeding countries from taking advantage of the increasing population and improvement of the rest of the kingdom, from raising their price to an exorbitant height, and from laying a real tax upon all the more improved and cultivated parts of the country.

The freest importation of salt provisions, in the same manner, could have as little effect upon the interest of the graziers of Great Britain as that of live cattle. Salt provisions are not only a very bulky commodity, but when compared with fresh meat they are a commodity both of worse quality, and, as they cost more labour and expense, of higher price. They could never, therefore, come into competition with the fresh meat, though they might with the salt provisions of the country. They might be used for victualling ships for distant voyages, and such like uses, but could never make any considerable part of the food of the people. The small quantity of salt provisions imported from Ireland since their importation was rendered free, is an experimental proof that our graziers have nothing to apprehend from it. It does not appear that the price of butcher’s meat has ever been sensibly affected by it.

Even the free importation of foreign corn could very little affect the interest of the farmers of Great Britain. Corn is a much more bulky commodity than butcher’s meat. A pound of wheat at a penny is as dear as a pound of butcher’s meat at fourpence. The small quantity of foreign corn imported even in times of the greatest scarcity, may satisfy our farmers that they can have nothing to fear from the freest importation. The average quantity imported, one year with another, amounts only, according to the very well informed author of the Tracts upon the Corn Trade, to 23,728 quarters of all sorts of grain, and does not exceed the five hundredth and seventy-one part of the annual consumption. But as

the bounty upon corn occasions a greater exportation in years of plenty, so it must, of consequence, occasion a greater importation in years of scarcity, than in the actual state of tillage would otherwise take place. By means of it, the plenty of one year does not compensate the scarcity of another; and as the average quantity exported is necessarily augmented by it, so must likewise, in the actual state of tillage, the average quantity imported. If there were no bounty, as less corn would be exported, so it is probable that, one year with another, less would be imported than at present. The corn-merchants, the fetchers and carriers of corn between Great Britain and foreign countries, would have much less employment, and might suffer considerably; but the country gentlemen and farmers could suffer very little. It is in the corn-merchants, accordingly, rather than the country gentlemen and farmers, that I have observed the greatest anxiety for the renewal and continuation of the bounty.

Country gentlemen and farmers are, to their great honour, of all people, the least subject to the wretched spirit of monopoly. The undertaker of a great manufactory is sometimes alarmed if another work of the same kind is established within twenty miles of him; the Dutch undertaker of the woollen manufacture at Abbeville, stipulated that no work of the same kind should be established within thirty leagues of that city. Farmers and country gentlemen, on the contrary, are generally disposed rather to promote, than to obstruct, the cultivation and improvement of their neighbours farms and estates. They have no secrets, such as those of the greater part of manufacturers, but are generally rather fond of communicating to their neighbours, and of extending as far as possible any new practice which they may have found to be advantageous. *Pius quæstus*, says old Cato, *stabilissimusque, minimeque invidiosus; minimeque male cogitantes sunt, qui in eo studio occupati sunt.* Country gentlemen and farmers, dispersed in different parts of the country, cannot so easily combine as merchants and manufacturers, who being collected into towns, and accustomed to that exclusive corporation spirit which prevails in them, naturally endeavour to obtain, against all their countrymen, the same exclusive privilege which they generally possess against the inhabitants of their respective towns. They accordingly seem to have been the original inventors of those restraints upon the importation of foreign goods, which secure to them the monopoly of the home market. It was probably in imitation of them, and to put themselves upon a level with those who, they found, were disposed to oppress them, that the country gentlemen and farmers of Great Britain so far forgot the generosity which is natural to their

station, as to demand the exclusive privilege of supplying their countrymen with corn and butcher’s meat. They did not, perhaps, take time to consider how much less their interest could be affected by the freedom of trade, than that of the people whose example they followed.

To prohibit, by a perpetual law, the importation of foreign corn and cattle, is in reality to enact, that the population and industry of the country shall, at no time, exceed what the rude produce of its own soil can maintain.

There seem, however, to be two cases, in which it will generally be advantageous to lay some burden upon foreign, for the encouragement of domestic industry.

The first is, when some particular sort of industry is necessary for the defence of the country. The defence of Great Britain, for example, depends very much upon the number of its sailors and shipping. The act of navigation, therefore, very properly endeavours to give the sailors and shipping of Great Britain the monopoly of the trade of their own country, in some cases, by absolute prohibitions, and in others, by heavy burdens upon the shipping of foreign countries. The following are the principal dispositions of this act.

First, All ships, of which the owners, masters, and three-fourths of the mariners, are not British subjects, are prohibited, upon pain of forfeiting ship and cargo, from trading to the British settlements and plantations, or from being employed in the coasting trade of Great Britain.

Secondly, A great variety of the most bulky articles of importation can be brought into Great Britain only, either in such ships as are above described, or in ships of the country where those goods are produced, and of which the owners, masters, and three-fourths of the mariners, are of that particular country; and when imported even in ships of this latter kind, they are subject to double aliens duty. If imported in ships of any other country, the penalty is forfeiture of ship and goods. When this act was made, the Dutch were, what they still are, the great carriers of Europe; and by this regulation they were entirely excluded from being the carriers to Great Britain, or from importing to us the goods of any other European country.

Thirdly, A great variety of the most bulky articles of importation are prohibited from being imported, even in British ships, from any country but that in which they are produced, under pain of forfeiting ship and cargo. This regulation, too, was probably intended against the Dutch. Holland was then, as now, the great emporium for all European goods;

and by this regulation, British ships were hindered from loading in Holland the goods of any other European country.

Fourthly, Salt fish of all kinds, whale-fins, whalebone, oil, and blubber, not caught by and cured on board British vessels, when imported into Great Britain, are subject to double aliens duty. The Dutch, as they are still the principal, were then the only fishers in Europe that attempted to supply foreign nations with fish. By this regulation, a very heavy burden was laid upon their supplying Great Britain.

When the act of navigation was made, though England and Holland were not actually at war, the most violent animosity subsisted between the two nations. It had begun during the government of the long parliament, which first framed this act, and it broke out soon after in the Dutch wars, during that of the Protector and of Charles II. It is not impossible, therefore, that some of the regulations of this famous act may have proceeded from national animosity. They are as wise, however, as if they had all been dictated by the most deliberate wisdom. National animosity, at that particular time, aimed at the very same object which the most deliberate wisdom would have recommended, the diminution of the naval power of Holland, the only naval power which could endanger the security of England.

The act of navigation is not favourable to foreign commerce, or to the growth of that opulence which can arise from it. The interest of a nation, in its commercial relations to foreign nations, is, like that of a merchant with regard to the different people with whom he deals, to buy as cheap, and to sell as dear as possible. But it will be most likely to buy cheap, when, by the most perfect freedom of trade, it encourages all nations to bring to it the goods which it has occasion to purchase; and, for the same reason, it will be most likely to sell dear, when its markets are thus filled with the greatest number of buyers. The act of navigation, it is true, lays no burden upon foreign ships that come to export the produce of British industry. Even the ancient aliens duty, which used to be paid upon all goods, exported as well as imported, has, by several subsequent acts, been taken off from the greater part of the articles of exportation. But if foreigners, either by prohibitions or high duties, are hindered from coming to sell, they cannot always afford to come to buy; because, coming without a cargo, they must lose the freight from their own country to Great Britain. By diminishing the number of sellers, therefore, we necessarily diminish that of buyers, and are thus likely not only to buy foreign goods dearer, but to sell our own cheaper, than if there was a more perfect freedom of trade. As defence, however, is of much more

importance than opulence, the act of navigation is, perhaps, the wisest of all the commercial regulations of England.

The second case, in which it will generally be advantageous to lay some burden upon foreign for the encouragement of domestic industry, is when some tax is imposed at home upon the produce of the latter. In this case, it seems reasonable that an equal tax should be imposed upon the like produce of the former. This would not give the monopoly of the home market to domestic industry, nor turn towards a particular employment a greater share of the stock and labour of the country, than what would naturally go to it. It would only hinder any part of what would naturally go to it from being turned away by the tax into a less natural direction, and would leave the competition between foreign and domestic industry, after the tax, as nearly as possible upon the same footing as before it. In Great Britain, when any such tax is laid upon the produce of domestic industry, it is usual, at the same time, in order to stop the clamorous complaints of our merchants and manufacturers, that they will be undersold at home, to lay a much heavier duty upon the importation of all foreign goods of the same kind.

This second limitation of the freedom of trade, according to some people, should, upon most occasions, be extended much farther than to the precise foreign commodities which could come into competition with those which had been taxed at home. When the necessaries of life have been taxed in any country, it becomes proper, they pretend, to tax not only the like necessaries of life imported from other countries, but all sorts of foreign goods which can come into competition with any thing that is the produce of domestic industry. Subsistence, they say, becomes necessarily dearer in consequence of such taxes; and the price of labour must always rise with the price of the labourer’s subsistence. Every commodity, therefore, which is the produce of domestic industry, though not immediately taxed itself, becomes dearer in consequence of such taxes, because the labour which produces it becomes so. Such taxes, therefore, are really equivalent, they say, to a tax upon every particular commodity produced at home. In order to put domestic upon the same footing with foreign industry, therefore, it becomes necessary, they think, to lay some duty upon every foreign commodity, equal to this enhancement of the price of the home commodities with which it can come into competition.

Whether taxes upon the necessaries of life, such as those in Great Britain upon soap, salt, leather, candles, &c. necessarily raise the price of labour, and consequently that of all other commodities, I shall consider

hereafter, when I come to treat of taxes. Supposing, however, in the mean time, that they have this effect, and they have it undoubtedly, this general enhancement of the price of all commodities, in consequence of that labour, is a case which differs in the two following respects from that of a particular commodity, of which the price was enhanced by a particular tax immediately imposed upon it.

First, It might always be known with great exactness, how far the price of such a commodity could be enhanced by such a tax, but how far the general enhancement of the price of labour might affect that of every different commodity about which labour was employed, could never be known with any tolerable exactness. It would be impossible, therefore, to proportion, with any tolerable exactness, the tax of every foreign, to the enhancement of the price of every home commodity.

Secondly, Taxes upon the necessaries of life have nearly the same effect upon the circumstances of the people as a poor soil and a bad climate. Provisions are thereby rendered dearer, in the same manner as if it required extraordinary labour and expense to raise them. As, in the natural scarcity arising from soil and climate, it would be absurd to direct the people in what manner they ought to employ their capitals and industry, so is it likewise in the artificial scarcity arising from such taxes. To be left to accommodate, as well as they could, their industry to their situation, and to find out those employments in which, notwithstanding their unfavourable circumstances, they might have some advantage either in the home or in the foreign market, is what, in both cases, would evidently be most for their advantage. To lay a new tax upon them, because they are already overburdened with taxes, and because they already pay too dear for the necessaries of life, to make them likewise pay too dear for the greater part of other commodities, is certainly a most absurd way of making amends.

Such taxes, when they have grown up to a certain height, are a curse equal to the barrenness of the earth, and the inclemency of the heavens, and yet it is in the richest and most industrious countries that they have been most generally imposed. No other countries could support so great a disorder. As the strongest bodies only can live and enjoy health under an unwholesome regimen, so the nations only, that in every sort of industry have the greatest natural and acquired advantages, can subsist and prosper under such taxes. Holland is the country in Europe in which they abound most, and which, from peculiar circumstances, continues to prosper, not by means of them, as has been most absurdly supposed, but in spite of them.

As there are two cases in which it will generally be advantageous to lay some burden upon foreign for the encouragement of domestic industry, so there are two others in which it may sometimes be a matter of deliberation, in the one, how far it is proper to continue the free importation of certain foreign goods; and, in the other, how far, or in what manner, it may be proper to restore that free importation, after it has been for some time interrupted.

The case in which it may sometimes be a matter of deliberation how far it is proper to continue the free importation of certain foreign goods, is when some foreign nation restrains, by high duties or prohibitions, the importation of some of our manufactures into their country. Revenge, in this case, naturally dictates retaliation, and that we should impose the like duties and prohibitions upon the importation of some or all of their manufactures into ours. Nations, accordingly, seldom fail to retaliate in this manner. The French have been particularly forward to favour their own manufactures, by restraining the importation of such foreign goods as could come into competition with them. In this consisted a great part of the policy of Mr. Colbert, who, notwithstanding his great abilities, seems in this case to have been imposed upon by the sophistry of merchants and manufacturers, who are always demanding a monopoly against their countrymen. It is at present the opinion of the most intelligent men in France, that his operations of this kind have not been beneficial to his country. That minister, by the tariff of 1667, imposed very high duties upon a great number of foreign manufactures. Upon his refusing to moderate them in favour of the Dutch, they, in 1671, prohibited the importation of the wines, brandies, and manufactures of France. The war of 1672 seems to have been in part occasioned by this commercial dispute. The peace of Nimeguen put an end to it in 1678, by moderating some of those duties in favour of the Dutch, who in consequence took off their prohibition. It was about the same time that the French and English began mutually to oppress each other’s industry, by the like duties and prohibitions, of which the French, however, seem to have set the first example. The spirit of hostility which has subsisted between the two nations ever since, has hitherto hindered them from being moderated on either side. In 1697, the English prohibited the importation of bone lace, the manufacture of Flanders. The government of that country, at that time under the domination of Spain, prohibited, in return, the importation of English woollens. In 1700, the prohibition of importing bone lace into England was taken off, upon condition that the

importation of English woollens into Flanders should be put on the same footing as before.

There may be good policy in retaliations of this kind, when there is a probability that they will procure the repeal of the high duties or prohibitions complained of. The recovery of a great foreign market will generally more than compensate the transitory inconveniency of paying dearer during a short time for some sorts of goods. To judge whether such retaliations are likely to produce such an effect, does not, perhaps, belong so much to the science of a legislator, whose deliberations ought to be governed by general principles, which are always the same, as to the skill of that insidious and crafty animal vulgarly called a statesman or politician, whose councils are directed by the momentary fluctuations of affairs. When there is no probability that any such repeal can be procured, it seems a bad method of compensating the injury done to certain classes of our people, to do another injury ourselves, not only to those classes, but to almost all the other classes of them. When our neighbours prohibit some manufacture of ours, we generally prohibit, not only the same, for that alone would seldom affect them considerably, but some other manufacture of theirs. This may, no doubt, give encouragement to some particular class of workmen among ourselves, and, by excluding some of their rivals, may enable them to raise their price in the home market. Those workmen however, who suffered by our neighbours prohibition, will not be benefited by ours. On the contrary, they, and almost all the other classes of our citizens, will thereby be obliged to pay dearer than before for certain goods. Every such law, therefore, imposes a real tax upon the whole country, not in favour of that particular class of workmen who were injured by our neighbours prohibitions, but of some other class.

The case in which it may sometimes be a matter of deliberation, how far, or in what manner, it is proper to restore the free importation of foreign goods, after it has been for some time interrupted, is when particular manufactures, by means of high duties or prohibitions upon all foreign goods which can come into competition with them, have been so far extended as to employ a great multitude of hands. Humanity may in this case require that the freedom of trade should be restored only by slow gradations, and with a good deal of reserve and circumspection. Were those high duties and prohibitions taken away all at once, cheaper foreign goods of the same kind might be poured so fast into the home market, as to deprive all at once many thousands of our people of their ordinary employment and means of subsistence. The disorder which this

would occasion might no doubt be very considerable. It would in all probability, however, be much less than is commonly imagined, for the two following reasons.

First, All those manufactures of which any part is commonly exported to other European countries without a bounty, could be very little affected by the freest importation of foreign goods. Such manufactures must be sold as cheap abroad as any other foreign goods of the same quality and kind, and consequently must be sold cheaper at home. They would still, therefore, keep possession of the home market; and though a capricious man of fashion might sometimes prefer foreign wares, merely because they were foreign, to cheaper and better goods of the same kind that were made at home, this folly could, from the nature of things, extend to so few, that it could make no sensible impression upon the general employment of the people. But a great part of all the different branches of our woollen manufacture, of our tanned leather, and of our hardware, are annually exported to other European countries without any bounty, and these are the manufactures which employ the greatest number of hands. The silk, perhaps, is the manufacture which would suffer the most by this freedom of trade, and after it the linen, though the latter much less than the former.

Secondly, Though a great number of people should, by thus restoring the freedom of trade, be thrown all at once out of their ordinary employment and common method of subsistence, it would by no means follow that they would thereby be deprived either of employment or subsistence. By the reduction of the army and navy at the end of the late war, more than 100,000 soldiers and seamen, a number equal to what is employed in the greatest manufactures, were all at once thrown out of their ordinary employment: but though they no doubt suffered some inconveniency, they were not thereby deprived of all employment and subsistence. The greater part of the seamen, it is probable, gradually betook themselves to the merchant service as they could find occasion, and in the mean time both they and the soldiers were absorbed in the great mass of the people, and employed in a great variety of occupations. Not only no great convulsion, but no sensible disorder, arose from so great a change in the situation of more than 100,000 men, all accustomed to the use of arms, and many of them to rapine and plunder. The number of vagrants was scarce anywhere sensibly increased by it; even the wages of labour were not reduced by it in any occupation, so far as I have been able to learn, except in that of seamen in the merchant service. But if we compare together the habits of a soldier and of any sort of manufacturer,

we shall find that those of the latter do not tend so much to disqualify him from being employed in a new trade, as those of the former from being employed in any. The manufacturer has always been accustomed to look for his subsistence from his labour only; the soldier to expect it from his pay. Application and industry have been familiar to the one; idleness and dissipation to the other. But it is surely much easier to change the direction of industry from one sort of labour to another, than to turn idleness and dissipation to any. To the greater part of manufactures, besides, it has already been observed, there are other collateral manufactures of so similar a nature, that a workman can easily transfer his industry from one of them to another. The greater part of such workmen, too, are occasionally employed in country labour. The stock which employed them in a particular manufacture before, will still remain in the country, to employ an equal number of people in some other way. The capital of the country remaining the same, the demand for labour will likewise be the same, or very nearly the same, though it may be exerted in different places, and for different occupations. Soldiers and seamen, indeed, when discharged from the king's service, are at liberty to exercise any trade within any town or place of Great Britain or Ireland. Let the same natural liberty of exercising what species of industry they please, be restored to all his Majesty's subjects, in the same manner as to soldiers and seamen; that is, break down the exclusive privileges of corporations, and repeal the statute of apprenticeship, both which are really encroachments upon natural liberty, and add to those the repeal of the law of settlements, so that a poor workman, when thrown out of employment, either in one trade or in one place, may seek for it in another trade or in another place, without the fear either of a prosecution or of a removal; and neither the public nor the individuals will suffer much more from the occasional disbanding some particular classes of manufacturers, than from that of the soldiers. Our manufacturers have no doubt great merit with their country, but they cannot have more than those who defend it with their blood, nor deserve to be treated with more delicacy.

To expect, indeed, that the freedom of trade should ever be entirely restored in Great Britain, is as absurd as to expect that an Oceana or Utopia should ever be established in it. Not only the prejudices of the public, but, what is much more unconquerable, the private interests of many individuals, irresistibly oppose it. Were the officers of the army to oppose, with the same zeal and unanimity, any reduction in the number of forces, with which master manufacturers set themselves against every

law that is likely to increase the number of their rivals in the home market; were the former to animate their soldiers, in the same manner as the latter inflame their workmen, to attack with violence and outrage the proposers of any such regulation; to attempt to reduce the army would be as dangerous as it has now become to attempt to diminish, in any respect, the monopoly which our manufacturers have obtained against us. This monopoly has so much increased the number of some particular tribes of them, that, like an overgrown standing army, they have become formidable to the government, and, upon many occasions, intimidate the legislature. The member of parliament who supports every proposal for strengthening this monopoly, is sure to acquire not only the reputation of understanding trade, but great popularity and influence with an order of men whose numbers and wealth render them of great importance. If he opposes them, on the contrary, and still more, if he has authority enough to be able to thwart them, neither the most acknowledged probity, nor the highest rank, nor the greatest public services, can protect him from the most infamous abuse and detraction, from personal insults, nor sometimes from real danger, arising from the insolent outrage of furious and disappointed monopolists.

The undertaker of a great manufacture, who, by the home markets being suddenly laid open to the competition of foreigners, should be obliged to abandon his trade, would no doubt suffer very considerably. That part of his capital which had usually been employed in purchasing materials, and in paying his workmen, might, without much difficulty, perhaps, find another employment; but that part of it which was fixed in workhouses, and in the instruments of trade, could scarce be disposed of without considerable loss. The equitable regard, therefore, to his interest, requires that changes of this kind should never be introduced suddenly, but slowly, gradually, and after a very long warning. The legislature, were it possible that its deliberations could be always directed, not by the clamorous importunity of partial interests, but by an extensive view of the general good, ought, upon this very account, perhaps, to be particularly careful, neither to establish any new monopolies of this kind, nor to extend further those which are already established. Every such regulation introduces some degree of real disorder into the constitution of the state, which it will be difficult afterwards to cure without occasioning another disorder.

How far it may be proper to impose taxes upon the importation of foreign goods, in order not to prevent their importation, but to raise a revenue for government, I shall consider hereafter when I come to treat

of taxes. Taxes imposed with a view to prevent, or even to diminish importation, are evidently as destructive of the revenue of the customs as of the freedom of trade.

CHAP. III. OF THE EXTRAORDINARY RESTRAINTS UPON THE IMPORTATION OF GOODS OF ALMOST ALL KINDS, FROM THOSE COUNTRIES WITH WHICH THE BALANCE IS SUPPOSED TO BE DISADVANTAGEOUS.

Part I. — *Of the Unreasonableness of those Restraints, even upon the Principles of the Commercial System.*

To lay extraordinary restraints upon the importation of goods of almost all kinds, from these particular countries with which the balance of trade is supposed to be disadvantageous, is the second expedient by which the commercial system proposes to increase the quantity of gold and silver. Thus, in Great Britain, Silesia lawns may be imported for home consumption, upon paying certain duties; but French cambrics and lawns are prohibited to be imported, except into the port of London, there to be warehoused for exportation. Higher duties are imposed upon the wines of France than upon those of Portugal, or indeed of any other country. By what is called the impost 1692, a duty of five-and-twenty per cent. of the rate or value, was laid upon all French goods; while the goods of other nations were, the greater part of them, subjected to much lighter duties, seldom exceeding five per cent. The wine, brandy, salt, and vinegar of France, were indeed excepted; these commodities being subjected to other heavy duties, either by other laws, or by particular clauses of the same law. In 1696, a second duty of twenty-five per cent. the first not having been thought a sufficient discouragement, was imposed upon all French goods, except brandy; together with a new duty of five-and-twenty pounds upon the ton of French wine, and another of fifteen pounds upon the ton of French vinegar. French goods have never been omitted in any of those general subsidies or duties of five per cent. which have been imposed upon all, or the greater part, of the goods enumerated in the book of rates. If we count the one-third and two-third subsidies as making a complete subsidy between them, there have been five of these general subsidies; so that, before the commencement of the present war, seventy-five per cent. may be considered as the lowest duty to which the

greater part of the goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of France, were liable. But upon the greater part of goods, those duties are equivalent to a prohibition. The French, in their turn, have, I believe, treated our goods and manufactures just as hardly; though I am not so well acquainted with the particular hardships which they have imposed upon them. Those mutual restraints have put an end to almost all fair commerce between the two nations; and smugglers are now the principal importers, either of British goods into France, or of French goods into Great Britain. The principles which I have been examining, in the foregoing chapter, took their origin from private interest and the spirit of monopoly; those which I am going to examine in this, from national prejudice and animosity. They are, accordingly, as might well be expected, still more unreasonable. They are so, even upon the principles of the commercial system.

First, Though it were certain that in the case of a free trade between France and England, for example, the balance would be in favour of France, it would by no means follow that such a trade would be disadvantageous to England, or that the general balance of its whole trade would thereby be turned more against it. If the wines of France are better and cheaper than these of Portugal, or its linens than those of Germany, it would be more advantageous for Great Britain to purchase both the wine and the foreign linen which it had occasion for of France, than of Portugal and Germany. Though the value of the annual importations from France would thereby be greatly augmented, the value of the whole annual importations would be diminished, in proportion as the French goods of the same quality were cheaper than those of the other two countries. This would be the case, even upon the supposition that the whole French goods imported were to be consumed in Great Britain.

But, *Secondly*, A great part of them might be re-exported to other countries, where, being sold with profit, they might bring back a return, equal in value, perhaps, to the prime cost of the whole French goods imported. What has frequently been said of the East India trade, might possibly be true of the French; that though the greater part of East India goods were bought with gold and silver, the re-exportation of a part of them to other countries brought back more gold and silver to that which carried on the trade, than the prime cost of the whole amounted to. One of the most important branches of the Dutch trade at present, consists in the carriage of French goods to other European countries. Some part even of the French wine drank in Great Britain, is clandestinely imported

from Holland and Zealand. If there was either a free trade between France and England, or if French goods could be imported upon paying only the same duties as those of other European nations, to be drawn back upon exportation, England might have some share of a trade which is found so advantageous to Holland.

Thirdly, and *lastly*, There is no certain criterion by which we can determine on which side what is called the balance between any two countries lies, or which of them exports to the greatest value. National prejudice and animosity, prompted always by the private interest of particular traders, are the principles which generally direct our judgment upon all questions concerning it. There are two criterions, however, which have frequently been appealed to upon such occasions, the custom-house books and the course of exchange. The custom-house books, I think, it is now generally acknowledged, are a very uncertain criterion, on account of the inaccuracy of the valuation at which the greater part of goods are rated in them. The course of exchange is, perhaps, almost equally so.

When the exchange between two places, such as London and Paris, is at par, it is said to be a sign that the debts due from London to Paris are compensated by those due from Paris to London. On the contrary, when a premium is paid at London for a bill upon Paris, it is said to be a sign that the debts due from London to Paris are not compensated by those due from Paris to London, but that a balance in money must be sent out from the latter place; for the risk, trouble, and expense, of exporting which, the premium is both demanded and given. But the ordinary state of debt and credit between those two cities must necessarily be regulated, it is said, by the ordinary course of their dealings with one another. When neither of them imports from the other to a greater amount than it exports to that other, the debts and credits of each may compensate one another. But when one of them imports from the other to a greater value than it exports to that other, the former necessarily becomes indebted to the latter in a greater sum than the latter becomes indebted to it: the debts and credits of each do not compensate one another, and money must be sent out from that place of which the debts overbalance the credits. The ordinary course of exchange, therefore, being an indication of the ordinary state of debt and credit between two places, must likewise be an indication of the ordinary course of their exports and imports, as these necessarily regulate that state.

But though the ordinary course of exchange shall be allowed to be a sufficient indication of the ordinary state of debt and credit between any

two places, it would not from thence follow, that the balance of trade was in favour of that place which had the ordinary state of debt and credit in its favour. The ordinary state of debt and credit between any two places is not always entirely regulated by the ordinary course of their dealings with one another, but is often influenced by that of the dealings of either with many other places. If it is usual, for example, for the merchants of England to pay for the goods which they buy of Hamburg, Dantzic, Riga, &c. by bills upon Holland, the ordinary state of debt and credit between England and Holland will not be regulated entirely by the ordinary course of the dealings of those two countries with one another, but will be influenced by that of the dealings in England with those other places. England may he obliged to send out every year money to Holland, though its annual exports to that country may exceed very much the annual value of its imports from thence, and though what is called the balance of trade may be very much in favour of England.

In the way, besides, in which the par of exchange has hitherto been computed, the ordinary course of exchange can afford no sufficient indication that the ordinary state of debt and credit is in favour of that country which seems to have, or which is supposed to have, the ordinary course of exchange in its favour; or, in other words, the real exchange may be, and in fact often is, so very different from the computed one, that, from the course of the latter, no certain conclusion can, upon many occasions, be drawn concerning that of the former.

When for a sum of money paid in England, containing, according to the standard of the English mint, a certain number of ounces of pure silver, you receive a bill for a sum of money to be paid in France, containing, according to the standard of the French mint, an equal number of ounces of pure silver, exchange is said to be at par between England and France. When you pay more, you are supposed to given premium, and exchange is said to be against England, and in favour of France. When you pay less, you are supposed to get a premium, and exchange is said to be against France, and in favour of England.

But, *first,* We cannot always judge of the value of the current money of different countries by the standard of their respective mints. In some it is more, in others it in less worn, clipt, and otherwise degenerated from that standard. But the value of the current coin of every country, compared with that of any other country, is in proportion, not to the quantity of pure silver which it ought to contain, but to that which it actually does contain. Before the reformation of the silver coin in King William’s time, exchange between England and Holland, computed in

the usual manner, according to the standard of their respective mints, was five-and-twenty per cent. against England. But the value of the current coin of England, as we learn from Mr Lowndes, was at that time rather more than five-and-twenty per cent. below its standard value. The real exchange, therefore, may even at that time have been in favour of England, notwithstanding the computed exchange so much against it; a smaller number of ounces of pure silver, actually paid in England, may have purchased a bill for a greater number of ounces of pure silver to be paid in Holland, and the man who was supposed to give, may in reality have got the premium. The French coin was, before the late reformation of the English gold coin, much less wore than the English, and was perhaps two or three per cent. nearer its standard. If the computed exchange with France, therefore, was not more than two or three per cent. against England, the real exchange might have been in its favour. Since the reformation of the gold coin, the exchange has been constantly in favour of England, and against France.

Secondly, In some countries the expense of coinage is defrayed by the government; in others, it is defrayed by the private people, who carry their bullion to the mint, and the government even derives some revenue from the coinage. In England it is defrayed by the government; and if you carry a pound weight of standard silver to the mint, you get back sixty-two shillings, containing a pound weight of the like standard silver. In France a duty of eight per cent. is deducted for the coinage, which not only defrays the expense of it, but affords a small revenue to the government. In England, as the coinage costs nothing, the current coin can never be much more valuable than the quantity of bullion which it actually contains. In France, the workmanship, as you pay for it, adds to the value, in the same manner as to that of wrought plate. A sum of French money, therefore, containing an equal weight of pure silver, is more valuable than a sum of English money containing an equal weight of pure silver, and must require more bullion, or other commodities, to purchase it. Though the current coin of the two countries, therefore, were equally near the standards of their respective mints, a sum of English money could not well purchase a sum of French money containing an equal number of ounces of pure silver, nor consequently, a bill upon France for such a sum. If, for such a bill, no more additional money was paid than what was sufficient to compensate the expense of the French coinage, the real exchange might be at par between the two countries; their debts and credits might mutually compensate one another, while the computed exchange was considerably in favour of France. If less than

this was paid, the real exchange might be in favour of England, while the computed was in favour of France.

Thirdly, and *lastly*, In some places, as at Amsterdam, Hamburg, Venice, &c. foreign bills of exchange are paid in what they call bank money; while in others, as at London, Lisbon, Antwerp, Leghorn, &c. they are paid in the common currency of the country. What is called bank money, is always of more value than the same nominal sum of common currency. A thousand guilders in the bank of Amsterdam, for example, are of more value than a thousand guilders of Amsterdam currency. The difference between them is called the agio of the bank, which at Amsterdam is generally about five per cent. Supposing the current money of the two countries equally near to the standard of their respective mints, and that the one pays foreign bills in this common currency, while the other pays them in bank money, it is evident that the computed exchange may be in favour of that which pays in bank money, though the real exchange should be in favour of that which pays in current money; for the same reason that the computed exchange may be in favour of that which pays in better money, or in money nearer to its own standard, though the real exchange should be in favour of that which pays in worse. The computed exchange, before the late reformation of the gold coin, was generally against London with Amsterdam, Hamburg, Venice, and, I believe, with all other places which pay in what is called bank money. It will by no means follow, however, that the real exchange was against it. Since the reformation of the gold coin, it has been in favour of London, even with those places. The computed exchange has generally been in favour of London with Lisbon, Antwerp, Leghorn, and, if you except France, I believe with most other parts of Europe that pay in common currency; and it is not improbable that the real exchange was so too.

Digression concerning Banks of Deposit, particularly concerning that of Amsterdam.

The currency of a great state, such as France or England, generally consists almost entirely of its own coin. Should this currency, therefore, be at any time worn, clipt, or otherwise degraded below its standard value, the state, by a reformation of its coin, can effectually re-establish its currency. But the currency of a small state, such as Genoa or Hamburg, can seldom consist altogether in its own coin, but must be made up, in a great measure, of the coins of all the neighbouring states

with which its inhabitants have a continual intercourse. Such a state, therefore, by reforming its coin, will not always be able to reform its currency. If foreign bills of exchange are paid in this currency, the uncertain value of any sum, of what is in its own nature so uncertain, must render the exchange always very much against such a state, its currency being in all foreign states necessarily valued even below what it is worth.

In order to remedy the inconvenience to which this disadvantageous exchange must have subjected their merchants, such small states, when they began to attend to the interest of trade, have frequently enacted, that foreign bills of exchange of a certain value should be paid, not in common currency, but by an order upon, or by a transfer in the books of a certain bank, established upon the credit, and under the protection of the state, this bank being always obliged to pay, in good and true money, exactly according to the standard of the state. The banks of Venice, Genoa, Amsterdam, Hamburg, and Nuremberg, seem to have been all originally established with this view, though some of them may have afterwards been made subservient to other purposes. The money of such banks, being better than the common currency of the country, necessarily bore an agio, which was greater or smaller, according as the currency was supposed to be more or less degraded below the standard of the state. The agio of the bank of Hamburg, for example, which is said to be commonly about fourteen per cent. is the supposed difference between the good standard money of the state, and the clipt, worn, and diminished currency, poured into it from all the neighbouring states.

Before 1609, the great quantity of clipt and worn foreign coin which the extensive trade of Amsterdam brought from all parts of Europe, reduced the value of its currency about nine per cent. below that of good money fresh from the mint. Such money no sooner appeared, than it was melted down or carried away, as it always is in such circumstances. The merchants, with plenty of currency, could not always find a sufficient quantity of good money to pay their bills of exchange; and the value of those bills, in spite of several regulations which were made to prevent it, became in a great measure uncertain.

In order to remedy these inconveniences, a bank was established in 1609, under the guarantee of the city. This bank received both foreign coin, and the light and worn coin of the country, at its real intrinsic value in the good standard money of the country, deducting only so much as was necessary for defraying the expense of coinage and the other necessary expense of management. For the value which remained after

this small deduction was made, it gave a credit in its books. This credit was called bank money, which, as it represented money exactly according to the standard of the mint, was always of the same real value, and intrinsically worth more than current money. It was at the same time enacted, that all bills drawn upon or negociated at Amsterdam, of the value of 600 guilders and upwards, should be paid in bank money, which at once took away all uncertainty in the value of those bills. Every merchant, in consequence of this regulation, was obliged to keep an account with the bank, in order to pay his foreign bills of exchange, which necessarily occasioned a certain demand for bank money.

Bank money, over and above both its intrinsic superiority to currency, and the additional value which this demand necessarily gives it, has likewise some other advantages. It is secure from fire, robbery, and other accidents; the city of Amsterdam is bound for it; it can be paid away by a simple transfer, without the trouble of counting, or the risk of transporting it from one place to another. In consequence of those different advantages, it seems from the beginning to have borne an agio; and it is generally believed that all the money originally deposited in the bank, was allowed to remain there, nobody caring to demand payment of a debt which he could sell for a premium in the market. By demanding payment of the bank, the owner of a bank credit would lose this premium. As a shilling fresh from the mint will buy no more goods in the market than one of our common worn shillings, so the good and true money which might be brought from the coffers of the bank into those of a private person, being mixed and confounded with the common currency of the country, would be of no more value than that currency, from which it could no longer be readily distinguished. While it remained in the coffers of the bank, its superiority was known and ascertained. When it had come into those of a private person, its superiority could not well be ascertained without more trouble than perhaps the difference was worth. By being brought from the coffers of the bank, besides, it lost all the other advantages of bank money; its security, its easy and safe transferability, its use in paying foreign bills of exchange. Over and above all this, it could not be brought from those coffers, as will appear by and by, without previously paying for the keeping.

Those deposits of coin, or those deposits which the bank was bound to restore in coin, constituted the original capital of the bank, or the whole value of what was represented by what is called bank money. At present they are supposed to constitute but a very small part of it. In order to

facilitate the trade in bullion, the bank has been for these many years in the practice of giving credit in its books, upon deposits of gold and silver bullion. This credit is generally about five per cent. below the mint price of such bullion. The bank grants at the same time what is called a recipice or receipt, entitling the person who makes the deposit, or the bearer, to take out the bullion again at any time within six months, upon transferring to the bank a quantity of bank money equal to that for which credit had been given in its books when the deposit was made, and upon paying one-fourth per cent. for the keeping, if the deposit was in silver; and one-half per cent. if it was in gold; but at the same time declaring, that in default of such payment, and upon the expiration of this term, the deposit should belong to the bank, at the price at which it had been received, or for which credit had been given in the transfer books. What is thus paid for the keeping of the deposit may be considered as a sort of warehouse rent; and why this warehouse rent should be so much dearer for gold than for silver, several different reasons have been assigned. The fineness of gold, it has been said, is more difficult to be ascertained than that of silver. Frauds are more easily practised, and occasion a greater loss in the most precious metal. Silver, besides, being the standard metal, the state, it has been said, wishes to encourage more the making of deposits of silver than those of gold.

Deposits of bullion are most commonly made when the price is somewhat lower than ordinary, and they are taken out again when it happens to rise. In Holland the market price of bullion is generally above the mint price, for the same reason that it was so in England before the late reformation of the gold coin. The difference is said to be commonly from about six to sixteen stivers upon the mark, or eight ounces of silver, of eleven parts of fine and one part alloy. The bank price, or the credit which the bank gives for the deposits of such silver (when made in foreign coin, of which the fineness is well known and ascertained, such as Mexico dollars), is twenty-two guilders the mark; the mint price is about twenty-three guilders, and the market price is from twenty-three guilders six, to twenty-three guilders sixteen stivers, or from two to three per cent. above the mint price.[37*] The proportions between the bank price, the mint price, and the market price of gold bullion, are nearly the same. A person can generally sell his receipt for the difference between the mint price of bullion and the market price. A receipt for bullion is almost always worth something, and it very seldom happens, therefore, that anybody suffers his receipts to expire, or allows his bullion to fall to the bank at the price at which it had been received, either by not taking it

out before the end of the six months, or by neglecting to pay one fourth or one half per cent. in order to obtain a new receipt for another six months. This, however, though it happens seldom, is said to happen sometimes, and more frequently with regard to gold than with regard to silver, on account of the higher warehouse rent which is paid for the keeping of the more precious metal.

The person who, by making a deposit of bullion, obtains both a bank credit and a receipt, pays his bills of exchange as they become due, with his bank credit; and either sells or keeps his receipt, according as he judges that the price of bullion is likely to rise or to fall. The receipt and the bank credit seldom keep long together, and there is no occasion that they should. The person who has a receipt, and who wants to take out bullion, finds always plenty of bank credits, or bank money, to buy at the ordinary price, and the person who has bank money, and wants to take out bullion, finds receipts always in equal abundance.

The owners of bank credits, and the holders of receipts, constitute two different sorts of creditors against the bank. The holder of a receipt cannot draw out the bullion for which it is granted, without re-assigning to the bank a sum of bank money equal to the price at which the bullion had been received. If he has no bank money of his own, he must purchase it of those who have it. The owner of bank money cannot draw out bullion, without producing to the bank receipts for the quantity which he wants. If he has none of his own, he must buy them of those who have them. The holder of a receipt, when he purchases bank money, purchases the power of taking out a quantity of bullion, of which the mint price is five per cent. above the bank price. The agio of five per cent. therefore, which he commonly pays for it, is paid, not for an imaginary, but for a real value. The owner of bank money, when he purchases a receipt, purchases the power of taking out a quantity of bullion, of which the market price is commonly from two to three per cent. above the mint price. The price which he pays for it, therefore, is paid likewise for a real value. The price of the receipt, and the price of the bank money, compound or make up between them the full value or price of the bullion.

Upon deposits of the coin current in the country, the bank grant receipts likewise, as well as bank credits; but those receipts are frequently of no value and will bring no price in the market. Upon ducatoons, for example, which in the currency pass for three guilders three stivers each, the bank gives a credit of three guilders only, or five per cent. below their current value. It grants a receipt likewise, entitling

the bearer to take out a number of ducatoons deposited at any time within six months, upon paying one fourth per cent. for the keeping. This receipt will frequently bring no price in the market. Three guilders, bank money, generally sell in the market for three guilders three stivers, the full value of the ducatoons, if they were taken out of the bank; and before they can be taken out, one-fourth per cent. must be paid for the keeping, which would be mere loss to the holder of the receipt. If the agio of the bank, however, should at any time fall to three per cent. such receipts might bring some price in the market, and might sell for one and three-fourths per cent. But the agio of the bank being now generally about five per cent. such receipts are frequently allowed to expire, or, as they express it, to fall to the bank. The receipts which are given for deposits of gold ducats fall to it yet more frequently, because a higher warehouse rent, or one half per cent. must be paid for the keeping of them, before they can be taken out again. The five per cent. which the bank gains, when deposits either of coin or bullion are allowed to fall to it, may be considered as the warehouse rent for the perpetual keeping of such deposits.

The sum of bank money, for which the receipts are expired, must be very considerable. It must comprehend the whole original capital of the bank, which, it is generally supposed, has been allowed to remain there from the time it was first deposited, nobody caring either to renew his receipt, or to take out his deposit, as, for the reasons already assigned, neither the one nor the other could be done without loss. But whatever may be the amount of this sum, the proportion which it bears to the whole mass of bank money is supposed to be very small. The bank of Amsterdam has, for these many years past, been the great warehouse of Europe for bullion, for which the receipts are very seldom allowed to expire, or, as they express it, to fall to the bank. The far greater part of the bank money, or of the credits upon the books of the bank, is supposed to have been created, for these many years past, by such deposits, which the dealers in bullion are continually both making and withdrawing.

No demand can be made upon the bank, but by means of a recipice or receipt. The smaller mass of bank money, for which the receipts are expired, is mixed and confounded with the much greater mass for which they are still in force; so that, though there may be a considerable sum of bank money, for which there are no receipts, there is no specific sum or portion of it which may not at any time be demanded by one. The bank cannot be debtor to two persons for the same thing; and the owner of bank money who has no receipt, cannot demand payment of the bank till

he buys one. In ordinary and quiet times, he can find no difficulty in getting one to buy at the market price, which generally corresponds with the price at which he can sell the coin or bullion it entitles him to take out of the bank.

It might be otherwise during a public calamity; an invasion, for example, such as that of the French in 1672. The owners of bank money being then all eager to draw it out of the bank, in order to have it in their own keeping, the demand for receipts might raise their price to an exorbitant height. The holders of them might form extravagant expectations, and, instead of two or three per cent. demand half the bank money for which credit had been given upon the deposits that the receipts had respectively been granted for. The enemy, informed of the constitution of the bank, might even buy them up, in order to prevent the carrying away of the treasure. In such emergencies, the bank, it is supposed, would break through its ordinary rule of making payment only to the holders of receipts. The holders of receipts, who had no bank money, must have received within two or three per cent. of the value of the deposit for which their respective receipts had been granted. The bank, therefore, it is said, would in this case make no scruple of paying, either with money or bullion, the full value of what the owners of bank money, who could get no receipts, were credited for in its books; paying, at the same time, two or three per cent. to such holders of receipts as had no bank money, that being the whole value which, in this state of things, could justly be supposed due to them.

Even in ordinary and quiet times, it is the interest of the holders of receipts to depress the agio, in order either to buy bank money (and consequently the bullion which their receipts would then enable them to take out of the bank) so much cheaper, or to sell their receipts to these who have bank money, and who want to take out bullion, so much dearer; the price of a receipt being generally equal to the difference between the market price of bank money and that of the coin or bullion for which the receipt had been granted. It is the interest of the owners of bank money, on the contrary, to raise the agio, in order either to sell their bank money so much dearer, or to buy a receipt so much cheaper. To prevent the stock-jobbing tricks which those opposite interests might sometimes occasion, the bank has of late years come to the resolution, to sell at all times bank money for currency at five per cent. agio, and to buy it in again at four per cent. agio. In consequence of this resolution, the agio can never either rise above five, or sink below four per cent.; and the proportion between the market price of bank and that of current

money is kept at all times very near the proportion between their intrinsic values. Before this resolution was taken, the market price of bank money used sometimes to rise so high as nine per cent. agio, and sometimes to sink so low as par, according as opposite interests happened to influence the market.

The bank of Amsterdam professes to lend out no part of what is deposited with it, but, for every guilder for which it gives credit in its books, to keep in its repositories the value of a guilder either in money or bullion. That it keeps in its repositories all the money or bullion for which there are receipts in force, for which it is at all times liable to be called upon, and which in reality is continually going from it, and returning to it again, cannot well be doubted. But whether it does so likewise with regard to that part of its capital for which the receipts are long ago expired, for which, in ordinary and quiet times, it cannot be called upon, and which, in reality, is very likely to remain with it for ever, or as long as the states of the United Provinces subsist, may perhaps appear more uncertain. At Amsterdam, however, no point of faith is better established than that, for every guilder circulated as bank money, there is a correspondent guilder in gold or silver to be found in the treasures of the bank. The city is guarantee that it should be so. The bank is under the direction of the four reigning burgomasters, who are changed every year. Each new set of burgomasters visits the treasure, compares it with the books, receives it upon oath, and delivers it over, with the same awful solemnity, to the set which succeeds; and in that sober and religious country, oaths are not yet disregarded. A rotation of this kind seems alone a sufficient security against any practices which cannot be avowed. Amidst all the revolutions which faction has ever occasioned in the government of Amsterdam, the prevailing party has at no time accused their predecessors of infidelity in the administration of the bank. No accusation could have affected more deeply the reputation and fortune of the disgraced party; and if such an accusation could have been supported, we may be assured that it would have been brought. In 1672, when the French king was at Utrecht, the bank of Amsterdam paid so readily, as left no doubt of the fidelity with which it had observed its engagements. Some of the pieces which were then brought from its repositories, appeared to have been scorched with the fire which happened in the town-house soon after the bank was established. Those pieces, therefore, must have lain there from that time.

What may be the amount of the treasure in the bank, is a question which has long employed the speculations of the curious. Nothing but

conjecture can be offered concerning it. It is generally reckoned, that there are about 2000 people who keep accounts with the bank; and allowing them to have, one with another, the value of L.1500 sterling lying upon their respective accounts (a very large allowance), the whole quantity of bank money, and consequently of treasure in the bank, will amount to about L.3,000,000 sterling, or, at eleven guilders the pound sterling, 33,000,000 of guilders; a great sum, and sufficient to carry on a very extensive circulation, but vastly below the extravagant ideas which some people have formed of this treasure.

The city of Amsterdam derives a considerable revenue from the bank. Besides what may be called the warehouse rent above mentioned, each person, upon first opening an account with the bank, pays a fee of ten guilders; and for every new account, three guilders three stivers; for every transfer, two stivers; and if the transfer is for less than 300 guilders, six stivers, in order to discourage the multiplicity of small transactions. The person who neglects to balance his account twice in the year, forfeits twenty-five guilders. The person who orders a transfer for more than is upon his account, is obliged to pay three per cent. for the sum overdrawn, and his order is set aside into the bargain. The bank is supposed, too, to make a considerable profit by the sale of the foreign coin or bullion which sometimes falls to it by the expiring of receipts, and which is always kept till it can be sold with advantage. It makes a profit, likewise, by selling bank money at five per cent. agio, and buying it in at four. These different emoluments amount to a good deal more than what is necessary for paying the salaries of officers, and defraying the expense of management. What is paid for the keeping of bullion upon receipts, is alone supposed to amount to a neat annual revenue of between 150,000 and 200,000 guilders. Public utility, however, and not revenue, was the original object of this institution. Its object was to relieve the merchants from the inconvenience of a disadvantageous exchange. The revenue which has arisen from it was unforeseen, and may be considered as accidental. But it is now time to return from this long digression, into which I have been insensibly led, in endeavouring to explain the reasons why the exchange between the countries which pay in what is called bank money, and those which pay in common currency, should generally appear to be in favour of the former, and against the latter. The former pay in a species of money, of which the intrinsic value is always the same, and exactly agreeable to the standard of their respective mints; the latter is a species of money, of which the

intrinsic value is continually varying, and is almost always more or less below that standard.

Part II. — *Of the Unreasonableness of those extraordinary Restraints, upon other Principles.*

In the foregoing part of this chapter, I have endeavoured to show, even upon the principles of the commercial system, how unnecessary it is to lay extraordinary restraints upon the importation of goods from those countries with which the balance of trade is supposed to be disadvantageous.

Nothing, however, can be more absurd than this whole doctrine of the balance of trade, upon which, not only these restraints, but almost all the other regulations of commerce, are founded. When two places trade with one another, this doctrine supposes that, if the balance be even, neither of them either loses or gains; but if it leans in any degree to one side, that one of them loses, and the other gains, in proportion to its declension from the exact equilibrium. Both suppositions are false. A trade, which is forced by means of bounties and monopolies, may be, and commonly is, disadvantageous to the country in whose favour it is meant to be established, as I shall endeavour to show hereafter. But that trade which, without force or constraint, is naturally and regularly carried on between any two places, is always advantageous, though not always equally so, to both.

By advantage or gain, I understand, not the increase of the quantity of gold or silver, but that of the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, or the increase of the annual revenue of its inhabitants.

If the balance be even, and if the trade between the two places consist altogether in the exchange of their native commodities, they will, upon most occasions, not only both gain, but they will gain equally, or very nearly equally; each will, in this case, afford a market for a part of the surplus produce of the other; each will replace a capital which had been employed in raising and preparing for the market this part of the surplus produce of the other, and which had been distributed among, and given revenue and maintenance to, a certain number of its inhabitants. Some part of the inhabitants of each, therefore, will directly derive their revenue and maintenance from the other. As the commodities exchanged, too, are supposed to be of equal value, so the two capitals employed in

the trade will, upon most occasions, be equal or very nearly equal; and both being employed in raising the native commodities of the two countries, the revenue and maintenance which their distribution will afford to the inhabitants of each will be equal, or very nearly equal. This revenue and maintenance, this mutually afforded, will be greater or smaller, in proportion to the extent of their dealings. If these should annually amount to L.100,000, for example, or to L.1,000,000, on each side, each of them will afford an annual revenue, in the one case, of L.100,000, and, in the other, of L.1,000,000, to the inhabitants of the other.

If their trade should be of such a nature, that one of them exported to the other nothing but native commodities, while the returns of that other consisted altogether in foreign goods; the balance, in this case, would still be supposed even, commodities being paid for with commodities. They would, in this case too, both gain, but they would not gain equally; and the inhabitants of the country which exported nothing but native commodities, would derive the greatest revenue from the trade. If England, for example, should import from France nothing but the native commodities of that country, and not having such commodities of its own as were in demand there, should annually repay them by sending thither a large quantity of foreign goods, tobacco, we shall suppose, and East India goods; this trade, though it would give some revenue to the inhabitants of both countries, would give more to those of France than to those of England. The whole French capital annually employed in it would annually be distributed among the people of France; but that part of the English capital only, which was employed in producing the English commodities with which those foreign goods were purchased, would be annually distributed among the people of England. The greater part of it would replace the capitals which had been employed in Virginia, Indostan, and China, and which had given revenue and maintenance to the inhabitants of those distant countries. If the capitals were equal, or nearly equal, therefore, this employment of the French capital would augment much more the revenue of the people of France, than that of the English capital would the revenue of the people of England. France would, in this case, carry on a direct foreign trade of consumption with England; whereas England would carry on a round-about trade of the same kind with France. The different effects of a capital employed in the direct, and of one employed in the round-about foreign trade of consumption, have already been fully explained.

There is not, probably, between any two countries, a trade which consists altogether in the exchange, either of native commodities on both sides, or of native commodities on one side, and of foreign goods on the other. Almost all countries exchange with one another, partly native and partly foreign goods. That country, however, in whose cargoes there is the greatest proportion of native, and the least of foreign goods, will always be the principal gainer.

If it was not with tobacco and East India goods, but with gold and silver, that England paid for the commodities annually imported from France, the balance, in this case, would be supposed uneven, commodities not being paid for with commodities, but with gold and silver. The trade, however, would in this case, as in the foregoing, give some revenue to the inhabitants of both countries, but more to those of France than to those of England. It would give some revenue to those of England. The capital which had been employed in producing the English goods that purchased this gold and silver, the capital which had been distributed among, and given revenue to, certain inhabitants of England, would thereby be replaced, and enabled to continue that employment. The whole capital of England would no more be diminished by this exportation of gold and silver, than by the exportation of an equal value of any other goods. On the contrary, it would, in most cases, be augmented. No goods are sent abroad but those for which the demand is supposed to be greater abroad than at home, and of which the returns, consequently, it is expected, will be of more value at home than the commodities exported. If the tobacco which in England is worth only L.100,000, when sent to France, will purchase wine which is in England worth L.110,000, the exchange will equally augment the capital of England by L.10,000. If L.100,000 of English gold, in the same manner, purchase French wine, which in England is worth L.110,000, this exchange will equally augment the capital of England by L.10,000. As a merchant, who has L.110,000 worth of wine in his cellar, is a richer man than he who has only L.100,000 worth of tobacco in his warehouse, so is he likewise a richer man than he who has only L.100,000 worth of gold in his coffers. He can put into motion a greater quantity of industry, and give revenue, maintenance, and employment, to a greater number of people, than either of the other two. But the capital of the country is equal to the capital of all its different inhabitants; and the quantity of industry which can be annually maintained in it is equal to what all those different capitals can maintain. Both the capital of the country, therefore, and the quantity of industry which can be annually maintained in it, must

generally be augmented by this exchange. It would, indeed, be more advantageous for England that it could purchase the wines of France with its own hardware and broad cloth, than with either the tobacco of Virginia, or the gold and silver of Brazil and Peru. A direct foreign trade of consumption is always more advantageous than a round-about one. But a round-about foreign trade of consumption, which is carried on with gold and silver, does not seem to be less advantageous than any other equally round-about one. Neither is a country which has no mines, more likely to be exhausted of gold and silver by this annual exportation of those metals, than one which does not grow tobacco by the like annual exportation of that plant. As a country which has wherewithal to buy tobacco will never be long in want of it, so neither will one be long in want of gold and silver which has wherewithal to purchase those metals.

It is a losing trade, it is said, which a workman carries on with the alehouse; and the trade which a manufacturing nation would naturally carry on with a wine country, may be considered as a trade of the same nature. I answer, that the trade with the alehouse is not necessarily a losing trade. In its own nature it is just as advantageous as any other, though, perhaps, somewhat more liable to be abused. The employment of a brewer, and even that of a retailer of fermented liquors, are as necessary divisions of labour as any other. It will generally be more advantageous for a workman to buy of the brewer the quantity he has occasion for, than to brew it himself; and if he is a poor workman, it will generally be more advantageous for him to buy it by little and little of the retailer, than a large quantity of the brewer. He may no doubt buy too much of either, as he may of any other dealers in his neighbourhood; of the butcher, if he is a glutton; or of the draper, if he affects to be a beau among his companions. It is advantageous to the great body of workmen, notwithstanding, that all these trades should be free, though this freedom may be abused in all of them, and is more likely to be so, perhaps, in some than in others. Though individuals, besides, may sometimes ruin their fortunes by an excessive consumption of fermented liquors, there seems to be no risk that a nation should do so. Though in every country there are many people who spend upon such liquors more than they can afford, there are always many more who spend less. It deserves to be remarked, too, that if we consult experience, the cheapness of wine seems to be a cause, not of drunkenness, but of sobriety. The inhabitants of the wine countries are in general the soberest people of Europe; witness the Spaniards, the Italians, and the inhabitants of the southern provinces of France. People are seldom guilty of excess in what is their

daily fare. Nobody affects the character of liberality and good fellowship, by being profuse of a liquor which is as cheap as small beer. On the contrary, in the countries which, either from excessive heat or cold, produce no grapes, and where wine consequently is dear and a rarity, drunkenness is a common vice, as among the northern nations, and all those who live between the tropics, the negroes, for example, on the coast of Guinea. When a French regiment comes from some of the northern provinces of France, where wine is somewhat dear, to be quartered in the southern, where it is very cheap, the soldiers, I have frequently heard it observed, are at first debauched by the cheapness and novelty of good wine; but after a few months residence, the greater part of them become as sober as the rest of the inhabitants. Were the duties upon foreign wines, and the excises upon malt, beer, and ale, to be taken away all at once, it might, in the same manner, occasion in Great Britain a pretty general and temporary drunkenness among the middling and inferior ranks of people, which would probably be soon followed by a permanent and almost universal sobriety. At present, drunkenness is by no means the vice of people of fashion, or of those who can easily afford the most expensive liquors. A gentleman drunk with ale has scarce ever been seen among us. The restraints upon the wine trade in Great Britain, besides, do not so much seem calculated to hinder the people from going, if I may say so, to the alehouse, as from going where they can buy the best and cheapest liquor. They favour the wine trade of Portugal, and discourage that of France. The Portuguese, it is said, indeed, are better customers for our manufactures than the French, and should therefore be encouraged in preference to them. As they give us their custom, it is pretended we should give them ours. The sneaking arts of underling tradesman are thus erected into political maxims for the conduct of a great empire; for it is the most underling tradesmen only who make it a rule to employ chiefly their own customers. A great trader purchases his goods always where they are cheapest and best, without regard to any little interest of this kind.

By such maxims as these, however, nations have been taught that their interest consisted in beggaring all their neighbours. Each nation has been made to look with an invidious eye upon the prosperity of all the nations with which it trades, and to consider their gain as its own loss. Commerce, which ought naturally to be, among nations as among individuals, a bond of union and friendship, has become the most fertile source of discord and animosity. The capricious ambition of kings and ministers has not, during the present and the preceding century, been

more fatal to the repose of Europe, than the impertinent jealousy of merchants and manufacturers. The violence and injustice of the rulers of mankind is an ancient evil, for which, I am afraid, the nature of human affairs can scarce admit of a remedy: but the mean rapacity, the monopolizing spirit, of merchants and manufacturers, who neither are, nor ought to be, the rulers of mankind, though it cannot, perhaps, be corrected, may very easily be prevented from disturbing the tranquillity of anybody but themselves.

That it was the spirit of monopoly which originally both invented and propagated this doctrine, cannot be doubted: and they who first taught it, were by no means such fools as they who believed it. In every country it always is, and must be, the interest of the great body of the people, to buy whatever they want of those who sell it cheapest. The proposition is so very manifest, that it seems ridiculous to take any pains to prove it; nor could it ever have been called in question, had not the interested sophistry of merchants and manufacturers confounded the common sense of mankind. Their interest is, in this respect, directly opposite to that of the great body of the people. As it is the interest of the freemen of a corporation to hinder the rest of the inhabitants from employing any workmen but themselves; so it is the interest of the merchants and manufacturers of every country to secure to themselves the monopoly of the home market. Hence, in Great Britain, and in most other European countries, the extraordinary duties upon almost all goods imported by alien merchants. Hence the high duties and prohibitions upon all those foreign manufactures which can come into competition with our own. Hence, too, the extraordinary restraints upon the importation of almost all sorts of goods from those countries with which the balance of trade is supposed to be disadvantageous; that is, from those against whom national animosity happens to be most violently inflamed.

The wealth of neighbouring nations, however, though dangerous in war and politics, is certainly advantageous in trade. In a state of hostility, it may enable our enemies to maintain fleets and armies superior to our own; but in a state of peace and commerce, it must likewise enable them to exchange with us to a greater value, and to afford a better market, either for the immediate produce of our own industry, or for whatever is purchased with that produce. As a rich man is likely to be a better customer to the industrious people in his neighbourhood, than a poor, so is likewise a rich nation. A rich man, indeed, who is himself a manufacturer, is a very dangerous neighbour to all those who deal in the same way. All the rest of the neighbourhood, however, by far the greatest

number, profit by the good market which his expense affords them. They even profit by his underselling the poorer workmen who deal in the same way with him. The manufacturers of a rich nation, in the same manner, may no doubt be very dangerous rivals to those of their neighbours. This very competition, however, is advantageous to the great body of the people, who profit greatly, besides, by the good market which the great expense of such a nation affords them in every other way. Private people, who want to make a fortune, never think of retiring to the remote and poor provinces of the country, but resort either to the capital, or to some of the great commercial towns. They know, that where little wealth circulates, there is little to be got; but that where a great deal is in motion, some share of it may fall to them. The same maxim which would in this manner direct the common sense of one, or ten, or twenty individuals, should regulate the judgment of one, or ten, or twenty millions, and should make a whole nation regard the riches of its neighbours, as a probable cause and occasion for itself to acquire riches. A nation that would enrich itself by foreign trade, is certainly most likely to do so, when its neighbours are all rich, industrious and commercial nations. A great nation, surrounded on all sides by wandering savages and poor barbarians, might, no doubt, acquire riches by the cultivation of its own lands, and by its own interior commerce, but not by foreign trade. It seems to have been in this manner that the ancient Egyptians and the modern Chinese acquired their great wealth. The ancient Egyptians, it is said, neglected foreign commerce, and the modern Chinese, it is known, hold it in the utmost contempt, and scarce deign to afford it the decent protection of the laws. The modern maxims of foreign commerce, by aiming at the impoverishment of all our neighbours, so far as they are capable of producing their intended effect, tend to render that very commerce insignificant and contemptible.

It is in consequence of these maxims, that the commerce between France and England has, in both countries, been subjected to so many discouragements and restraints. If those two countries, however, were to consider their real interest, without either mercantile jealousy or national animosity, the commerce of France might be more advantageous to Great Britain than that of any other country, and, for the same reason, that of Great Britain to France. France is the nearest neighbour to Great Britain. In the trade between the southern coast of England and the northern and north-western coast of France, the returns might be expected, in the same manner as in the inland trade, four, five, or six times in the year. The capital, therefore, employed in this trade could, in each of the two

countries, keep in motion four, five, or six times the quantity of industry, and afford employment and subsistence to four, five, or six times the number of people, which an equal capital could do in the greater part of the other branches of foreign trade. Between the parts of France and Great Britain most remote from one another, the returns might be expected, at least, once in the year; and even this trade would so far be at least equally advantageous, as the greater part of the other branches of our foreign European trade. It would be, at least, three times more advantageous than the boasted trade with our North American colonies, in which the returns were seldom made in less than three years, frequently not in less than four or five years. France, besides, is supposed to contain 24,000,000 of inhabitants. Our North American colonies were never supposed to contain more than 3,000,000; and France is a much richer country than North America; though, on account of the more unequal distribution of riches, there is much more poverty and beggary in the one country than in the other. France, therefore, could afford a market at least eight times more extensive, and, on account of the superior frequency of the returns, four-and-twenty times more advantageous than that which our North American colonies ever afforded. The trade of Great Britain would be just as advantageous to France, and, in proportion to the wealth, population, and proximity of the respective countries, would have the same superiority over that which France carries on with her own colonies. Such is the very great difference between that trade which the wisdom of both nations has thought proper to discourage, and that which it has favoured the most.

But the very same circumstances which would have rendered an open and free commerce between the two countries so advantageous to both, have occasioned the principal obstructions to that commerce. Being neighbours, they are necessarily enemies, and the wealth and power of each becomes, upon that account, more formidable to the other; and what would increase the advantage of national friendship, serves only to inflame the violence of national animosity. They are both rich and industrious nations; and the merchants and manufacturers of each dread the competition of the skill and activity of those of the other. Mercantile jealousy is excited, and both inflames, and is itself inflamed, by the violence of national animosity, and the traders of both countries have announced, with all the passionate confidence of interested falsehood, the certain ruin of each, in consequence of that unfavourable balance of trade, which, they pretend, would be the infallible effect of an unrestrained commerce with the other.

There is no commercial country in Europe, of which the approaching ruin has not frequently been foretold by the pretended doctors of this system, from an unfavourable balance of trade. After all the anxiety, however, which they have excited about this, after all the vain attempts of almost all trading nations to turn that balance in their own favour, and against their neighbours, it does not appear that any one nation in Europe has been, in any respect, impoverished by this cause. Every town and country, on the contrary, in proportion as they have opened their ports to all nations, instead of being ruined by this free trade, as the principles of the commercial system would lead us to expect, have been enriched by it. Though there are in Europe, indeed, a few towns which, in some respects, deserve the name of free ports, there is no country which does so. Holland, perhaps, approaches the nearest to this character of any, though still very remote from it; and Holland, it is acknowledged, not only derives its whole wealth, but a great part of its necessary subsistence, from foreign trade.

There is another balance, indeed, which has already been explained, very different from the balance of trade, and which, according as it happens to be either favourable or unfavourable, necessarily occasions the prosperity or decay of every nation. This is the balance of the annual produce and consumption. If the exchangeable value of the annual produce, it has already been observed, exceeds that of the annual consumption, the capital of the society must annually increase in proportion to this excess. The society in this case lives within its revenue; and what is annually saved out of its revenue, is naturally added to its capital, and employed so as to increase still further the annual produce. If the exchangeable value of the annual produce, on the contrary, fall short of the annual consumption, the capital of the society must annually decay in proportion to this deficiency. The expense of the society, in this case, exceeds its revenue, and necessarily encroaches upon its capital. Its capital, therefore, must necessarily decay, and, together with it, the exchangeable value of the annual produce of its industry.

This balance of produce and consumption is entirely different from what is called the balance of trade. It might take place in a nation which had no foreign trade, but which was entirely separated from all the world. It may take place in the whole globe of the earth, of which the wealth, population, and improvement, may be either gradually increasing or gradually decaying.

The balance of produce and consumption may be constantly in favour of a nation, though what is called the balance of trade be generally against it. A nation may import to a greater value than it exports for half a century, perhaps, together; the gold and silver which comes into it during all this time, may be all immediately sent out of it; its circulating coin may gradually decay, different sorts of paper money being substituted in its place, and even the debts, too, which it contracts in the principal nations with whom it deals, may be gradually increasing; and yet its real wealth, the exchangeable value of the annual produce of its lands and labour, may, during the same period, have been increasing in a much greater proportion. The state of our North American colonies, and of the trade which they carried on with Great Britain, before the commencement of the present disturbances,[38*] may serve as a proof that this is by no means an impossible supposition.

CHAP. IV. OF DRAWBACKS.

Merchants and manufacturers are not contented with the monopoly of the home market, but desire likewise the most extensive foreign sale for their goods. Their country has no jurisdiction in foreign nations, and therefore can seldom procure them any monopoly there. They are generally obliged, therefore, to content themselves with petitioning for certain encouragements to exportation.

Of these encouragements, what are called drawbacks seem to be the most reasonable. To allow the merchant to draw back upon exportation, either the whole, or a part of whatever excise or inland duty is imposed upon domestic industry, can never occasion the exportation of a greater quantity of goods than what would have been exported had no duty been imposed. Such encouragements do not tend to turn towards any particular employment a greater share of the capital of the country, than what would go to that employment of its own accord, but only to hinder the duty from driving away any part of that share to other employments. They tend not to overturn that balance which naturally establishes itself among all the various employments of the society, but to hinder it from being overturned by the duty. They tend not to destroy, but to preserve, what it is in most cases advantageous to preserve, the natural division and distribution of labour in the society.

The same thing may be said of the drawbacks upon the re-exportation of foreign goods imported, which, in Great Britain, generally amount to by much the largest part of the duty upon importation. By the second of the rules, annexed to the act of parliament, which imposed what is now called the old subsidy, every merchant, whether English or alien, was allowed to draw back half that duty upon exportation; the English merchant, provided the exportation took place within twelve months; the alien, provided it took place within nine months. Wines, currants, and wrought silks, were the only goods which did not fall within this rule, having other and more advantageous allowances. The duties imposed by this act of parliament were, at that time, the only duties upon the importation of foreign goods. The term within which this, and all other drawbacks could be claimed, was afterwards (by 7 Geo. I. cha. sect. 10.) extended to three years.

The duties which have been imposed since the old subsidy, are, the greater part of them, wholly drawn back upon exportation. This general

rule, however, is liable to a great number of exceptions; and the doctrine of drawbacks has become a much less simple matter than it was at their first institution.

Upon the exportation of some foreign goods, of which it was expected that the importation would greatly exceed what was necessary for the home consumption, the whole duties are drawn back, without retaining even half the old subsidy. Before the revolt of our North American colonies, we had the monopoly of the tobacco of Maryland and Virginia. We imported about ninety-six thousand hogsheads, and the home consumption was not supposed to extend fourteen thousand. To facilitate the great exportation which was necessary, in order to rid us of the rest, the whole duties were drawn back, provided the exportation took place within three years.

We still have, though not altogether, yet very nearly, the monopoly of the sugars of our West Indian islands. If sugars are exported within a year, therefore, all the duties, upon importation are drawn back; and if exported within three years, all the duties, except half the old subsidy, which still continues to be retained upon the exportation of the greater part of goods. Though the importation of sugar exceeds a good deal what is necessary for the home consumption, the excess is inconsiderable, in comparison of what it used to be in tobacco.

Some goods, the particular objects of the jealousy of our own manufacturers, are prohibited to be imported for home consumption. They may, however, upon paying certain duties, be imported and warehoused for exportation. But upon such exportation no part of these duties is drawn back. Our manufacturers are unwilling, it seems, that even this restricted importation should be encouraged, and are afraid lest some part of these goods should be stolen out of the warehouse, and thus came into competition with their own. It is under these regulations only that we can import wrought silks, French cambrics and lawns, calicoes, painted, printed, stained, or dyed, &c.

We are unwilling even to be the carriers of French goods, and choose rather to forego a profit to ourselves than to suffer those whom we consider as our enemies to make any profit by our means. Not only half the old subsidy, but the second twenty-five per cent. is retained upon the exportation of all French goods.

By the fourth of the rules annexed to the old subsidy, the drawback allowed upon the exportation of all wines amounted to a great deal more than half the duties which were at that time paid upon their importation; and it seems at that time to have been the object of the legislature to give

somewhat more than ordinary encouragement to the carrying trade in wine. Several of the other duties, too, which were imposed either at the same time or subsequent to the old subsidy, what is called the additional duty, the new subsidy, the one-third and two-thirds subsidies, the impost 1692, the tonnage on wine, were allowed to be wholly drawn back upon exportation. All those duties, however, except the additional duty and impost 1692, being paid down in ready money upon importation, the interest of so large a sum occasioned an expense, which made it unreasonable to expect any profitable carrying trade in this article. Only a part, therefore of the duty called the impost on wine, and no part of the twenty-five pounds the ton upon French wines, or of the duties imposed in 1745, in 1763, and in 1778, were allowed to be drawn back upon exportation. The two imposts of five per cent. imposed in 1779 and 1781, upon all the former duties of customs, being allowed to be wholly drawn back upon the exportation of all other goods, were likewise allowed to be drawn back upon that of wine. The last duty that has been particularly imposed upon wine, that of 1780, is allowed to be wholly drawn back; an indulgence which, when so many heavy duties are retained, most probably could never occasion the exportation of a single ton of wine. These rules took place with regard to all places of lawful exportation, except the British colonies in America.

The 15th Charles II, cha, called an act for the encouragement of trade, had given Great Britain the monopoly of supplying the colonies with all the commodities of the growth or manufacture of Europe, and consequently with wines. In a country of so extensive a coast as our North American and West Indian colonies, where our authority was always so very slender, and where the inhabitants were allowed to carry out in their own ships their non-enumerated commodities, at first to all parts of Europe, and afterwards to all parts of Europe south of Cape Finisterre, it is not very probable that this monopoly could ever be much respected; and they probably at all times found means of bringing back some cargo from the countries to which they were allowed to carry out one. They seem, however, to have found some difficulty in importing European wines from the places of their growth; and they could not well import them from Great Britain, where they were loaded with many heavy duties, of which a considerable part was not drawn back upon exportation. Madeira wine, not being an European commodity, could be imported directly into America and the West Indies, countries which, in all their non-enumerated commodities, enjoyed a free trade to the island of Madeira. These circumstances had probably introduced that general

taste for Madeira wine, which our officers found established in all our colonies at the commencement of the war which began in 1755, and which they brought back with them to the mother country, where that wine had not been much in fashion before. Upon the conclusion of that war, in 1763 (by the 4th Geo. III, cha, sect. 12), all the duties except L.3, 10s. were allowed to be drawn back upon the exportation to the colonies of all wines, except French wines, to the commerce and consumption of which national prejudice would allow no sort of encouragement. The period between the granting of this indulgence and the revolt of our North American colonies, was probably too short to admit of any considerable change in the customs of those countries.

The same act which, in the drawbacks upon all wines, except French wines, thus favoured the colonies so much more than other countries, in those upon the greater part of other commodities, favoured them much less. Upon the exportation of the greater part of commodities to other countries, half the old subsidy was drawn back. But this law enacted, that no part of that duty should be drawn back upon the exportation to the colonies of any commodities of the growth or manufacture either of Europe or the East Indies, except wines, white calicoes, and muslins.

Drawbacks were, perhaps, originally granted for the encouragement of the carrying trade, which, as the freight of the ship is frequently paid by foreigners in money, was supposed to be peculiarly fitted for bringing gold and silver into the country. But though the carrying trade certainly deserves no peculiar encouragement, though the motive of the institution was, perhaps, abundantly foolish, the institution itself seems reasonable enough. Such drawbacks cannot force into this trade a greater share of the capital of the country than what would have gone to it of its own accord, had there been no duties upon importation; they only prevent its being excluded altogether by those duties. The carrying trade, though it deserves no preference, ought not to be precluded, but to be left free, like all other trades. It is a necessary resource to those capitals which cannot find employment, either in the agriculture or in the manufactures of the country, either in its home trade, or in its foreign trade of consumption.

The revenue of the customs, instead of suffering, profits from such drawbacks, by that part of the duty which is retained. If the whole duties had been retained, the foreign goods upon which they are paid could seldom have been exported, nor consequently imported, for want of a market. The duties, therefore, of which a part is retained, would never have been paid.

These reasons seem sufficiently to justify drawbacks, and would justify them, though the whole duties, whether upon the produce of domestic industry or upon foreign goods, were always drawn back upon exportation. The revenue of excise would, in this case indeed, suffer a little, and that of the customs a good deal more; but the natural balance of industry, the natural division and distribution of labour, which is always more or less disturbed by such duties, would be more nearly re-established by such a regulation.

These reasons, however, will justify drawbacks only upon exporting goods to those countries which are altogether foreign and independent, not to those in which our merchants and manufacturers enjoy a monopoly. A drawback, for example, upon the exportation of European goods to our American colonies, will not always occasion a greater exportation than what would have taken place without it. By means of the monopoly which our merchants and manufacturers enjoy there, the same quantity might frequently, perhaps, be sent thither, though the whole duties were retained. The drawback, therefore, may frequently be pure loss to the revenue of excise and customs, without altering the state of the trade, or rendering it in any respect more extensive. How far such drawbacks can be justified as a proper encouragement to the industry of our colonies, or how far it is advantageous to the mother country that they should be exempted from taxes which are paid by all the rest of their fellow-subjects, will appear hereafter, when I come to treat of colonies.

Drawbacks, however, it must always be understood, are useful only in those cases in which the goods, for the exportation of which they are given, are really exported to some foreign country, and not clandestinely re-imported into our own. That some drawbacks, particularly those upon tobacco, have frequently been abused in this manner, and have given occasion to many frauds, equally hurtful both to the revenue and to the fair trader, is well known.

CHAP. V. OF BOUNTIES.

Bounties upon exportation are, in Great Britain, frequently petitioned for, and sometimes granted, to the produce of particular branches of domestic industry. By means of them, our merchants and manufacturers, it is pretended, will be enabled to sell their goods as cheap or cheaper than their rivals in the foreign market. A greater quantity, it is said, will thus be exported, and the balance of trade consequently turned more in favour of our own country. We cannot give our workmen a monopoly in the foreign, as we have done in the home market. We cannot force foreigners to buy their goods as we have done our own countrymen. The next best expedient, it has been thought, therefore, is to pay them for buying. It is in this manner that the mercantile system proposes to enrich the whole country, and to put money into all our pockets by means of the balance of trade.

Bounties, it is allowed, ought to be given to those branches of trade only which cannot be carried on without them. But every branch of trade in which the merchant can sell his goods for a price which replaces to him, with the ordinary profits of stock, the whole capital employed in preparing and sending them to market, can be carried on without a bounty. Every such branch is evidently upon a level with all the other branches of trade which are carried on without bounties, and cannot, therefore, require one more than they. Those trades only require bounties in which the merchant is obliged to sell his goods for a price which does not replace to him his capital, together with the ordinary profit, or in which he is obliged to sell them for less than it really costs him to send them to market. The bounty is given in order to make up this loss, and to encourage him to continue, or, perhaps, to begin a trade, of which the expense is supposed to be greater than the returns, of which every operation eats up a part of the capital employed in it, and which is of such a nature, that if all other trades resembled it, there would soon be no capital left in the country.

The trades, it is to be observed, which are carried on by means of bounties, are the only ones which can be carried on between two nations for any considerable time together, in such a manner as that one of them shall always and regularly lose, or sell its goods for less than it really costs to send them to market. But if the bounty did not repay to the merchant what he would otherwise lose upon the price of his goods, his

own interest would soon oblige him to employ his stock in another way, or to find out a trade in which the price of the goods would replace to him, with the ordinary profit, the capital employment in sending them to market. The effect of bounties, like that of all the other expedients of the mercantile system, can only be to force the trade of a country into a channel much less advantageous than that in which it would naturally run of its own accord.

The ingenious and well-informed author of the Tracts upon the Corn Trade has shown very clearly, that since the bounty upon the exportation of corn was first established, the price of the corn exported, valued moderately enough, has exceeded that of the corn imported, valued very high, by a much greater sum than the amount of the whole bounties which have been paid during that period. This, he imagines, upon the true principles of the mercantile system, is a clear proof that this forced corn trade is beneficial to the nation, the value of the exportation exceeding that of the importation by a much greater sum than the whole extraordinary expense which the public has been at in order to get it exported. He does not consider that this extraordinary expense, or the bounty, is the smallest part of the expense which the exportation of corn really costs the society. The capital which the farmer employed in raising it must likewise be taken into the account. Unless the price of the corn, when sold in the foreign markets replaces, not only the bounty, but this capital, together with the ordinary profits of stock, the society is a loser by the difference, or the national stock is so much diminished. But the very reason for which it has been thought necessary to grant a bounty, is the supposed insufficiency of the price to do this.

The average price of corn, it has been said, has fallen considerably since the establishment of the bounty. That the average price of corn began to fall somewhat towards the end of the last century, and has continued to do so during the course of the sixty-four first years of the present, I have already endeavoured to show. But this event, supposing it to be real, as I believe it to be, must have happened in spite of the bounty, and cannot possibly have happened in consequence of it. It has happened in France, as well as in England, though in France there was not only no bounty, but, till 1764, the exportation of corn was subjected to a general prohibition. This gradual fall in the average price of grain, it is probable, therefore, is ultimately owing neither to the one regulation nor to the other, but to that gradual and insensible rise in the real value of silver, which, in the first book of this discourse, I have endeavoured to show, has taken place in the general market of Europe during the course of the

present century. It seems to be altogether impossible that the bounty could ever contribute to lower the price of grain.

In years of plenty, it has already been observed, the bounty, by occasioning an extraordinary exportation, necessarily keeps up the price of corn in the home market above what it would naturally fall to. To do so was the avowed purpose of the institution. In years of scarcity, though the bounty is frequently suspended, yet the great exportation which it occasions in years of plenty, must frequently hinder, more or less, the plenty of one year from relieving the scarcity of another. Both in years of plenty and in years of scarcity, therefore, the bounty necessarily tends to raise the money price of corn somewhat higher than it otherwise would be in the home market.

That, in the actual state of tillage, the bounty must necessarily have this tendency, will not I apprehend, be disputed by any reasonable person. But it has been thought by many people, that it tends to encourage tillage, and that in two different ways; first, by opening a more extensive foreign market to the corn of the farmer, it tends, they imagine, to increase the demand for, and consequently the production of, that commodity; and, secondly, by securing to him a better price than he could otherwise expect in the actual state of tillage, it tends, they suppose, to encourage tillage. This double encouragement must, they imagine, in a long period of years, occasion such an increase in the production of corn, as may lower its price in the home market, much more than the bounty can raise it, in the actual state which tillage may, at the end of that period, happen to be in.

I answer, that whatever extension of the foreign market can be occasioned by the bounty must, in every particular year, be altogether at the expense of the home market; as every bushel of corn, which is exported by means of the bounty, and which would not have been exported without the bounty, would have remained in the home market to increase the consumption, and to lower the price of that commodity. The corn bounty, it is to be observed, as well as every other bounty upon exportation, imposes two different taxes upon the people; first, the tax which they are obliged to contribute, in order to pay the bounty; and, secondly, the tax which arises from the advanced price of the commodity in the home market, and which, as the whole body of the people are purchasers of corn, must, in this particular commodity, be paid by the whole body of the people. In this particular commodity, therefore, this second tax is by much the heaviest of the two. Let us suppose that, taking one year with another, the bounty of 5s. upon the exportation of the

quarter of wheat raises the price of that commodity in the home market only 6d. the bushel, or 4s. the quarter higher than it otherwise would have been in the actual state of the crop. Even upon this very moderate supposition, the great body of the people, over and above contributing the tax which pays the bounty of 5s. upon every quarter of wheat exported, must pay another of 4s. upon every quarter which they themselves consume. But according to the very well informed author of the Tracts upon the Corn Trade, the average proportion of the corn exported to that consumed at home, is not more than that of one to thirty-one. For every 5s. therefore, which they contribute to the payment of the first tax, they must contribute L.6, 4s. to the payment of the second. So very heavy a tax upon the first necessary of life must either reduce the subsistence of the labouring poor, or it must occasion some augmentation in their pecuniary wages, proportionable to that in the pecuniary price of their subsistence. So far as it operates in the one way, it must reduce the ability of the labouring poor to educate and bring up their children, and must, so far, tend to restrain the population of the country. So far as it operates in the other, it must reduce the ability of the employers of the poor, to employ so great a number as they otherwise might do, and must so far tend to restrain the industry of the country. The extraordinary exportation of corn, therefore, occasioned by the bounty, not only in every particular year diminishes the home, just as much as it extends the foreign market and consumption, but, by restraining the population and industry of the country, its final tendency is to stint and restrain the gradual extension of the home market; and thereby, in the long-run, rather to diminish than to augment the whole market and consumption of corn.

This enhancement of the money price of corn, however, it has been thought, by rendering that commodity more profitable to the farmer, must necessarily encourage its production.

I answer, that this might be the case, if the effect of the bounty was to raise the real price of corn, or to enable the farmer, with an equal quantity of it, to maintain a greater number of labourers in the same manner, whether liberal, moderate, or scanty, than other labourers are commonly maintained in his neighbourhood. But neither the bounty, it is evident, nor any other human institution, can have any such effect. It is not the real, but the nominal price of corn, which can in any considerable degree be affected by the bounty. And though the tax, which that institution imposes upon the whole body of the people, may be very

burdensome to those who pay it, it is of very little advantage to those who receive it.

The real effect of the bounty is not so much to raise the real value of corn, as to degrade the real value of silver; or to make an equal quantity of it exchange for a smaller quantity, not only of corn, but of all other home made commodities; for the money price of corn regulates that of all other home made commodities.

It regulates the money price of labour, which must always be such as to enable the labourer to purchase a quantity of corn sufficient to maintain him and his family, either in the liberal, moderate, or scanty manner, in which the advancing, stationary, or declining circumstances of the society, oblige his employers to maintain him.

It regulates the money price of all the other parts of the rude produce of land, which, in every period of improvement, must bear a certain proportion to that of corn, though this proportion is different in different periods. It regulates, for example, the money price of grass and hay, of butcher's meat, of horses, and the maintenance of horses, of land carriage consequently, or of the greater part of the inland commerce of the country.

By regulating the money price of all the other parts of the rude produce of land, it regulates that of the materials of almost all manufactures; by regulating the money price of labour, it regulates that of manufacturing art and industry; and by regulating both, it regulates that of the complete manufacture. The money price of labour, and of every thing that is the produce, either of land or labour, must necessarily either rise or fall in proportion to the money price of corn.

Though in consequence of the bounty, therefore, the farmer should be enabled to sell his corn for 4s. the bushel, instead of 3s 6d. and to pay his landlord a money rent proportionable to this rise in the money price of his produce; yet if, in consequence of this rise in the price of corn, 4s. will purchase no more home made goods of any other kind than 3s. 6d. would have done before, neither the circumstances of the farmer, nor those of the landlord, will be much mended by this change. The farmer will not be able to cultivate much better; the landlord will not be able to live much better. In the purchase of foreign commodities, this enhancement in the price of corn may give them some little advantage. In that of home made commodities, it can give them none at all. And almost the whole expense of the farmer, and the far greater part even of that of the landlord, is in home made commodities.

That degradation in the value of silver, which is the effect of the fertility of the mines, and which operates equally, or very nearly equally, through the greater part of the commercial world, is a matter of very little consequence to any particular country. The consequent rise of all money prices, though it does not make those who receive them really richer, does not make them really poorer. A service of plate becomes really cheaper, and every thing else remains precisely of the same real value as before.

But that degradation in the value of silver, which, being the effect either of the peculiar situation or of the political institutions of a particular country, takes place only in that country, is a matter of very great consequence, which, far from tending to make any body really richer, tends to make every body really poorer. The rise in the money price of all commodities, which is in this case peculiar to that country, tends to discourage more or less every sort of industry which is carried on within it, and to enable foreign nations, by furnishing almost all sorts of goods for a smaller quantity of silver than its own workmen can afford to do, to undersell them, not only in the foreign, but even in the home market.

It is the peculiar situation of Spain and Portugal, as proprietors of the mines, to be the distributers of gold and silver to all the other countries of Europe. Those metals ought naturally, therefore, to be somewhat cheaper in Spain and Portugal than in any other part of Europe. The difference, however, should be no more than the amount of the freight and insurance; and, on account of the great value and small bulk of those metals, their freight is no great matter, and their insurance is the same as that of any other goods of equal value. Spain and Portugal, therefore, could suffer very little from their peculiar situation, if they did not aggravate its disadvantages by their political institutions.

Spain by taxing, and Portugal by prohibiting, the exportation of gold and silver, load that exportation with the expense of smuggling, and raise the value of those metals in other countries so much more above what it is in their own, by the whole amount of this expense. When you dam up a stream of water, as soon as the dam is full, as much water must run over the dam-head as if there was no dam at all. The prohibition of exportation cannot detain a greater quantity of gold and silver in Spain and Portugal, than what they can afford to employ, than what the annual produce of their land and labour will allow them to employ, in coin, plate, gilding, and other ornaments of gold and silver. When they have got this quantity, the dam is full, and the whole stream which flows in

afterwards must run over. The annual exportation of gold and silver from Spain and Portugal, accordingly, is, by all accounts, notwithstanding these restraints, very near equal to the whole annual importation. As the water, however, must always be deeper behind the dam-head than before it, so the quantity of gold and silver which these restraints detain in Spain and Portugal, must, in proportion to the annual produce of their land and labour, be greater than what is to be found in other countries. The higher and stronger the dam-head, the greater must be the difference in the depth of water behind and before it. The higher the tax, the higher the penalties with which the prohibition is guarded, the more vigilant and severe the police which looks after the execution of the law, the greater must be the difference in the proportion of gold and silver to the annual produce of the land and labour of Spain and Portugal, and to that of other countries. It is said, accordingly, to be very considerable, and that you frequently find there a profusion of plate in houses, where there is nothing else which would in other countries be thought suitable or correspondent to this sort of magnificence. The cheapness of gold and silver, or, what is the same thing, the dearness of all commodities, which is the necessary effect of this redundancy of the precious metals, discourages both the agriculture and manufactures of Spain and Portugal, and enables foreign nations to supply them with many sorts of rude, and with almost all sorts of manufactured produce, for a smaller quantity of gold and silver than what they themselves can either raise or make them for at home. The tax and prohibition operate in two different ways. They not only lower very much the value of the precious metals in Spain and Portugal, but by detaining there a certain quantity of those metals which would otherwise flow over other countries, they keep up their value in those other countries somewhat above what it otherwise would be, and thereby give those countries a double advantage in their commerce with Spain and Portugal. Open the flood-gates, and there will presently be less water above, and more below the dam-head, and it will soon come to a level in both places. Remove the tax and the prohibition, and as the quantity of gold and silver will diminish considerably in Spain and Portugal, so it will increase somewhat in other countries; and the value of those metals, their proportion to the annual produce of land and labour, will soon come to a level, or very near to a level, in all. The loss which Spain and Portugal could sustain by this exportation of their gold and silver, would be altogether nominal and imaginary. The nominal value of their goods, and of the annual produce of their land and labour, would fall, and would be expressed or represented by a smaller quantity

of silver than before; but their real value would be the same as before, and would be sufficient to maintain, command, and employ the same quantity of labour. As the nominal value of their goods would fall, the real value of what remained of their gold and silver would rise, and a smaller quantity of those metals would answer all the same purposes of commerce and circulation which had employed a greater quantity before. The gold and silver which would go abroad would not go abroad for nothing, but would bring back an equal value of goods of some kind or other. Those goods, too, would not be all matters of mere luxury and expense, to be consumed by idle people, who produce nothing in return for their consumption. As the real wealth and revenue of idle people would not be augmented by this extraordinary exportation of gold and silver, so neither would their consumption be much augmented by it. Those goods would probably, the greater part of them, and certainly some part of them, consist in materials, tools, and provisions, for the employment and maintenance of industrious people, who would reproduce, with a profit, the full value of their consumption. A part of the dead stock of the society would thus be turned into active stock, and would put into motion a greater quantity of industry than had been employed before. The annual produce of their land and labour would immediately be augmented a little, and in a few years would probably be augmented a great deal; their industry being thus relieved from one of the most oppressive burdens which it at present labours under.

The bounty upon the exportation of corn necessarily operates exactly in the same way as this absurd policy of Spain and Portugal. Whatever be the actual state of tillage, it renders our corn somewhat dearer in the home market than it otherwise would be in that state, and somewhat cheaper in the foreign; and as the average money price of corn regulates, more or less, that of all other commodities, it lowers the value of silver considerably in the one, and tends to raise it a little in the other. It enables foreigners, the Dutch in particular, not only to eat our corn cheaper than they otherwise could do, but sometimes to eat it cheaper than even our own people can do upon the same occasions; as we are assured by an excellent authority, that of Sir Matthew Decker. It hinders our own workmen from furnishing their goods for so small a quantity of silver as they otherwise might do, and enables the Dutch to furnish theirs for a smaller. It tends to render our manufactures somewhat dearer in every market, and theirs somewhat cheaper, than they otherwise would be, and consequently to give their industry a double advantage over our own.

The bounty, as it raises in the home market, not so much the real, as the nominal price of our corn; as it augments, not the quantity of labour which a certain quantity of corn can maintain and employ, but only the quantity of silver which it will exchange for; it discourages our manufactures, without rendering any considerable service, either to our farmers or country gentlemen. It puts, indeed, a little more money into the pockets of both, and it will perhaps be somewhat difficult to persuade the greater part of them that this is not rendering them a very considerable service. But if this money sinks in its value, in the quantity of labour, provisions, and home-made commodities of all different kinds which it is capable of purchasing, as much as it rises in its quantity, the service will be little more than nominal and imaginary.

There is, perhaps, but one set of men in the whole commonwealth to whom the bounty either was or could be essentially serviceable. These were the corn merchants, the exporters and importers of corn. In years of plenty, the bounty necessarily occasioned a greater exportation than would otherwise have taken place; and by hindering the plenty of the one year from relieving the scarcity of another, it occasioned in years of scarcity a greater importation than would otherwise have been necessary. It increased the business of the corn merchant in both; and in the years of scarcity, it not only enabled him to import a greater quantity, but to sell it for a better price, and consequently with a greater profit, than he could otherwise have made, if the plenty of one year had not been more or less hindered from relieving the scarcity of another. It is in this set of men, accordingly, that I have observed the greatest zeal for the continuance or renewal of the bounty.

Our country gentlemen, when they imposed the high duties upon the exportation of corn, which in times of moderate plenty amount to a prohibition, and when they established the bounty, seem to have imitated the conduct of our manufacturers. By the one institution, they secured to themselves the monopoly of the home market, and by the other they endeavoured to prevent that market from ever being overstocked with their commodity. By both they endeavoured to raise its real value, in the same manner as our manufacturers had, by the like institutions, raised the real value of many different sorts of manufactured goods. They did not, perhaps, attend to the great and essential difference which nature has established between corn and almost every other sort of goods. When, either by the monopoly of the home market, or by a bounty upon exportation, you enable our woollen or linen manufacturers to sell their goods for somewhat a better price than they otherwise could get for

them, you raise, not only the nominal, but the real price of those goods; you render them equivalent to a greater quantity of labour and subsistence; you increase not only the nominal, but the real profit, the real wealth and revenue of these manufacturers; and you enable them, either to live better themselves, or to employ a greater quantity of labour in those particular manufactures. You really encourage those manufactures, and direct towards them a greater quantity of the industry of the country than what would properly go to them of its own accord. But when, by the like institutions, you raise the nominal or money price of corn, you do not raise its real value; you do not increase the real wealth, the real revenue, either of our farmers or country gentlemen; you do not encourage the growth of corn, because you do not enable them to maintain and employ more labourers in raising it. The nature of things has stamped upon corn a real value, which cannot be altered by merely altering its money price. No bounty upon exportation, no monopoly of the home market, can raise that value. The freest competition cannot lower it. Through the world in general, that value is equal to the quantity of labour which it can maintain, and in every particular place it is equal to the quantity of labour which it can maintain in the way, whether liberal, moderate, or scanty, in which labour is commonly maintained in that place. Woollen or linen cloth are not the regulating commodities by which the real value of all other commodities must be finally measured and determined; corn is. The real value of every other commodity is finally measured and determined by the proportion which its average money price bears to the average money price of corn. The real value of corn does not vary with those variations in its average money price, which sometimes occur from one century to another; it is the real value of silver which varies with them.

Bounties upon the exportation of any home-made commodity are liable, first, to that general objection which may be made to all the different expedients of the mercantile system; the objection of forcing some part of the industry of the country into a channel less advantageous than that in which it would run of its own accord; and, secondly, to the particular objection of forcing it not only into a channel that is less advantageous, but into one that is actually disadvantageous; the trade which cannot be carried on but by means of a bounty being necessarily a losing trade. The bounty upon the exportation of corn is liable to this further objection, that it can in no respect promote the raising of that particular commodity of which it was meant to encourage the production. When our country gentlemen, therefore, demanded the establishment of

the bounty, though they acted in imitation of our merchants and manufacturers, they did not act with that complete comprehension of their own interest, which commonly directs the conduct of those two other orders of people. They loaded the public revenue with a very considerable expense: they imposed a very heavy tax upon the whole body of the people; but they did not, in any sensible degree, increase the real value of their own commodity; and by lowering somewhat the real value of silver, they discouraged, in some degree, the general industry of the country, and, instead of advancing, retarded more or less the improvement of their own lands, which necessarily depend upon the general industry of the country.

To encourage the production of any commodity, a bounty upon production, one should imagine, would have a more direct operation than one upon exportation. It would, besides, impose only one tax upon the people, that which they must contribute in order to pay the bounty. Instead of raising, it would tend to lower the price of the commodity in the home market; and thereby, instead of imposing a second tax upon the people, it might, at least in part, repay them for what they had contributed to the first. Bounties upon production, however, have been very rarely granted. The prejudices established by the commercial system have taught us to believe, that national wealth arises more immediately from exportation than from production. It has been more favoured, accordingly, as the more immediate means of bringing money into the country. Bounties upon production, it has been said too, have been found by experience more liable to frauds than those upon exportation. How far this is true, I know not. That bounties upon exportation have been abused, to many fraudulent purposes, is very well known. But it is not the interest of merchants and manufacturers, the great inventors of all these expedients, that the home market should be overstocked with their goods; an event which a bounty upon production might sometimes occasion. A bounty upon exportation, by enabling them to send abroad their surplus part, and to keep up the price of what remains in the home market, effectually prevents this. Of all the expedients of the mercantile system, accordingly, it is the one of which they are the fondest. I have known the different undertakers of some particular works agree privately among themselves to give a bounty out of their own pockets upon the exportation of a certain proportion of goods which they dealt in. This expedient succeeded so well, that it more than doubled the price of their goods in the home market, notwithstanding a very considerable increase in the produce. The

operation of the bounty upon corn must have been wonderfully different, if it has lowered the money price of that commodity.

Something like a bounty upon production, however, has been granted upon some particular occasions. The tonnage bounties given to the white herring and whale fisheries may, perhaps, be considered as somewhat of this nature. They tend directly, it may be supposed, to render the goods cheaper in the home market than they otherwise would be. In other respects, their effects, it must be acknowledged, are the same as those of bounties upon exportation. By means of them, a part of the capital of the country is employed in bringing goods to market, of which the price does not repay the cost, together with the ordinary profits of stock.

But though the tonnage bounties to those fisheries do not contribute to the opulence of the nation, it may, perhaps, be thought that they contribute to its defence, by augmenting the number of its sailors and shipping. This, it may be alleged, may sometimes be done by means of such bounties, at a much smaller expense than by keeping up a great standing navy, if I may use such an expression, in the same way as a standing army.

Notwithstanding these favourable allegations, however, the following considerations dispose me to believe, that in granting at least one of these bounties, the legislature has been very grossly imposed upon:

First. The herring-buss bounty seems too large.

From the commencement of the winter fishing 1771, to the end of the winter fishing 1781, the tonnage bounty upon the herring-buss fishery has been at thirty shillings the ton. During these eleven years, the whole number of barrels caught by the herring-buss fishery of Scotland amounted to 378,347. The herrings caught and cured at sea are called sea-sticks. In order to render them what are called merchantable herrings, it is necessary to repack them with an additional quantity of salt; and in this case, it is reckoned, that three barrels of sea-sticks are usually repacked into two barrels of merchantable herrings. The number of barrels of merchantable herrings, therefore, caught during these eleven years, will amount only, according to this account, to 252,231¼. During these eleven years, the tonnage bounties paid amounted to L.155,463 : 11s. or 8s. 2¼d. upon every barrel of sea-sticks, and to 12s. 3¾d. upon every barrel of merchantable herrings.

The salt with which these herrings are cured is sometimes Scotch, and sometimes foreign salt; both which are delivered, free of all excise duty, to the fish-curers. The excise duty upon Scotch salt is at present 1s. 6d., that upon foreign salt 10s. the bushel. A barrel of herrings is supposed to

require about one bushel and one-fourth of a bushel foreign salt. Two bushels are the supposed average of Scotch salt. If the herrings are entered for exportation, no part of this duty is paid up; if entered for home consumption, whether the herrings were cured with foreign or with Scotch salt, only one shilling the barrel is paid up. It was the old Scotch duty upon a bushel of salt, the quantity which, at a low estimation, had been supposed necessary for curing a barrel of herrings. In Scotland, foreign salt is very little used for any other purpose but the curing of fish. But from the 5th April 1771 to the 5th April 1782, the quantity of foreign salt imported amounted to 936,974 bushels, at eighty-four pounds the bushel; the quantity of Scotch salt delivered from the works to the fish-curers, to no more than 168,226, at fifty-six pounds the bushel only. It would appear, therefore, that it is principally foreign salt that is used in the fisheries. Upon every barrel of herrings exported, there is, besides, a bounty of 2s. 8d. and more than two-thirds of the buss-caught herrings are exported. Put all these things together, and you will find that, during these eleven years, every barrel of buss-caught herrings, cured with Scotch salt, when exported, has cost government 17s. 11¾d.; and, when entered for home consumption, 14s. 3¾d.; and that every barrel cured with foreign salt, when exported, has cost government L.1 : 7 : 5¾d.; and, when entered for home consumption, L.1 : 3 : 9¾d. The price of a barrel of good merchantable herrings runs from seventeen and eighteen to four and five-and-twenty shillings; about a guinea at an average.[39]*

Secondly, The bounty to the white-herring fishery is a tonnage bounty, and is proportioned to the burden of the ship, not to her diligence or success in the fishery; and it has, I am afraid, been too common for the vessels to fit out for the sole purpose of catching, not the fish, but the bounty. In the year 1759, when the bounty was at fifty shillings the ton, the whole buss fishery of Scotland brought in only four barrels of sea-sticks. In that year, each barrel of sea-sticks cost government, in bounties alone, L.113 : 15s.; each barrel of merchantable herrings L.159 : 7 : 6.

Thirdly, The mode of fishing, for which this tonnage bounty in the white herring fishery has been given (by busses or decked vessels from twenty to eighty tons burden), seems not so well adapted to the situation of Scotland, as to that of Holland, from the practice of which country it appears to have been borrowed. Holland lies at a great distance from the seas to which herrings are known principally to resort, and can, therefore, carry on that fishery only in decked vessels, which can carry water and provisions sufficient for a voyage to a distant sea; but the Hebrides, or Western Islands, the islands of Shetland, and the northern

and north-western coasts of Scotland, the countries in whose neighborhood the herring fishery is principally carried on, are everywhere intersected by arms of the sea, which run up a considerable way into the land, and which, in the language of the country, are called sea-lochs. It is to these sea-lochs that the herrings principally resort during the seasons in which they visit those seas; for the visits of this, and, I am assured, of many other sorts of fish, are not quite regular and constant. A boat-fishery, therefore, seems to be the mode of fishing best adapted to the peculiar situation of Scotland, the fishers carrying the herrings on shore as fast as they are taken, to be either cured or consumed fresh. But the great encouragement which a bounty of 30s. the ton gives to the buss-fishery, is necessarily a discouragement to the boat-fishery, which, having no such bounty, cannot bring its cured fish to market upon the same terms as the buss-fishery. The boat-fishery, accordingly, which, before the establishment of the buss-bounty, was very considerable, and is said to have employed a number of seamen, not inferior to what the buss-fishery employs at present, is now gone almost entirely to decay. Of the former extent, however, of this now ruined and abandoned fishery, I must acknowledge that I cannot pretend to speak with much precision. As no bounty was paid upon the outfit of the boat-fishery, no account was taken of it by the officers of the customs or salt duties.

Fourthly, In many parts of Scotland, during certain seasons of the year, herrings make no inconsiderable part of the food of the common people. A bounty which tended to lower their price in the home market, might contribute a good deal to the relief of a great number of our fellow-subjects, whose circumstances are by no means affluent. But the herring-buss bounty contributes to no such good purpose. It has ruined the boat-fishery, which is by far the best adapted for the supply of the home market; and the additional bounty of 2s. 8d. the barrel upon exportation, carries the greater part, more than two-thirds, of the produce of the buss-fishery abroad. Between thirty and forty years ago, before the establishment of the buss-bounty, 16s. the barrel, I have been assured, was the common price of white herrings. Between ten and fifteen years ago, before the boat-fishery was entirely ruined, the price was said to have run from seventeen to twenty shillings the barrel. For these last five years, it has, at an average, been at twenty-five shillings the barrel. This high price, however, may have been owing to the real scarcity of the herrings upon the coast of Scotland. I must observe, too, that the cask or barrel, which is usually sold with the herrings, and of which the price is

included in all the foregoing prices, has, since the commencement of the American war, risen to about double its former price, or from about 3s. to about 6s. I must likewise observe, that the accounts I have received of the prices of former times, have been by no means quite uniform and consistent, and an old man of great accuracy and experience has assured me, that, more than fifty years ago, a guinea was the usual price of a barrel of good merchantable herrings; and this, I imagine, may still be looked upon as the average price. All accounts, however, I think, agree that the price has not been lowered in the home market in consequence of the buss-bounty.

When the undertakers of fisheries, after such liberal bounties have been bestowed upon them, continue to sell their commodity at the same, or even at a higher price than they were accustomed to do before, it might be expected that their profits should be very great; and it is not improbable that those of some individuals may have been so. In general, however, I have every reason to believe they have been quite otherwise. The usual effect of such bounties is, to encourage rash undertakers to adventure in a business which they do not understand; and what they lose by their own negligence and ignorance, more than compensates all that they can gain by the utmost liberality of government. In 1750, by the same act which first gave the bounty of 30s. the ton for the encouragement of the white herring fishery (the 23d Geo. II. cha), a joint stock company was erected, with a capital of L.500,000, to which the subscribers (over and above all other encouragements, the tonnage bounty just now mentioned, the the exportation bounty of 2s. 8d. the barrel, the delivery of both British and foreign salt duty free) were, during the space of fourteen years, for every hundred pounds which they subscribed and paid into the stock of the society, entitled to three pounds a-year, to be paid by the receiver-general of the customs in equal half-yearly payments. Besides this great company, the residence of whose governor and directors was to be in London, it was declared lawful to erect different fishing chambers in all the different out-ports of the kingdom, provided a sum not less than L.10,000 was subscribed into the capital of each, to be managed at its own risk, and for its own profit and loss. The same annuity, and the same encouragements of all kinds, were given to the trade of those inferior chambers as to that of the great company. The subscription of the great company was soon filled up, and several different fishing chambers were erected in the different out-ports of the kingdom. In spite of all these encouragements, almost all those different companies, both great and small, lost either the whole or the

greater part of their capitals; scarce a vestige now remains of any of them, and the white-herring fishery is now entirely, or almost entirely, carried on by private adventurers.

If any particular manufacture was necessary, indeed, for the defence of the society, it might not always be prudent to depend upon our neighbours for the supply; and if such manufacture could not otherwise be supported at home, it might not be unreasonable that all the other branches of industry should be taxed in order to support it. The bounties upon the exportation of British made sail-cloth, and British made gunpowder, may, perhaps, both be vindicated upon this principle.

But though it can very seldom be reasonable to tax the industry of the great body of the people, in order to support that of some particular class of manufacturers; yet, in the wantonness of great prosperity, when the public enjoys a greater revenue than it knows well what to do with, to give such bounties to favourite manufactures, may, perhaps, be as natural as to incur any other idle expense. In public, as well as in private expenses, great wealth, may, perhaps, frequently be admitted as an apology for great folly. But there must surely be something more than ordinary absurdity in continuing such profusion in times of general difficulty and distress.

What is called a bounty, is sometimes no more than a drawback, and, consequently, is not liable to the same objections as what is properly a bounty. The bounty, for example, upon refined sugar exported, may be considered as a drawback of the duties upon the brown and Muscovado sugars, from which it is made; the bounty upon wrought silk exported, a drawback of the duties upon raw and thrown silk imported; the bounty upon gunpowder exported, a drawback of the duties upon brimstone and saltpetre imported. In the language of the customs, those allowances only are called drawbacks which are given upon goods exported in the same form in which they are imported. When that form has been so altered by manufacture of any kind as to come under a new denomination, they are called bounties.

Premiums given by the public to artists and manufacturers, who excel in their particular occupations, are not liable to the same objections as bounties. By encouraging extraordinary dexterity and ingenuity, they serve to keep up the emulation of the workmen actually employed in those respective occupations, and are not considerable enough to turn towards any one of them a greater share of the capital of the country than what would go to it of its own accord. Their tendency is not to overturn the natural balance of employments, but to render the work which is

done in each as perfect and complete as possible. The expense of premiums, besides, is very trifling, that of bounties very great. The bounty upon corn alone has sometimes cost the public, in one year, more than L.300,000.

Bounties are sometimes called premiums, as drawbacks are sometimes called bounties. But we must, in all cases, attend to the nature of the thing, without paying any regard to the word.

Digression concerning the Corn Trade and Corn Laws.

I cannot conclude this chapter concerning bounties, without observing, that the praises which have been bestowed upon the law which establishes the bounty upon the exportation of corn, and upon that system of regulations which is connected with it, are altogether unmerited. A particular examination of the nature of the corn trade, and of the principal British laws which relate to it, will sufficiently demonstrate the truth of this assertion. The great importance of this subject must justify the length of the digression.

The trade of the corn merchant is composed of four different branches, which, though they may sometimes be all carried on by the same person, are, in their own nature, four separate and distinct trades. These are, first, the trade of the inland dealer; secondly, that of the merchant-importer for home consumption; thirdly, that of the merchant-exporter of home produce for foreign consumption; and, fourthly, that of the merchant-carrier, or of the importer of corn, in order to export it again.

I. The interest of the inland dealer, and that of the great body of the people, how opposite soever they may at first appear, are, even in years of the greatest scarcity, exactly the same. It is his interest to raise the price of his corn as high as the real scarcity of the season requires, and it can never be his interest to raise it higher. By raising the price, he discourages the consumption, and puts every body more or less, but particularly the inferior ranks of people, upon thrift and good management. If, by raising it too high, he discourages the consumption so much that the supply of the season is likely to go beyond the consumption of the season, and to last for some time after the next crop begins to come in, he runs the hazard, not only of losing a considerable part of his corn by natural causes, but of being obliged to sell what remains of it for much less than what he might have had for it several months before. If, by not raising the price high enough, he discourages

the consumption so little, that the supply of the season is likely to fall short of the consumption of the season, he not only loses a part of the profit which he might otherwise have made, but he exposes the people to suffer before the end of the season, instead of the hardships of a dearth, the dreadful horrors of a famine. It is the interest of the people that their daily, weekly, and monthly consumption should be proportioned as exactly as possible to the supply of the season. The interest of the inland corn dealer is the same. By supplying them, as nearly as he can judge, in this proportion, he is likely to sell all his corn for the highest price, and with the greatest profit; and his knowledge of the state of the crop, and of his daily, weekly, and monthly sales, enables him to judge, with more or less accuracy, how far they really are supplied in this manner. Without intending the interest of the people, he is necessarily led, by a regard to his own interest, to treat them, even in years of scarcity, pretty much in the same manner as the prudent master of a vessel is sometimes obliged to treat his crew. When he foresees that provisions are likely to run short, he puts them upon short allowance. Though from excess of caution he should sometimes do this without any real necessity, yet all the inconveniencies which his crew can thereby suffer are inconsiderable, in comparison of the danger, misery, and ruin, to which they might sometimes be exposed by a less provident conduct. Though, from excess of avarice, in the same manner, the inland corn merchant should sometimes raise the price of his corn somewhat higher than the scarcity of the season requires, yet all the inconveniencies which the people can suffer from this conduct, which effectually secures them from a famine in the end of the season, are inconsiderable, in comparison of what they might have been exposed to by a more liberal way of dealing in the beginning of it. The corn merchant himself is likely to suffer the most by this excess of avarice; not only from the indignation which it generally excites against him, but, though he should escape the effects of this indignation, from the quantity of corn which it necessarily leaves upon his hands in the end of the season, and which, if the next season happens to prove favourable, he must always sell for a much lower price than he might otherwise have had.

Were it possible, indeed, for one great company of merchants to possess themselves of the whole crop of an extensive country, it might perhaps be their interest to deal with it, as the Dutch are said to do with the spiceries of the Moluccas, to destroy or throw away a considerable part of it, in order to keep up the price of the rest. But it is scarce possible, even by the violence of law, to establish such an extensive

monopoly with regard to corn; and wherever the law leaves the trade free, it is of all commodities the least liable to be engrossed or monopolized by the force of a few large capitals, which buy up the greater part of it. Not only its value far exceeds what the capitals of a few private men are capable of purchasing; but, supposing they were capable of purchasing it, the manner in which it is produced renders this purchase altogether impracticable. As, in every civilized country, it is the commodity of which the annual consumption is the greatest; so a greater quantity of industry is annually employed in producing corn than in producing any other commodity. When it first comes from the ground, too, it is necessarily divided among a greater number of owners than any other commodity; and these owners can never be collected into one place, like a number of independent manufacturers, but are necessarily scattered through all the different corners of the country. These first owners either immediately supply the consumers in their own neighbourhood, or they supply other inland dealers, who supply those consumers. The inland dealers in corn, therefore, including both the farmer and the baker, are necessarily more numerous than the dealers in any other commodity; and their dispersed situation renders it altogether impossible for them to enter into any general combination. If, in a year of scarcity, therefore, any of them should find that he had a good deal more corn upon hand than, at the current price, he could hope to dispose of before the end of the season, he would never think of keeping up this price to his own loss, and to the sole benefit of his rivals and competitors, but would immediately lower it, in order to get rid of his corn before the new crop began to come in. The same motives, the same interests, which would thus regulate the conduct of any one dealer, would regulate that of every other, and oblige them all in general to sell their corn at the price which, according to the best of their judgment, was most suitable to the scarcity or plenty of the season.

Whoever examines, with attention, the history of the dearths and famines which have afflicted any part of Europe during either the course of the present or that of the two preceding centuries, of several of which we have pretty exact accounts, will find, I believe, that a dearth never has arisen from any combination among the inland dealers in corn, nor from any other cause but a real scarcity, occasioned sometimes, perhaps, and in some particular places, by the waste of war, but in by far the greatest number of cases by the fault of the seasons; and that a famine has never arisen from any other cause but the violence of government attempting, by improper means, to remedy the inconveniencies of a dearth.

In an extensive corn country, between all the different parts of which there is a free commerce and communication, the scarcity occasioned by the most unfavourable seasons can never be so great as to produce a famine; and the scantiest crop, if managed with frugality and economy, will maintain, through the year, the same number of people that are commonly fed in a more affluent manner by one of moderate plenty. The seasons most unfavourable to the crop are those of excessive drought or excessive rain. But as corn grows equally upon high and low lands, upon grounds that are disposed to be too wet, and upon those that are disposed to be too dry, either the drought or the rain, which is hurtful to one part of the country, is favourable to another; and though, both in the wet and in the dry season, the crop is a good deal less than in one more properly tempered; yet, in both, what is lost in one part of the country is in some measure compensated by what is gained in the other. In rice countries, where the crop not only requires a very moist soil, but where, in a certain period of its growing, it must be laid under water, the effects of a drought are much more dismal. Even in such countries, however, the drought is, perhaps, scarce ever so universal as necessarily to occasion a famine, if the government would allow a free trade. The drought in Bengal, a few years ago, might probably have occasioned a very great dearth. Some improper regulations, some injudicious restraints, imposed by the servants of the East India Company upon the rice trade, contributed, perhaps, to turn that dearth into a famine.

When the government, in order to remedy the inconveniencies of a dearth, orders all the dealers to sell their corn at what it supposes a reasonable price, it either hinders them from bringing it to market, which may sometimes produce a famine even in the beginning of the season; or, if they bring it thither, it enables the people, and thereby encourages them to consume it so fast as must necessarily produce a famine before the end of the season. The unlimited, unrestrained freedom of the corn trade, as it is the only effectual preventive of the miseries of a famine, so it is the best palliative of the inconveniencies of a dearth; for the inconveniencies of a real scarcity cannot be remedied; they can only be palliated. No trade deserves more the full protection of the law, and no trade requires it so much; because no trade is so much exposed to popular odium.

In years of scarcity, the inferior ranks of people impute their distress to the avarice of the corn merchant, who becomes the object of their hatred and indignation. Instead of making profit upon such occasions, therefore, he is often in danger of being utterly ruined, and of having his

magazines plundered and destroyed by their violence. It is in years of scarcity, however, when prices are high, that the corn merchant expects to make his principal profit. He is generally in contract with some farmers to furnish him, for a certain number of years, with a certain quantity of corn, at a certain price. This contract price is settled according to what is supposed to be the moderate and reasonable, that is, the ordinary or average price, which, before the late years of scarcity, was commonly about 28s. for the quarter of wheat, and for that of other grain in proportion. In years of scarcity, therefore, the corn merchant buys a great part of his corn for the ordinary price, and sells it for a much higher. That this extraordinary profit, however, is no more them sufficient to put his trade upon a fair level with other trades, and to compensate the many losses which be sustains upon other occasions, both from the perishable nature of the commodity itself, and from the frequent and unforeseen fluctuations of its price, seems evident enough, from this single circumstance, that great fortunes are as seldom made in this as in any other trade. The popular odium, however, which attends it in years of scarcity, the only years in which it can be very profitable, renders people of character and fortune averse to enter into it. It is abandoned to an inferior set of dealers; and millers, bakers, meal-men, and meal-factors, together with a number of wretched hucksters, arr almost the only middle people that, in the home market, come between the grower and the consumer.

The ancient policy of Europe, instead of discountenancing this popular odium against a trade so beneficial to the public, seems, on the contrary, to have authorised and encouraged it.

By the 5th and 6th of Edward VI. ca, it was enacted, that whoever should buy any corn or grain, with intent to sell it again, should be reputed an unlawful engrosser, and should, for the first fault, suffer two months imprisonment, and forfeit the value of the corn; for the second, suffer six months imprisonment, and forfeit double the value; and, for the third, be set in the pillory, suffer imprisonment during the king’s pleasure, and forfeit all his goods and chattels. The ancient policy of most other parts of Europe was no better than that of England.

Our ancestors seem to have imagined, that the people would buy their corn cheaper of the farmer than of the corn merchant, who, they were afraid, would require, over and above, the price which he paid to the farmer, an exorbitant profit to himself. They endeavoured, therefore, to annihilate his trade altogether. They even endeavoured to hinder, as much as possible, any middle man of any kind from coming in between

the grower and the consumer; and this was the meaning of the many restraints which they imposed upon the trade of those whom they called kidders, or carriers of corn; a trade which nobody was allowed to exercise without a licence, ascertaining his qualifications as a man of probity and fair dealing. The authority of three justices of the peace was, by the statute of Edward VI. necessary in order to grant this licence. But even this restraint was afterwards thought insufficient, and, by a statute of Elizabeth, the privilege of granting it was confined to the quarter-sessions.

The ancient policy of Europe endeavoured, in this manner, to regulate agriculture, the great trade of the country, by maxims quite different from those which it established with regard to manufactures, the great trade of the towns. By leaving a farmer no other customers but either the consumers or their immediate factors, the kidders and carriers of corn, it endeavoured to force him to exercise the trade, not only of a farmer, but of a corn merchant, or corn retailer. On the contrary, it, in many cases, prohibited the manufacturer from exercising the trade of a shopkeeper, or from selling his own goods by retail. It meant, by the one law, to promote the general interest of the country, or to render corn cheap, without, perhaps, its being well understood how this was to be done. By the other, it meant to promote that of a particular order of men, the shopkeepers, who would be so much undersold by the manufacturer, it was supposed, that their trade would be ruined, if he was allowed to retail at all.

The manufacturer, however, though he had been allowed to keep a shop, and to sell his own goods by retail, could not have undersold the common shopkeeper. Whatever part of his capital he might have placed in his shop, he must have withdrawn it from his manufacture. In order to carry on his business on a level with that of other people, as he must have had the profit of a manufacturer on the one part, so he must have had that of a shopkeeper upon the other. Let us suppose, for example, that in the particular town where he lived, ten per cent. was the ordinary profit both of manufacturing and shopkeeping stock; he must in this case have charged upon every piece of his own goods, which he sold in his shop, a profit of twenty per cent. When he carried them from his workhouse to his shop, he must have valued them at the price for which he could have sold them to a dealer or shopkeeper, who would have bought them by wholesale. If he valued them lower, he lost a part of the profit of his manufacturing capital. When, again, he sold them from his shop, unless he got the same price at which a shopkeeper would have sold them, he lost a part of the profit of his shopkeeping capital. Though

he might appear, therefore, to make a double profit upon the same piece of goods, yet, as these goods made successively a part of two distinct capitals, he made but a single profit upon the whole capital employed about them; and if he made less than his profit, he was a loser, and did not employ his whole capital with the same advantage as the greater of part of his neighbours.

What the manufacturer was prohibited to do, the farmer was in some measure enjoined to do; to divide his capital between two different employments; to keep one part of it in his granaries and stack-yard, for supplying the occasional demands of the market, and to employ the other in the cultivation of his land. But as he could not afford to employ the latter for less than the ordinary profits of farming stock, so he could as little afford to employ the former for less than the ordinary profits of mercantile stock. Whether the stock which really carried on the business of a corn merchant belonged to the person who was called a farmer, or to the person who was called a corn merchant, an equal profit was in both cases requisite, in order to indemnify its owner for employing it in this manner, in order to put his business on a level with other trades, and in order to hinder him from having an interest to change it as soon as possible for some other. The farmer, therefore, who was thus forced to exercise the trade of a corn merchant, could not afford to sell his corn cheaper than any other corn merchant would have been obliged to do in the case a free competition.

The dealer who can employ his whole stock in one single branch of business, has an advantage of the same kind with the workman who can employ his whole labour in one single operation. As the latter acquires a dexterity which enables him, with the same two hands, to perform a much greater quantity of work, so the former acquires so easy and ready a method of transacting his business, of buying and disposing of his goods, that, with the same capital he can transact a much greater quantity of business. As the one can commonly afford his work a good deal cheaper, so the other can commonly afford his goods somewhat cheaper, than if his stock and attention were both employed about a greater variety of objects. The greater part of manufacturers could not afford to retail their own goods so cheap as a vigilant and active shopkeeper, whose sole business it was to buy them by wholesale and to retail them again. The greater part of farmers could still less afford to retail their own corn, to supply the inhabitants of a town, at perhaps four or five miles distance from the greater part of them, so cheap as a vigilant and

active corn merchant, whose sole business it was to purchase corn by wholesale, to collect it into a great magazine, and to retail it again.

The law which prohibited the manufacturer from exercising the trade of a shopkeeper, endeavoured to force this division in the employment of stock to go on faster than it might otherwise have done. The law which obliged the farmer to exercise the trade of a corn merchant, endeavoured to hinder it from going on so fast. Both laws were evident violations of natural liberty, and therefore unjust; and they were both, too, as impolitic as they were unjust. It is the interest of every society, that things of this kind should never either be forced or obstructed. The man who employs either his labour or his stock in a greater variety of ways than his situation renders necessary, can never hurt his neighbour by underselling him. He may hurt himself, and he generally does so. Jack-of-all-trades will never be rich, says the proverb. But the law ought always to trust people with the care of their own interest, as in their local situations they must generally be able to judge better of it than the legislature can do. The law, however, which obliged the farmer to exercise the trade of a corn merchant was by far the most pernicious of the two.

It obstructed not only that division in the employment of stock which is so advantageous to every society, but it obstructed likewise the improvement and cultivation of the land. By obliging the farmer to carry on two trades instead of one, it forced him to divide his capital into two parts, of which one only could be employed in cultivation. But if he had been at liberty to sell his whole crop to a corn merchant as fast as he could thresh it out, his whole capital might have returned immediately to the land, and have been employed in buying more cattle, and hiring more servants, in order to improve and cultivate it better. But by being obliged to sell his corn by retail, he was obliged to keep a great part of his capital in his granaries and stack-yard through the year, and could not therefore cultivate so well as with the same capital he might otherwise have done. This law, therefore, necessarily obstructed the improvement of the land, and, instead of tending to render corn cheaper, must have tended to render it scarcer, and therefore dearer, than it would otherwise have been.

After the business of the farmer, that of the corn merchant is in reality the trade which, if properly protected and encouraged, would contribute the most to the raising of corn. It would support the trade of the farmer, in the same manner as the trade of the wholesale dealer supports that of the manufacturer.

The wholesale dealer, by affording a ready market to the manufacturer, by taking his goods off his hand as fast as he can make

them, and by sometimes even advancing their price to him before he has made them, enables him to keep his whole capital, and sometimes even more than his whole capital, constantly employed in manufacturing, and consequently to manufacture a much greater quantity of goods than if he was obliged to dispose of them himself to the immediate consumers, or even to the retailers. As the capital of the wholesale merchant, too, is generally sufficient to replace that of many manufacturers, this intercourse between him and them interests the owner of a large capital to support the owners of a great number of small ones, and to assist them in those losses and misfortunes which might otherwise prove ruinous to them.

An intercourse of the same kind universally established between the farmers and the corn merchants, would be attended with effects equally beneficial to the farmers. They would be enabled to keep their whole capitals, and even more than their whole capitals constantly employed in cultivation. In case of any of those accidents to which no trade is more liable than theirs, they would find in their ordinary customer, the wealthy corn merchant, a person who had both an interest to support them, and the ability to do it; and they would not, as at present, be entirely dependent upon the forbearance of their landlord, or the mercy of his steward. Were it possible, as perhaps it is not, to establish this intercourse universally, and all at once; were it possible to turn all at once the whole farming stock of the kingdom to its proper business, the cultivation of land, withdrawing it from every other employment into which any part of it may be at present diverted; and were it possible, in order to support and assist, upon occasion, the operations of this great stock, to provide all at once another stock almost equally great; it is not, perhaps, very easy to imagine how great, how extensive, and how sudden, would be the improvement which this change of circumstances would alone produce upon the whole face of the country.

The statute of Edward VI. therefore, by prohibiting as much as possible any middle man from coming in between the grower and the consumer, endeavoured to annihilate a trade, of which the free exercise is not only the best palliative of the inconveniencies of a dearth, but the best preventive of that calamity; after the trade of the farmer, no trade contributing so much to the growing of corn as that of the corn merchant.

The rigour of this law was afterwards softened by several subsequent statutes, which successively permitted the engrossing of corn when the prices of wheat should not exceed 20s. and 24s. 32s. and 40s. the quarter. At last, by the 15th of Charles II. c. 7, the engrossing or buying of corn,

in order to sell it again, as long as the price of wheat did not exceed 48s. the quarter, and that of other grain in proportion, was declared lawful to all persons not being forestallers, that is, not selling again in the same market within three months. All the freedom which the trade of the inland corn dealer has ever yet enjoyed was bestowed upon it by this statute. The statute of the twelfth of the present king, which repeals almost all the other ancient laws against engrossers and forestallers, does not repeal the restrictions of this particular statute, which therefore still continue in force.

This statute, however, authorises in some measure two very absurd popular prejudices.

First, It supposes, that when the price of wheat has risen so high as 48s. the quarter, and that of other grain in proportion, corn is likely to be so engrossed as to hurt the people. But, from what has been already said, it seems evident enough, that corn can at no price be so engrossed by the inland dealers as to hurt the people; and 48s. the quarter, besides, though it may be considered as a very high price, yet, in years of scarcity, it is a price which frequently takes place immediately after harvest, when scarce any part of the new crop can be sold off, and when it is impossible even for ignorance to suppose that any part of it can be so engrossed as to hurt the people.

Secondly, It supposes that there is a certain price at which corn is likely to be forestalled, that is, bought up in order to be sold again soon after in the same market, so as to hurt the people. But if a merchant ever buys up corn, either going to a particular market, or in a particular market, in order to sell it again soon after in the same market, it must be because he judges that the market cannot be so liberally supplied through the whole season as upon that particular occasion, and that the price, therefore, must rise. If he judges wrong in this, and if the price does not rise, he not only loses the whole profit of the stock which he employs in this manner, but a part of the stock itself, by the expense and loss which necessarily attend the storing and keeping of corn. He hurts himself, therefore, much more essentially than he can hurt even the particular people whom he may hinder from supplying themselves upon that particular market day, because they may afterwards supply themselves just as cheap upon any other market day. If he judges right, instead of hurting the great body of the people, he renders them a most important service. By making them feel the inconveniencies of a dearth somewhat earlier than they otherwise might do, he prevents their feeling them afterwards so severely as they certainly would do, if the cheapness of

price encouraged them to consume faster than suited the real scarcity of the season. When the scarcity is real, the best thing that can be done for people is, to divide the inconvenience of it as equally as possible, through all the different months and weeks and days of the year. The interest of the corn merchant makes him study to do this as exactly as he can; and as no other person can have either the same interest, or the same knowledge, or the same abilities, to do it so exactly as he, this most important operation of commerce ought to be trusted entirely to him; or, in other words, the corn trade, so far at least as concerns the supply of the home market, ought to be left perfectly free.

The popular fear of engrossing and forestalling may be compared to the popular terrors and suspicions of witchcraft. The unfortunate wretches accused of this latter crime were not more innocent of the misfortunes imputed to them, than those who have been accused of the former. The law which put an end to all prosecutions against witchcraft, which put it out of any man’s power to gratify his own malice by accusing his neighbour of that imaginary crime, seems effectually to have put an end to those fears and suspicions, by taking away the great cause which encouraged and supported them. The law which would restore entire freedom to the inland trade of corn, would probably prove as effectual to put an end to the popular fears of engrossing and forestalling.

The 15th of Charles II. c. 7, however, with all its imperfections, has, perhaps, contributed more, both to the plentiful supply of the home market, and to the increase of tillage, than any other law in the statute book. It is from this law that the inland corn trade has derived all the liberty and protection which it has ever yet enjoyed; and both the supply of the home market and the interest of tillage are much more effectually promoted by the inland, than either by the importation or exportation trade.

The proportion of the average quantity of all sorts of grain imported into Great Britain to that of all sorts of grain consumed, it has been computed by the author of the Tracts upon the Corn Trade, does not exceed that of one to five hundred and seventy. For supplying the home market, therefore, the importance of the inland trade must be to that of the importation trade as five hundred and seventy to one.

The average quantity of all sorts of grain exported from Great Britain does not, according to the same author, exceed the one-and-thirtieth part of the annual produce. For the encouragement of tillage, therefore, by

providing a market for the home produce, the importance of the inland trade must be to that of the exportation trade as thirty to one.

I have no great faith in political arithmetic, and I mean not to warrant the exactness of either of these computations. I mention them only in order to show of how much less consequence, in the opinion of the most judicious and experienced persons, the foreign trade of corn is than the home trade. The great cheapness of corn in the years immediately preceding the establishment of the bounty may, perhaps with reason, be ascribed in some measure to the operation of this statute of Charles II. which had been enacted about five-and-twenty years before, and which had, therefore, full time to produce its effect.

A very few words will sufficiently explain all that I have to say concerning the other three branches of the corn trade.

II. The trade of the merchant-importer of foreign corn for home consumption, evidently contributes to the immediate supply of the home market, and must so far be immediately beneficial to the great body of the people. It tends, indeed, to lower somewhat the average money price of corn, but not to diminish its real value, or the quantity of labour which it is capable of maintaining. If importation was at all times free, our farmers and country gentlemen would probably, one year with another, get less money for their corn than they do at present, when importation is at most times in effect prohibited; but the money which they got would be of more value, would buy more goods of all other kinds, and would employ more labour. Their real wealth, their real revenue, therefore, would be the same as at present, though it might be expressed by a smaller quantity of silver, and they would neither be disabled nor discouraged from cultivating corn as much as they do at present. On the contrary, as the rise in the real value of silver, in consequence of lowering the money price of corn, lowers somewhat the money price of all other commodities, it gives the industry of the country where it takes place some advantage in all foreign markets, and thereby tends to encourage and increase that industry. But the extent of the home market for corn must be in proportion to the general industry of the country where it grows, or to the number of those who produce something else, and, therefore, have something else, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of something else, to give in exchange for corn. But in every country, the home market, as it is the nearest and most convenient, so is it likewise the greatest and most important market for corn. That rise in the real value of silver, therefore, which is the effect of lowering the average money price of corn, tends to enlarge the greatest and most

important market for corn, and thereby to encourage, instead of discouraging its growth.

By the 22nd of Charles II. c. 13, the importation of wheat, whenever the price in the home market did not exceed 53s. 4d. the quarter, was subjected to a duty of 16s. the quarter; and to a duty of 8s. whenever the price did not exceed L.4. The former of these two prices has, for more than a century past, taken place only in times of very great scarcity; and the latter has, so far as I know, not taken place at all. Yet, till wheat had risen above this latter price, it was, by this statute, subjected to a very high duty; and, till it had risen above the former, to a duty which amounted to a prohibition. The importation of other sorts of grain was restrained at rates and by duties, in proportion to the value of the grain, almost equally high.[40*] Subsequent laws still further increased those duties.

The distress which, in years of scarcity, the strict execution of those laws might have brought upon the people, would probably have been very great; but, upon such occasions, its execution was generally suspended by temporary statutes, which permitted, for a limited time, the importation of foreign corn. The necessity of these temporary statutes sufficiently demonstrates the impropriety of this general one.

These restraints upon importation, though prior to the establishment of the bounty, were dictated by the same spirit, by the same principles, which afterwards enacted that regulation. How hurtful soever in themselves, these, or some other restraints upon importation, became necessary in consequence of that regulation. If, when wheat was either below 48s. the quarter, or not much above it, foreign corn could have been imported, either duty free, or upon paying only a small duty, it might have been exported again, with the benefit of the bounty, to the great loss of the public revenue, and to the entire perversion of the institution, of which the object was to extend the market for the home growth, not that for the growth of foreign countries.

III. The trade of the merchant-exporter of corn for foreign consumption, certainly does not contribute directly to the plentiful supply of the home market. It does so, however, indirectly. From whatever source this supply may be usually drawn, whether from home growth, or from foreign importation, unless more corn is either usually grown, or usually imported into the country, than what is usually consumed in it, the supply of the home market can never be very plentiful. But unless the surplus can, in all ordinary cases, be exported, the growers will be careful never to grow more, and the importers never

to import more, than what the bare consumption of the home market requires. That market will very seldom be overstocked; but it will generally be understocked; the people, whose business it is to supply it, being generally afraid lest their goods should be left upon their hands. The prohibition of exportation limits the improvement and cultivation of the country to what the supply of its own inhabitants require. The freedom of exportation enables it to extend cultivation for the supply of foreign nations.

By the 12th of Charles II. c. 4, the exportation of corn was permitted whenever the price of wheat did not exceed 40s. the quarter, and that of other grain in proportion. By the 15th of the same prince, this liberty was extended till the price of wheat exceeded 48s. the quarter, and by the 22d, to all higher prices. A poundage, indeed, was to be paid to the king upon such exportation; but all grain was rated so low in the book of rates, that this poundage amounted only, upon wheat to 1s. upon oats to 4d. and upon all other grain to 6d. the quarter. By the 1st of William and Mary, the act which established this bounty, this small duty was virtually taken off whenever the price of wheat did not exceed 48s. the quarter; and by the 11th and 12th of William III. c. 20, it was expressly taken off at all higher prices.

The trade of the merchant-exporter was, in this manner, not only encouraged by a bounty, but rendered much more free than that of the inland dealer. By the last of these statutes, corn could be engrossed at any price for exportation; but it could not be engrossed for inland sale, except when the price did not exceed 48s. the quarter. The interest of the inland dealer, however, it has already been shown, can never be opposite to that of the great body of the people. That of the merchant-exporter may, and in fact sometimes is. If, while his own country labours under a dearth, a neighbouring country should be afflicted with a famine, it might be his interest to carry corn to the latter country, in such quantities as might very much aggravate the calamities of the dearth. The plentiful supply of the home market was not the direct object of those statutes; but, under the pretence of encouraging agriculture, to raise the money price of corn as high as possible, and thereby to occasion, as much as possible, a constant dearth in the home market. By the discouragement of importation, the supply of that market, even in times of great scarcity, was confined to the home growth; and by the encouragement of exportation, when the price was so high as 48s. the quarter, that market was not, even in times of considerable scarcity, allowed to enjoy the whole of that growth. The temporary laws, prohibiting, for a limited

time, the exportation of corn, and taking off, for a limited time, the duties upon its importation, expedients to which Great Britain has been obliged so frequently to have recourse, sufficiently demonstrate the impropriety of her general system. Had that system been good, she would not so frequently have been reduced to the necessity of departing from it.

Were all nations to follow the liberal system of free exportation and free importation, the different states into which a great continent was divided, would so far resemble the different provinces of a great empire. As among the different provinces of a great empire, the freedom of the inland trade appears, both from reason and experience, not only the best palliative of a dearth, but the most effectual preventive of a famine; so would the freedom of the exportation and importation trade be among the different states into which a great continent was divided. The larger the continent, the easier the communication through all the different parts of it, both by land and by water, the less would any one particular part of it ever he exposed to either of these calamities, the scarcity of any one country being more likely to be relieved by the plenty of some other. But very few countries have entirely adopted this liberal system. The freedom of the corn trade is almost everywhere more or less restrained, and in many countries is confined by such absurd regulations, as frequently aggravate the unavoidable misfortune of a dearth into the dreadful calamity of a famine. The demand of such countries for corn may frequently become so great and so urgent, that a small state in their neighbourhood, which happened at the same time to be labouring under some degree of dearth, could not venture to supply them without exposing itself to the like dreadful calamity. The very bad policy of one country may thus render it, in some measure, dangerous and imprudent to establish what would otherwise be the best policy in another. The unlimited freedom of exportation, however, would be much less dangerous in great states, in which the growth being much greater, the supply could seldom be much affected by any quantity of corn that was likely to be exported. In a Swiss canton, or in some of the little states in Italy, it may, perhaps, sometimes be necessary to restrain the exportation of corn. In such great countries as France or England, it scarce ever can. To hinder, besides, the farmer from sending his goods at all times to the best market, is evidently to sacrifice the ordinary laws of justice to an idea of public utility, to a sort of reasons of state; an act of legislative authority which ought to be exercised only, which can be pardoned only, in cases of the most urgent necessity. The price at which exportation of

corn is prohibited, if it is ever to be prohibited, ought always to be a very high price.

The laws concerning corn may everywhere be compared to the laws concerning religion. The people feel themselves so much interested in what relates either to their subsistence in this life, or to their happiness in a life to come, that government must yield to their prejudices, and, in order to preserve the public tranquillity, establish that system which they approve of. It is upon this account, perhaps, that we so seldom find a reasonable system established with regard to either of those two capital objects.

IV. The trade of the merchant-carrier, or of the importer of foreign corn, in order to export it again, contributes to the plentiful supply of the home market. It is not, indeed, the direct purpose of his trade to sell his corn there; but he will generally be willing to do so, and even for a good deal less money than he might expect in a foreign market; because he saves in this manner the expense of loading and unloading, of freight and insurance. The inhabitants of the country which, by means of the carrying trade, becomes the magazine and storehouse for the supply of other countries, can very seldom be in want themselves. Though the carrying trade must thus contribute to reduce the average money price of corn in the home market, it would not thereby lower its real value; it would only raise somewhat the real value of silver.

The carrying trade was in effect prohibited in Great Britain, upon all ordinary occasions, by the high duties upon the importation of foreign corn, of the greater part of which there was no drawback; and upon extraordinary occasions, when a scarcity made it necessary to suspend those duties by temporary statutes, exportation was always prohibited. By this system of laws, therefore, the carrying trade was in effect prohibited.

That system of laws, therefore, which is connected with the establishment of the bounty, seems to deserve no part of the praise which has been bestowed upon it. The improvement and prosperity of Great Britain, which has been so often ascribed to those laws, may very easily be accounted for by other causes. That security which the laws in Great Britain give to every man, that he shall enjoy the fruits of his own labour, is alone sufficient to make any country flourish, notwithstanding these and twenty other absurd regulations of commerce; and this security was perfected by the Revolution, much about the same time that the bounty was established. The natural effort of every individual to better his own condition, when suffered to exert itself with freedom and security, is so

powerful a principle, that it is alone, and without any assistance, not only capable of carrying on the society to wealth and prosperity, but of surmounting a hundred impertinent obstructions, with which the folly of human laws too often encumbers its operations: though the effect of those obstructions is always, more or less, either to encroach upon its freedom, or to diminish its security. In Great Britain industry is perfectly secure; and though it is far from being perfectly free, it is as free or freer than in any other part of Europe.

Though the period of the greatest prosperity and improvement of Great Britain has been posterior to that system of laws which is connected with the bounty, we must not upon that account, impute it to those laws. It has been posterior likewise to the national debt; but the national debt has most assuredly not been the cause of it.

Though the system of laws which is connected with the bounty, has exactly the same tendency with the practice of Spain and Portugal, to lower somewhat the value of the precious metals in the country where it takes place; yet Great Britain is certainly one of the richest countries in Europe, while Spain and Portugal are perhaps amongst the most beggarly. This difference of situation, however, may easily be accounted for from two different causes. First, the tax in Spain, the prohibition in Portugal of exporting gold and silver, and the vigilant police which watches over the execution of those laws, must, in two very poor countries, which between them import annually upwards of six millions sterling, operate not only more directly, but much more forcibly, in reducing the value of those metals there, than the corn laws can do in Great Britain. And, secondly, this bad policy is not in these countries counterbalanced by the general liberty and security of the people. Industry is there neither free nor secure; and the civil and ecclesiastical governments of both Spain and Portugal are such as would alone be sufficient to perpetuate their present state of poverty, even though their regulations of commerce were as wise as the greatest part of them are absurd and foolish.

The 13th of the present king, c. 43, seems to have established a new system with regard to the corn laws, in many respects better than the ancient one, but in one or two respects perhaps not quite so good.

By this statute, the high duties upon importation for home consumption are taken off, so soon as the price of middling wheat rises to 48s. the quarter; that of middling rye, pease, or beans, to 32s.; that of barley to 24s.; and that of oats to 16s.; and instead of them, a small duty is imposed of only 6d. upon the quarter of wheat, and upon that of other

grain in proportion. With regard to all those different sorts of grain, but particularly with regard to wheat, the home market is thus opened to foreign supplies, at prices considerably lower than before.

By the same statute, the old bounty of 5s. upon the exportation of wheat, ceases so soon as the price rises to 44s. the quarter, instead of 48s. the price at which it ceased before; that of 2s. 6d. upon the exportation of barley, ceases so soon as the price rises to 22s. instead of 24s. the price at which it ceased before; that of 2s. 6d. upon the exportation of oatmeal, ceases so soon as the price rises to 14s. instead of 15s. the price at which it ceased before. The bounty upon rye is reduced from 3s. 6d. to 3s. and it ceases so soon as the price rises to 28s. instead of 32s. the price at which it ceased before. If bounties are as improper as I have endeavoured to prove them to be, the sooner they cease, and the lower they are, so much the better.

The same statute permits, at the lowest prices, the importation of corn in order to be exported again, duty free, provided it is in the mean time lodged in a warehouse under the joint locks of the king and the importer. This liberty, indeed, extends to no more than twenty-five of the different parts of Great Britain. They are, however, the principal ones; and there may not, perhaps, be warehouses proper for this purpose in the greater part of the others.

So far this law seems evidently an improvement upon the ancient system.

But by the same law, a bounty of 2s. the quarter is given for the exportation of oats, whenever the price does not exceed fourteen shillings. No bounty had ever been given before for the exportation of this grain, no more than for that of pease or beans.

By the same law, too, the exportation of wheat is prohibited so soon as the price rises to forty-four shillings the quarter; that of rye so soon as it rises to twenty-eight shillings; that of barley so soon as it rises to twenty-two shillings; and that of oats so soon as they rise to fourteen shillings. Those several prices seem all of them a good deal too low; and there seems to be an impropriety, besides, in prohibiting exportation altogether at those precise prices at which that bounty, which was given in order to force it, is withdrawn. The bounty ought certainly either to have been withdrawn at a much lower price, or exportation ought to have been allowed at a much higher.

So far, therefore, this law seems to be inferior to the ancient system. With all its imperfections, however, we may perhaps say of it what was said of the laws of Solon, that though not the best in itself, it is the best

which the interest, prejudices, and temper of the times, would admit of. It may perhaps in due time prepare the way for a better.

CHAP. VI. OF TREATIES OF COMMERCE.

When a nation binds itself by treaty, either to permit the entry of certain goods from one foreign country which it prohibits from all others, or to exempt the goods of one country from duties to which it subjects those of all others, the country, or at least the merchants and manufacturers of the country, whose commerce is so favoured, must necessarily derive great advantage from the treaty. Those merchants and manufacturers enjoy a sort of monopoly in the country which is so indulgent to them. That country becomes a market, both more extensive and more advantageous for their goods: more extensive, because the goods of other nations being either excluded or subjected to heavier duties, it takes off a greater quantity of theirs; more advantageous, because the merchants of the favoured country, enjoying a sort of monopoly there, will often sell their goods for a better price than if exposed to the free competition of all other nations.

Such treaties, however, though they may be advantageous to the merchants and manufacturers of the favoured, are necessarily disadvantageous to those of the favouring country. A monopoly is thus granted against them to a foreign nation; and they must frequently buy the foreign goods they have occasion for, dearer than if the free competition of other nations was admitted. That part of its own produce with which such a nation purchases foreign goods, must consequently be sold cheaper; because, when two things are exchanged for one another, the cheapness of the one is a necessary consequence, or rather is the same thing, with the dearness of the other. The exchangeable value of its annual produce, therefore, is likely to be diminished by every such treaty. This diminution, however, can scarce amount to any positive loss, but only to a lessening of the gain which it might otherwise make. Though it sells its goods cheaper than it otherwise might do, it will not probably sell them for less than they cost; nor, as in the case of bounties, for a price which will not replace the capital employed in bringing them to market, together with the ordinary profits of stock. The trade could not go on long if it did. Even the favouring country, therefore, may still gain by the trade, though less than if there was a free competition.

Some treaties of commerce, however, have been supposed advantageous, upon principles very different from these; and a commercial country has sometimes granted a monopoly of this kind,

against itself, to certain goods of a foreign nation, because it expected, that in the whole commerce between them, it would annually sell more than it would buy, and that a balance in gold and silver would be annually returned to it. It is upon this principle that the treaty of commerce between England and Portugal, concluded in 1703 by Mr Methuen, has been so much commended. The following is a literal translation of that treaty, which consists of three articles only.

ART. I.

His sacred royal majesty of Portugal promises, both in his own name and that of his successors, to admit for ever hereafter, into Portugal, the woollen cloths, and the rest of the woollen manufactures of the British, as was accustomed, till they were prohibited by the law; nevertheless upon this condition:

ART. II.

That is to say, that her sacred royal majesty of Great Britain shall, in her own name, and that of her successors, be obliged, for ever hereafter, to admit the wines of the growth of Portugal into Britain; so that at no time, whether there shall be peace or war between the kingdoms of Britain and France, any thing more shall be demanded for these wines by the name of custom or duty, or by whatsoever other title, directly or indirectly, whether they shall be imported into Great Britain in pipes or hogsheads, or other casks, than what shall be demanded for the like quantity or measure of French wine, deducting or abating a third part of the custom or duty. But if, at any time, this deduction or abatement of customs, which is to be made as aforesaid, shall in any manner be attempted and prejudiced, it shall be just and lawful for his sacred royal majesty of Portugal, again to prohibit the woollen cloths, and the rest of the British woollen manufactures.

ART. III.

The most excellent lords the plenipotentiaries promise and take upon themselves, that their above named masters shall ratify this treaty; and within the space of two months the ratification shall be exchanged.

By this treaty, the crown of Portugal becomes bound to admit the English woollens upon the same footing as before the prohibition; that is, not to raise the duties which had been paid before that time. But it does

not become bound to admit them upon any better terms than those of any other nation, of France or Holland, for example. The crown of Great Britain, on the contrary, becomes bound to admit the wines of Portugal, upon paying only two-thirds of the duty which is paid for those of France, the wines most likely to come into competition with them. So far this treaty, therefore, is evidently advantageous to Portugal, and disadvantageous to Great Britain.

It has been celebrated, however, as a masterpiece of the commercial policy of England. Portugal receives annually from the Brazils a greater quantity of gold than can be employed in its domestic commerce, whether in the shape of coin or of plate. The surplus is too valuable to be allowed to lie idle and locked up in coffers; and as it can find no advantageous market at home, it must, notwithstanding any prohibition, be sent abroad, and exchanged for something for which there is a more advantageous market at home. A large share of it comes annually to England, in return either for English goods, or for those of other European nations that receive their returns through England. Mr Barretti was informed, that the weekly packet-boat from Lisbon brings, one week with another, more than L.50,000 in gold to England. The sum had probably been exaggerated. It would amount to more than L.2,600,000 a-year, which is more than the Brazils are supposed to afford.

Our merchants were, some years ago, out of humour with the crown of Portugal. Some privileges which had been granted them, not by treaty, but by the free grace of that crown, at the solicitation, indeed, it is probable, and in return for much greater favours, defence and protection from the crown of Great Britain, had been either infringed or revoked. The people, therefore, usually most interested in celebrating the Portugal trade, were then rather disposed to represent it as less advantageous than it had commonly been imagined. The far greater part, almost the whole, they pretended, of this annual importation of gold, was not on account of Great Britain, but of other European nations; the fruits and wines of Portugal annually imported into Great Britain nearly compensating the value of the British goods sent thither.

Let us suppose, however, that the whole was on account of Great Britain, and that it amounted to a still greater sum than Mr Barretti seems to imagine; this trade would not, upon that account, be more advantageous than any other, in which, for the same value sent out, we received an equal value of consumable goods in return.

It is but a very small part of this importation which, it can be supposed, is employed as an annual addition, either to the plate or to the

coin of the kingdom. The rest must all be sent abroad, and exchanged for consumable goods of some kind or other. But if those consumable goods were purchased directly with the produce of English industry, it would be more for the advantage of England, than first to purchase with that produce the gold of Portugal, and afterwards to purchase with that gold those consumable goods. A direct foreign trade of consumption is always more advantageous than a round-about one; and to bring the same value of foreign goods to the home market, requires a much smaller capital in the one way than in the other. If a smaller share of its industry, therefore, had been employed in producing goods fit for the Portugal market, and a greater in producing those fit for the other markets, where those consumable goods for which there is a demand in Great Britain are to be had, it would have been more for the advantage of England. To procure both the gold which it wants for its own use, and the consumable goods, would, in this way, employ a much smaller capital than at present. There would be a spare capital, therefore, to be employed for other purposes, in exciting an additional quantity of industry, and in raising a greater annual produce.

Though Britain were entirely excluded from the Portugal trade, it could find very little difficulty in procuring all the annual supplies of gold which it wants, either for the purposes of plate, or of coin, or of foreign trade. Gold, like every other commodity, is always somewhere or another to be got for its value by those who have that value to give for it. The annual surplus of gold in Portugal, besides, would still be sent abroad, and though not carried away by Great Britain, would be carried away by some other nation, which would be glad to sell it again for its price, in the same manner as Great Britain does at present. In buying gold of Portugal, indeed, we buy it at the first hand; whereas, in buying it of any other nation, except Spain, we should buy it at the second, and might pay somewhat dearer. This difference, however, would surely be too insignificant to deserve the public attention.

Almost all our gold, it is said, comes from Portugal. With other nations, the balance of trade is either against us, or not much in our favour. But we should remember, that the more gold we import from one country, the less we must necessarily import from all others. The effectual demand for gold, like that for every other commodity, is in every country limited to a certain quantity. If nine-tenths of this quantity are imported from one country, there remains a tenth only to be imported from all others. The more gold, besides, that is annually imported from some particular countries, over and above what is requisite for plate and

for coin, the more must necessarily be exported to some others: and the more that most insignificant object of modern policy, the balance of trade, appears to be in our favour with some particular countries, the more it must necessarily appear to be against us with many others.

It was upon this silly notion, however, that England could not subsist without the Portugal trade, that, towards the end of the late war, France and Spain, without pretending either offence or provocation, required the king of Portugal to exclude all British ships from his ports, and, for the security of this exclusion, to receive into them French or Spanish garrisons. Had the king of Portugal submitted to those ignominious terms which his brother-in-law the king of Spain proposed to him, Britain would have been freed from a much greater inconveniency than the loss of the Portugal trade, the burden of supporting a very weak ally, so unprovided of every thing for his own defence, that the whole power of England, had it been directed to that single purpose, could scarce, perhaps, have defended him for another campaign. The loss of the Portugal trade would, no doubt, have occasioned a considerable embarrassment to the merchants at that time engaged in it, who might not, perhaps, have found out, for a year or two, any other equally advantageous method of employing their capitals; and in this would probably have consisted all the inconveniency which England could have suffered from this notable piece of commercial policy.

The great annual importation of gold and silver is neither for the purpose of plate nor of coin, but of foreign trade. A round-about foreign trade of consumption can be carried on more advantageously by means of these metals than of almost any other goods. As they are the universal instruments of commerce, they are more readily received in return for all commodities than any other goods; and, on account of their small bulk and great value, it costs less to transport them backward and forward from one place to another than almost any other sort of merchandize, and they lose less of their value by being so transported. Of all the commodities, therefore, which are bought in one foreign country, for no other purpose but to be sold or exchanged again for some other goods in another, there are none so convenient as gold and silver. In facilitating all the different round-about foreign trades of consumption which are carried on in Great Britain, consists the principal advantage of the Portugal trade; and though it is not a capital advantage, it is, no doubt, a considerable one.

That any annual addition which, it can reasonably be supposed, is made either to the plate or to the coin of the kingdom, could require but a

very small annual importation of gold and silver, seems evident enough; and though we had no direct trade with Portugal, this small quantity could always, somewhere or another, be very easily got.

Though the goldsmiths trade be very considerable in Great Britain, the far greater part of the new plate which they annually sell, is made from other old plate melted down; so that the addition annually made to the whole plate of the kingdom cannot be very great, and could require but a very small annual importation.

It is the same case with the coin. Nobody imagines, I believe, that even the greater part of the annual coinage, amounting, for ten years together, before the late reformation of the gold coin, to upwards of L.800,000 a-year in gold, was an annual addition to the money before current in the kingdom. In a country where the expense of the coinage is defrayed by the government, the value of the coin, even when it contains its full standard weight of gold and silver, can never be much greater than that of an equal quantity of those metals uncoined, because it requires only the trouble of going to the mint, and the delay, perhaps, of a few weeks, to procure for any quantity of uncoined gold and silver an equal quantity of those metals in coin; but in every country the greater part of the current coin is almost always more or less worn, or otherwise degenerated from its standard. In Great Britain it was, before the late reformation, a good deal so, the gold being more than two per cent., and the silver more than eight per cent. below its standard weight. But if forty-four guineas and a-half, containing their full standard weight, a pound weight of gold, could purchase very little more than a pound weight of uncoined gold; forty-four guineas and a-half, wanting a part of their weight, could not purchase a pound weight, and something was to be added, in order to make up the deficiency. The current price of gold bullion at market, therefore, instead of being the same with the mint price, or L.46 : 14 : 6, was then about L.47 : 14s., and sometimes about L.48. When the greater part of the coin, however, was in this degenerate condition, forty-four guineas and a-half, fresh from the mint, would purchase no more goods in the market than any other ordinary guineas; because, when they came into the coffers of the merchant, being confounded with other money, they could not afterwards be distinguished without more trouble than the difference was worth. Like other guineas, they were worth no more than L.46 : 14 : 6. If thrown into the melting pot, however, they produced, without any sensible loss, a pound weight of standard gold, which could be sold at any time for between L.47 : 14s. and L.48, either in gold or silver, as fit for all the

purposes of coin as that which had been melted down. There was an evident profit, therefore, in melting down new-coined money; and it was done so instantaneously, that no precaution of government could prevent it. The operations of the mint were, upon this account, somewhat like the web of Penelopé; the work that was done in the day was undone in the night. The mint was employed, not so much in making daily additions to the coin, as in replacing the very best part of it, which was daily melted down.

Were the private people who carry their gold and silver to the mint to pay themselves for the coinage, it would add to the value of those metals, in the same manner as the fashion does to that of plate. Coined gold and silver would be more valuable than uncoined. The seignorage, if it was not exorbitant, would add to the bullion the whole value of the duty; because, the government having everywhere the exclusive privilege of coining, no coin can come to market cheaper than they think proper to afford it. If the duty was exorbitant, indeed, that is, if it was very much above the real value of the labour and expense requisite for coinage, false coiners, both at home and abroad, might be encouraged, by the great difference between the value of bullion and that of coin, to pour in so great a quantity of counterfeit money as might reduce the value of the government money. In France, however, though the seignorage is eight per cent., no sensible inconveniency of this kind is found to arise from it. The dangers to which a false coiner is everywhere exposed, if he lives in the country of which he counterfeits the coin, and to which his agents or correspondents are exposed, if he lives in a foreign country, are by far too great to be incurred for the sake of a profit of six or seven per cent.

The seignorage in France raises the value of the coin higher than in proportion to the quantity of pure gold which it contains. Thus, by the edict of January 1726, the[41]* mint price of fine gold of twenty-four carats was fixed at seven hundred and forty livres nine sous and one denier one-eleventh the mark of eight Paris ounces. The gold coin of France, making an allowance for the remedy of the mint, contains twenty-one carats and three-fourths of fine gold, and two carats one-fourth of alloy. The mark of standard gold, therefore, is worth no more than about six hundred and seventy-one livres ten deniers. But in France this mark of standard gold is coined into thirty louis d’ors of twenty-four livres each, or into seven hundred and twenty livres. The coinage, therefore, increases the value of a mark of standard gold bullion, by the difference between six hundred and seventy-one livres ten deniers and seven hundred and twenty livres, or by forty-eight livres nineteen sous and two deniers.

A seignorage will, in many cases, take away altogether, and will in all cases diminish, the profit of melting down the new coin. This profit always arises from the difference between the quantity of bullion which the common currency ought to contain and that which it actually does contain. If this difference is less than the seignorage, there will be loss instead of profit. If it is equal to the seignorage, there will be neither profit nor loss. If it is greater than the seignorage, there will, indeed, be some profit, but less than if there was no seignorage. If, before the late reformation of the gold coin, for example, there had been a seignorage of five per cent. upon the coinage, there would have been a loss of three per cent. upon the melting down of the gold coin. If the seignorage had been two per cent, there would have been neither profit nor loss. If the seignorage had been one per cent., there would have been a profit but of one per cent. only, instead of two per cent. Wherever money is received by tale, therefore, and not by weight, a seignorage is the most effectual preventive of the melting down of the coin, and, for the same reason, of its exportation. It is the best and heaviest pieces that are commonly either melted down or exported, because it is upon such that the largest profits are made.

The law for the encouragement of the coinage, by rendering it duty-free, was first enacted during the reign of Charles II. for a limited time, and afterwards continued, by different prolongations, till 1769, when it was rendered perpetual. The bank of England, in order to replenish their coffers with money, are frequently obliged to carry bullion to the mint; and it was more for their interest, they probably imagined, that the coinage should be at the expense of the government than at their own. It was probably out of complaisance to this great company, that the government agreed to render this law perpetual. Should the custom of weighing gold, however, come to be disused, as it is very likely to be on account of its inconveniency; should the gold coin of England come to be received by tale, as it was before the late recoinage, this great company may, perhaps, find that they have, upon this, as upon some other occasions, mistaken their own interest not a little.

Before the late recoinage, when the gold currency of England was two per cent. below its standard weight, as there was no seignorage, it was two per cent. below the value of that quantity of standard gold bullion which it ought to have contained. When this great company, therefore, bought gold bullion in order to have it coined, they were obliged to pay for it two per cent. more than it was worth after the coinage. But if there

had been a seignorage of two per cent upon the coinage, the common gold currency, though two per cent. below its standard weight, would, notwithstanding, have been equal in value to the quantity of standard gold which it ought to have contained; the value of the fashion compensating in this case the diminuation of the weight. They would, indeed, have had the seignorage to pay, which being two per cent., their loss upon the whole transaction would have been two per cent., exactly the same, but no greater than it actually was.

If the seignorage had been five per cent., and the gold currency only two per cent. below its standard weight, the bank would, in this case, have gained three per cent. upon the price of the bullion; but as they would have had a seignorage of five per cent. to pay upon the coinage, their loss upon the whole transaction would, in the same manner, have been exactly two per cent.

If the seignorage had been only one per cent., and the gold currency two per cent. below its standard weight, the bank would, in this case, have lost only one per cent. upon the price of the bullion; but as they would likewise have had a seignorage of one per cent. to pay, their loss upon the whole transaction would have been exactly two per cent., in the same manner as in all other cases.

If there was a reasonable seignorage, while at the same time the coin contained its full standard weight, as it has done very nearly since the late recoinage, whatever the bank might lose by the seignorage, they would gain upon the price of the bullion; and whatever they might gain upon the price of the bullion, they would lose by the seignorage. They would neither lose nor gain, therefore, upon the whole transaction, and they would, in this, as in all the foregoing cases, be exactly in the same situation as if there was no seignorage.

When the tax upon a commodity is so moderate as not to encourage smuggling, the merchant who deals in it, though he advances, does not properly pay the tax, as he gets it back in the price of the commodity. The tax is finally paid by the last purchaser or consumer. But money is a commodity, with regard to which every man is a merchant. Nobody buys it but in order to sell it again; and with regard to it there is, in ordinary cases, no last purchaser or consumer. When the tax upon coinage, therefore, is so moderate as not to encourage false coining, though every body advances the tax, nobody finally pays it; because every body gets it back in the advanced value of the coin.

A moderate seignorage, therefore, would not, in any case, augment the expense of the bank, or of any other private persons who carry their

bullion to the mint in order to be coined; and the want of a moderate seignorage does not in any case diminish it. Whether there is or is not a seignorage, if the currency contains its full standard weight, the coinage costs nothing to any body; and if it is short of that weight, the coinage must always cost the difference between the quantity of bullion which ought to be contained in it, and that which actually is contained in it.

The government, therefore, when it defrays the expense of coinage, not only incurs some small expense, but loses some small revenue which it might get by a proper duty; and neither the bank, nor any other private persons, are in the smallest degree benefited by this useless piece of public generosity.

The directors of the bank, however, would probably be unwilling to agree to the imposition of a seignorage upon the authority of a speculation which promises them no gain, but only pretends to insure them from any loss. In the present state of the gold coin, and as long as it continues to be received by weight, they certainly would gain nothing by such a change. But if the custom of weighing the gold coin should ever go into disuse, as it is very likely to do, and if the gold coin should ever fall into the same state of degradation in which it was before the late recoinage, the gain, or more properly the savings, of the bank, in consequence of the imposition of a seignorage, would probably be very considerable. The bank of England is the only company which sends any considerable quantity of bullion to the mint, and the burden of the annual coinage falls entirely, or almost entirely, upon it. If this annual coinage had nothing to do but to repair the unavoidable losses and necessary wear and tear of the coin, it could seldom exceed fifty thousand, or at most a hundred thousand pounds. But when the coin is degraded below its standard weight, the annual coinage must, besides this, fill up the large vacuities which exportation and the melting pot are continually making in the current coin. It was upon this account, that during the ten or twelve years immediately preceding the late reformation of the gold coin, the annual coinage amounted, at an average, to more than L.850,000. But if there had been a seignorage of four or five per cent. upon the gold coin, it would probably, even in the state in which things then were, have put an effectual stop to the business both of exportation and of the melting pot. The bank, instead of losing every year about two and a half per cent. upon the bullion which was to be coined into more than eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, or incurring an annual loss of more than twenty-one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds, would not probably have incurred the tenth part of that loss.

The revenue allotted by parliament for defraying the expense of the coinage is but fourteen thousand pounds a-year; and the real expense which it costs the government, or the fees of the officers of the mint, do not, upon ordinary occasions, I am assured, exceed the half of that sum. The saving of so very small a sum, or even the gaining of another, which could not well be much larger, are objects too inconsiderable, it may be thought, to deserve the serious attention of government. But the saving of eighteen or twenty thousand pounds a-year, in case of an event which is not improbable, which has frequently happened before, and which in very likely to happen again, is surely an object which well deserves the serious attention, even of so great a company as the bank of England.

Some of the foregoing reasonings and observations might, perhaps, have been more properly placed in those chapters of the first book which treat of the origin and use of money, and of the difference between the real and the nominal price of commodities. But as the law for the encouragement of coinage derives its origin from these vulgar prejudices which have been introduced by the mercantile system, I judged it more proper to reserve them for this chapter. Nothing could be more agreeable to the spirit of that system than a sort of bounty upon the production of money, the very thing which, it supposes, constitutes the wealth of every nation. It is one of its many admirable expedients for enriching the country.

CHAP. VII. OF COLONIES.

PART I.

Of the Motives for Establishing New Colonies.

The interest which occasioned the first settlement of the different European colonies in America and the West Indies, was not altogether so plain and distinct as that which directed the establishment of those of ancient Greece and Rome.

All the different states of ancient Greece possessed, each of them, but a very small territory; and when the people in any one of them multiplied beyond what that territory could easily maintain, a part of them were sent in quest of a new habitation, in some remote and distant part of the world; the war-like neighbours who surrounded them on all sides, rendering it difficult for any of them to enlarge very much its territory at home. The colonies of the Dorians resorted chiefly to Italy and Sicily, which, in the times preceding the foundation of Rome, were inhabited by barbarous and uncivilized nations; those of the Ionians and Æolians, the two other great tribes of the Greeks, to Asia Minor and the islands of the Ægean sea, of which the inhabitants seem at that time to have been pretty much in the same state as those of Sicily and Italy. The mother city, though she considered the colony as a child, at all times entitled to great favour and assistance, and owing in return much gratitude and respect, yet considered it as an emancipated child, over whom she pretended to claim no direct authority or jurisdiction. The colony settled its own form of government, enacted its own laws, elected its own magistrates, and made peace or war with its neighbours, as an independent state, which had no occasion to wait for the approbation or consent of the mother city. Nothing can be more plain and distinct than the interest which directed every such establishment.

Rome, like most of the other ancient republics, was originally founded upon an agrarian law, which divided the public territory, in a certain proportion, among the different citizens who composed the state. The course of human affairs, by marriage, by succession, and by alienation, necessarily deranged this original division, and frequently threw the lands which had been allotted for the maintenance of many different families, into the possession of a single person. To remedy this disorder, for such it was supposed to be, a law was made, restricting the

quantity of land which any citizen could possess to five hundred *jugera*, about 350 English acres. This law, however, though we read of its having been executed upon one or two occasions, was either neglected or evaded, and the inequality of fortunes went on continually increasing. The greater part of the citizens had no land; and without it the manners and customs of those times rendered it difficult for a freeman to maintain his independency. In the present times, though a poor man has no land of his own, if he has a little stock, he may either farm the lands of another, or he may carry on some little retail trade; and if he has no stock, he may find employment either as a country labourer, or as an artificer. But among the ancient Romans, the lands of the rich were all cultivated by slaves, who wrought under an overseer, who was likewise a slave; so that a poor freeman had little chance of being employed either as a farmer or as a labourer. All trades and manufactures, too, even the retail trade, were carried on by the slaves of the rich for the benefit of their masters, whose wealth, authority, and protection, made it difficult for a poor freeman to maintain the competition against them. The citizens, therefore, who had no land, had scarce any other means of subsistence but the bounties of the candidates at the annual elections. The tribunes, when they had a mind to animate the people against the rich and the great, put them in mind of the ancient divisions of lands, and represented that law which restricted this sort of private property as the fundamental law of the republic. The people became clamorous to get land, and the rich and the great, we may believe, were perfectly determined not to give them any part of theirs. To satisfy them in some measure, therefore, they frequently proposed to send out a new colony. But conquering Rome was, even upon such occasions, under no necessity of turning out her citizens to seek their fortune, if one may so, through the wide world, without knowing where they were to settle. She assigned them lands generally in the conquered provinces of Italy, where, being within the dominions of the republic, they could never form any independent state, but were at best but a sort of corporation, which, though it had the power of enacting bye-laws for its own government, was at all times subject to the correction, jurisdiction, and legislative authority of the mother city. The sending out a colony of this kind not only gave some satisfaction to the people, but often established a sort of garrison, too, in a newly conquered province, of which the obedience might otherwise have been doubtful. A Roman colony, therefore, whether we consider the nature of the establishment itself, or the motives for making it, was altogether different from a Greek one. The words, accordingly, which in the original

languages denote those different establishments, have very different meanings. The Latin word (*colonia*) signifies simply a plantation. The Greek word (αποικια), on the contrary, signifies a separation of dwelling, a departure from home, a going out of the house. But though the Roman colonies were, in many respects, different from the Greek ones, the interest which prompted to establish them was equally plain and distinct. Both institutions derived their origin, either from irresistible necessity, or from clear and evident utility.

The establishment of the European colonies in America and the West Indies arose from no necessity; and though the utility which has resulted from them has been very great, it is not altogether so clear and evident. It was not understood at their first establishment, and was not the motive, either of that establishment, or of the discoveries which gave occasion to it; and the nature, extent, and limits of that utility, are not, perhaps, well understood at this day.

The Venetians, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, carried on a very advantageous commerce in spiceries and other East India goods, which they distributed among the other nations of Europe. They purchased them chiefly in Egypt, at that time under the dominion of the Mamelukes, the enemies of the Turks, of whom the Venetians were the enemies: and this union of interest, assisted by the money of Venice, formed such a connexion as gave the Venetians almost a monopoly of the trade.

The great profits of the Venetians tempted the avidity of the Portuguese. They had been endeavouring, during the course of the fifteenth century, to find out by sea a way to the countries from which the Moors brought them ivory and gold dust across the desert. They discovered the Madeiras, the Canaries, the Azores, the Cape de Verd islands, the coast of Guinea, that of Loango, Congo, Angola, and Benguela, and, finally, the Cape of Good Hope. They had long wished to share in the profitable traffic of the Venetians, and this last discovery opened to them a probable prospect of doing so. In 1497, Vasco de Gamo sailed from the port of Lisbon with a fleet of four ships, and, after a navigation of eleven months, arrived upon the coast of Indostan; and thus completed a course of discoveries which had been pursued with great steadiness, and with very little interruption, for near a century together.

Some years before this, while the expectations of Europe were in suspense about the projects of the Portuguese, of which the success appeared yet to be doubtful, a Genoese pilot formed the yet more daring project of sailing to the East Indies by the west. The situation of those

countries was at that time very imperfectly known in Europe. The few European travellers who had been there, had magnified the distance, perhaps through simplicity and ignorance; what was really very great, appearing almost infinite to those who could not measure it; or, perhaps, in order to increase somewhat more the marvellous of their own adventures in visiting regions so immensely remote from Europe. The longer the way was by the east, Columbus very justly concluded, the shorter it would be by the west. He proposed, therefore, to take that way, as both the shortest and the surest, and he had the good fortune to convince Isabella of Castile of the probability of his project. He sailed from the port of Palos in August 1492, near five years before the expedition of Vasco de Gamo set out from Portugal; and, after a voyage of between two and three months, discovered first some of the small Bahama or Lucyan islands, and afterwards the great island of St. Domingo.

But the countries which Columbus discovered, either in this or in any of his subsequent voyages, had no resemblance to those which he had gone in quest of. Instead of the wealth, cultivation, and populousness of China and Indostan, he found, in St. Domingo, and in all the other parts of the new world which he ever visited, nothing but a country quite covered with wood, uncultivated, and inhabited only by some tribes of naked and miserable savages. He was not very willing, however, to believe that they were not the same with some of the countries described by Marco Polo, the first European who had visited, or at least had left behind him any description of China or the East Indies; and a very slight resemblance, such as that which he found between the name of Cibao, a mountain in St. Domingo, and that of Cipange, mentioned by Marco Polo, was frequently sufficient to make him return to this favourite prepossession, though contrary to the clearest evidence. In his letters to Ferdinand and Isabella, he called the countries which he had discovered the Indies. He entertained no doubt but that they were the extremity of those which had been described by Marco Polo, and that they were not very distant from the Ganges, or from the countries which had been conquered by Alexander. Even when at last convinced that they were different, he still flattered himself that those rich countries were at no great distance; and in a subsequent voyage, accordingly, went in quest of them along the coast of Terra Firma, and towards the Isthmus of Darien.

In consequence of this mistake of Columbus, the name of the Indies has stuck to those unfortunate countries ever since; and when it was at last clearly discovered that the new were altogether different from the old

Indies, the former were called the West, in contradistinction to the latter, which were called the East Indies.

It was of importance to Columbus, however, that the countries which he had discovered, whatever they were, should be represented to the court of Spain as of very great consequence; and, in what constitutes the real riches of every country, the animal and vegetable productions of the soil, there was at that time nothing which could well justify such a representation of them.

The cori, something between a rat and a rabbit, and supposed by Mr Buffon to be the same with the aperea of Brazil, was the largest viviparous quadruped in St. Domingo. This species seems never to have been very numerous; and the dogs and cats of the Spaniards are said to have long ago almost entirely extirpated it, as well as some other tribes of a still smaller size. These, however, together with a pretty large lizard, called the ivana or iguana, constituted the principal part of the animal food which the land afforded.

The vegetable food of the inhabitants, though, from their want of industry, not very abundant, was not altogether so scanty. It consisted in Indian corn, yams, potatoes, bananas, &c., plants which were then altogether unknown in Europe, and which have never since been very much esteemed in it, or supposed to yield a sustenance equal to what is drawn from the common sorts of grain and pulse, which have been cultivated in this part of the world time out of mind.

The cotton plant, indeed, afforded the material of a very important manufacture, and was at that time, to Europeans, undoubtedly the most valuable of all the vegetable productions of those islands. But though, in the end of the fifteenth century, the muslins and other cotton goods of the East Indies were much esteemed in every part of Europe, the cotton manufacture itself was not cultivated in any part of it. Even this production, therefore, could not at that time appear in the eyes of Europeans to be of very great consequence.

Finding nothing, either in the animals or vegetables of the newly discovered countries which could justify a very advantageous representation of them, Columbus turned his view towards their minerals; and in the richness of their productions of this third kingdom, he flattered himself he had found a full compensation for the insignificancy of those of the other two. The little bits of gold with which the inhabitants ornamented their dress, and which, he was informed, they frequently found in the rivulets and torrents which fell from the mountains, were sufficient to satisfy him that those mountains abounded

with the richest gold mines. St. Domingo, therefore, was represented as a country abounding with gold, and upon that account (according to the prejudices not only of the present times, but of those times), an inexhaustible source of real wealth to the crown and kingdom of Spain. When Columbus, upon his return from his first voyage, was introduced with a sort of triumphal honours to the sovereigns of Castile and Arragon, the principal productions of the countries which he had discovered were carried in solemn procession before him. The only valuable part of them consisted in some little fillets, bracelets, and other ornaments of gold, and in some bales of cotton. The rest were mere objects of vulgar wonder and curiosity; some reeds of an extraordinary size, some birds of a very beautiful plumage, and some stuffed skins of the huge alligator and manati; all of which were preceded by six or seven of the wretched natives, whose singular colour and appearance added greatly to the novelty of the show.

In consequence of the representations of Columbus, the council of Castile determined to take possession of the countries of which the inhabitants were plainly incapable of defending themselves. The pious purpose of converting them to Christianity sanctified the injustice of the project. But the hope of finding treasures of gold there was the sole motive which prompted to undertake it; and to give this motive the greater weight, it was proposed by Columbus, that the half of all the gold and silver that should be found there, should belong to the crown. This proposal was approved of by the council.

As long as the whole, or the greater part of the gold which the first adventurers imported into Europe was got by so very easy a method as the plundering of the defenceless natives, it was not perhaps very difficult to pay even this heavy tax; but when the natives were once fairly stript of all that they had, which, in St. Domingo, and in all the other countries discovered by Columbus, was done completely in six or eight years, and when, in order to find more, it had become necessary to dig for it in the mines, there was no longer any possibility of paying this tax. The rigorous exaction of it, accordingly, first occasioned, it is said, the total abandoning of the mines of St. Domingo, which have never been wrought since. It was soon reduced, therefore, to a third; then to a fifth; afterwards to a tenth; and at last to a twentieth part of the gross produce of the gold mines. The tax upon silver continued for a long time to be a fifth of the gross produce. It was reduced to a tenth only in the course of the present century. But the first adventurers do not appear to have been

much interested about silver. Nothing less precious than gold seemed worthy of their attention.

All the other enterprizes of the Spaniards in the New World, subsequent to those of Columbus, seem to have been prompted by the same motive. It was the sacred thirst of gold that carried Ovieda, Nicuessa, and Vasco Nugnes de Balboa, to the Isthmus of Darien; that carried Cortes to Mexico, Almagro and Pizarro to Chili and Peru. When those adventurers arrived upon any unknown coast, their first inquiry was always if there was any gold to be found there; and according to the information which they received concerning this particular, they determined either to quit the country or to settle in it.

Of all those expensive and uncertain projects, however, which bring bankruptcy up on the greater part of the people who engage in them, there is none, perhaps, more perfectly ruinous than the search after new silver and gold mines. It is, perhaps, the most disadvantageous lottery in the world, or the one in which the gain of those who draw the prizes bears the least proportion to the loss of those who draw the blanks; for though the prizes are few, and the blanks many, the common price of a ticket is the whole fortune of a very rich man. Projects of mining, instead of replacing the capital employed in them, together with the ordinary profits of stock, commonly absorb both capital and profit. They are the projects, therefore, to which, of all others, a prudent lawgiver, who desired to increase the capital of his nation, would least choose to give any extraordinary encouragement, or to turn towards them a greater share of that capital than what would go to them of its own accord. Such, in reality, is the absurd confidence which almost all men have in their own good fortune, that wherever there is the least probability of success, too great a share of it is apt to go to them of its own accord.

But though the judgment of sober reason and experience concerning such projects has always been extremely unfavourable, that of human avidity has commonly been quite otherwise. The same passion which has suggested to so many people the absurd idea of the philosopher’s stone, has suggested to others the equally absurd one of immense rich mines of gold and silver. They did not consider that the value of those metals has, in all ages and nations, arisen chiefly from their scarcity, and that their scarcity has arisen from the very small quantities of them which nature has anywhere deposited in one place, from the hard and intractable substances with which she has almost everywhere surrounded those small quantities, and consequently from the labour and expense which are everywhere necessary in order to penetrate, and get at them. They

flattered themselves that veins of those metals might in many places be found, as large and as abundant as those which are commonly found of lead, or copper, or tin, or iron. The dream of Sir Walter Raleigh, concerning the golden city and country of El Dorado, may satisfy us, that even wise men are not always exempt from such strange delusions. More than a hundred years after the death of that great man, the Jesuit Gumila was still convinced of the reality of that wonderful country, and expressed, with great warmth, and, I dare say, with great sincerity, how happy he should be to carry the light of the gospel to a people who could so well reward the pious labours of their missionary.

In the countries first discovered by the Spaniards, no gold or silver mines are at present known which are supposed to be worth the working. The quantities of those metals which the first adventurers are said to have found there, had probably been very much magnified, as well as the fertility of the mines which were wrought immediately after the first discovery. What those adventurers were reported to have found, however, was sufficient to inflame the avidity of all their countrymen. Every Spaniard who sailed to America expected to find an El Dorado. Fortune, too, did upon this what she has done upon very few other occasions. She realized in some measure the extravagant hopes of her votaries; and in the discovery and conquest of Mexico and Peru (of which the one happened about thirty, and the other about forty, years after the first expedition of Columbus), she presented them with something not very unlike that profusion of the precious metals which they sought for.

A project of commerce to the East Indies, therefore, gave occasion to the first discovery of the West. A project of conquest gave occasion to all the establishments of the Spaniards in those newly discovered countries. The motive which excited them to this conquest was a project of gold and silver mines; and a course of accidents which no human wisdom could foresee, rendered this project much more successful than the undertakers had any reasonable grounds for expecting.

The first adventurers of all the other nations of Europe who attempted to make settlements in America, were animated by the like chimerical views; but they were not equally successful. It was more than a hundred years after the first settlement of the Brazils, before any silver, gold, or diamond mines, were discovered there. In the English, French, Dutch, and Danish colonies, none have ever yet been discovered, at least none that are at present supposed to be worth the working. The first English settlers in North America, however, offered a fifth of all the gold and

silver which should be found there to the king, as a motive for granting them their patents. In the patents of Sir Walter Raleigh, to the London and Plymouth companies, to the council of Plymouth, &c. this fifth was accordingly reserved to the crown. To the expectation of finding gold and silver mines, those first settlers, too, joined that of discovering a north-west passage to the East Indies. They have hitherto been disappointed in both.

PART II.

Causes of the Prosperity of New Colonies.

The colony of a civilized nation which takes possession either of a waste country, or of one so thinly inhabited that the natives easily give place to the new settlers, advances more rapidly to wealth and greatness than any other human society.

The colonies carry out with them a knowledge of agriculture and of other useful arts, superior to what can grow up of its own accord, in the course of many centuries, among savage and barbarous nations. They carry out with them, too, the habit of subordination, some notion of the regular government which takes place in their own country, of the system of laws which support it, and of a regular administration of justice; and they naturally establish something of the same kind in the new settlement. But among savage and barbarous nations, the natural progress of law and government is still slower than the natural progress of arts, after law and government have been so far established as is necessary for their protection. Every colonist gets more land than he can possibly cultivate. He has no rent, and scarce any taxes, to pay. No landlord shares with him in its produce, and, the share of the sovereign is commonly but a trifle. He has every motive to render as great as possible a produce which is thus to be almost entirely his own. But his land is commonly so extensive, that, with all his own industry, and with all the industry of other people whom he can get to employ, he can seldom make it produce the tenth part of what it is capable of producing. He is eager, therefore, to collect labourers from all quarters, and to reward them with the most liberal wages. But those liberal wages, joined to the plenty and cheapness of land, soon make those labourers leave him, in order to become landlords themselves, and to reward with equal liberality other labourers, who soon leave them for the same reason that they left their first master. The liberal reward of labour encourages marriage. The children, during

the tender years of infancy, are well fed and properly taken care of; and when they are grown up, the value of their labour greatly overpays their maintenance. When arrived at maturity, the high price of labour, and the low price of land, enable them to establish themselves in the same manner as their fathers did before them.

In other countries, rent and profit eat up wages, and the two superior orders of people oppress the inferior one; but in new colonies, the interest of the two superior orders obliges them to treat the inferior one with more generosity and humanity, at least where that inferior one is not in a state of slavery. Waste lands, of the greatest natural fertility, are to be had for a trifle. The increase of revenue which the proprietor, who is always the undertaker, expects from their improvement, constitutes his profit, which, in these circumstances, is commonly very great; but this great profit cannot be made, without employing the labour of other people in clearing and cultivating the land; and the disproportion between the great extent of the land and the small number of the people, which commonly takes place in new colonies, makes it difficult for him to get this labour. He does not, therefore, dispute about wages, but is willing to employ labour at any price. The high wages of labour encourage population. The cheapness and plenty of good land encourage improvement, and enable the proprietor to pay those high wages. In those wages consists almost the whole price of the land; and though they are high, considered as the wages of labour, they are low, considered as the price of what is so very valuable. What encourages the progress of population and improvement, encourages that of real wealth and greatness.

The progress of many of the ancient Greek colonies towards wealth and greatness seems accordingly to have been very rapid. In the course of a century or two, several of them appear to have rivalled, and even to have surpassed, their mother cities. Syracuse and Agrigentum in Sicily, Tarentum and Locri in Italy, Ephesus and Miletus in Lesser Asia, appear, by all accounts, to have been at least equal to any of the cities of ancient Greece. Though posterior in their establishment, yet all the arts of refinement, philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, seem to have been cultivated as early, and to have been improved as highly in them as in any part of the mother country. The schools of the two oldest Greek philosophers, those of Thales and Pythagoras, were established, it is remarkable, not in ancient Greece, but the one in an Asiatic, the other in an Italian colony. All those colonies had established themselves in countries inhabited by savage and barbarous nations, who easily gave

place to the new settlers. They had plenty of good land; and as they were altogether independent of the mother city, they were at liberty to manage their own affairs in the way that they judged was most suitable to their own interest.

The history of the Roman colonies is by no means so brilliant. Some of them, indeed, such as Florence, have, in the course of many ages, and after the fall of the mother city, grown up to be considerable states. But the progress of no one of them seems ever to have been very rapid. They were all established in conquered provinces, which in most cases had been fully inhabited before. The quantity of land assigned to each colonist was seldom very considerable, and, as the colony was not independent, they were not always at liberty to manage their own affairs in the way that they judged was most suitable to their own interest.

In the plenty of good land, the European colonies established in America and the West Indies resemble, and even greatly surpass, those of ancient Greece. In their dependency upon the mother state, they resemble those of ancient Rome; but their great distance from Europe has in all of them alleviated more or less the effects of this dependency. Their situation has placed them less in the view, and less in the power of their mother country. In pursuing their interest their own way, their conduct has upon many occasions been overlooked, either because not known or not understood in Europe; and upon some occasions it has been fairly suffered and submitted to, because their distance rendered it difficult to restrain it. Even the violent and arbitrary government of Spain has, upon many occasion, been obliged to recall or soften the orders which had been given for the government of her colonies, for fear of a general insurrection. The progress of all the European colonies in wealth, population, and improvement, has accordingly been very great.

The crown of Spain, by its share of the gold and silver, derived some revenue from its colonies from the moment of their first establishment. It was a revenue, too, of a nature to excite in human avidity the most extravagant expectation of still greater riches. The Spanish colonies, therefore, from the moment of their first establishment, attracted very much the attention of their mother country; while those of the other European nations were for a long time in a great measure neglected. The former did not, perhaps, thrive the better in consequence of this attention, nor the latter the worse in consequence of this neglect. In proportion to the extent of the country which they in some measure possess, the Spanish colonies are considered as less populous and thriving than those of almost any other European nation. The progress even of the Spanish

colonies, however, in population and improvement, has certainly been very rapid and very great. The city of Lima, founded since the conquest, is represented by Ulloa as containing fifty thousand inhabitants near thirty years ago. Quito, which had been but a miserable hamlet of Indians, is represented by the same author as in his time equally populous. Gemel i Carreri, a pretended traveller, it is said, indeed, but who seems everywhere to have written upon extreme good information, represents the city of Mexico as containing a hundred thousand inhabitants; a number which, in spite of all the exaggerations of the Spanish writers, is probably more than five times greater than what it contained in the time of Montezuma. These numbers exceed greatly these of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, the three greatest cities of the English colonies. Before the conquest of the Spaniards, there were no cattle fit for draught, either in Mexico or Peru. The lama was their only beast of burden, and its strength seems to have been a good deal inferior to that of a common ass. The plough was unknown among them. They were ignorant of the use of iron. They had no coined money, nor any established instrument of commerce of any kind. Their commerce was carried on by barter. A sort of wooden spade was their principal instrument of agriculture. Sharp stones served them for knives and hatchets to cut with; fish bones, and the hard sinews of certain animals, served them with needles to sew with; and these seem to have been their principal instruments of trade. In this state of things, it seems impossible that either of those empires could have been so much improved or so well cultivated as at present, when they are plentifully furnished with all sorts of European cattle, and when the use of iron, of the plough, and of many of the arts of Europe, have been introduced among them. But the populousness of every country must be in proportion to the degree of its improvement and cultivation. In spite of the cruel destruction of the natives which followed the conquest, these two great empires are probably more populous now than they ever were before; and the people are surely very different; for we must acknowledge, I apprehend, that the Spanish creoles are in many respects superior to the ancient Indians.

After the settlements of the Spaniards, that of the Portuguese in Brazil is the oldest of any European nation in America. But as for a long time after the first discovery neither gold nor silver mines were found in it, and as it afforded upon that account little or no revenue to the crown, it was for a long time in a great measure neglected; and during this state of neglect, it grew up to be a great and powerful colony. While Portugal was under the dominion of Spain, Brazil was attacked by the Dutch, who

got possession of seven of the fourteen provinces into which it is divided. They expected soon to conquer the other seven, when Portugal recovered its independency by the elevation of the family of Braganza to the throne. The Dutch, then, as enemies to the Spaniards, became friends to the Portuguese, who were likewise the enemies of the Spaniards. They agreed, therefore, to leave that part of Brazil which they had not conquered to the king of Portugal, who agreed to leave that part which they had conquered to them, as a matter not worth disputing about, with such good allies. But the Dutch government soon began to oppress the Portuguese colonists, who, instead of amusing themselves with complaints, took arms against their new masters, and by their own valour and resolution, with the connivance, indeed, but without any avowed assistance from the mother country, drove them out of Brazil. The Dutch, therefore, finding it impossible to keep any part of the country to themselves, were contented that it should be entirely restored to the crown of Portugal. In this colony there are said to be more than six hundred thousand people, either Portuguese or descended from Portuguese, creoles, mulattoes, and a mixed race between Portuguese and Brazilians. No one colony in America is supposed to contain so great a number of people of European extraction.

Towards the end of the fifteenth, and during the greater part of the sixteenth century, Spain and Portugal were the two great naval powers upon the ocean; for though the commerce of Venice extended to every part of Europe, its fleet had scarce ever sailed beyond the Mediterranean. The Spaniards, in virtue of the first discovery, claimed all America as their own; and though they could not hinder so great a naval power as that of Portugal from settling in Brazil, such was at that time the terror of their name, that the greater part of the other nations of Europe were afraid to establish themselves in any other part of that great continent. The French, who attempted to settle in Florida, were all murdered by the Spaniards. But the declension of the naval power of this latter nation, in consequence of the defeat or miscarriage of what they called their invincible armada, which happened towards the end of the sixteenth century, put it out of their power to obstruct any longer the settlements of the other European nations. In the course of the seventeenth century, therefore, the English, French, Dutch, Danes, and Swedes, all the great nations who had any ports upon the ocean, attempted to make some settlements in the new world.

The Swedes established themselves in New Jersey; and the number of Swedish families still to be found there sufficiently demonstrates, that

this colony was very likely to prosper, had it been protected by the mother country. But being neglected by Sweden, it was soon swallowed up by the Dutch colony of New York, which again, in 1674, fell under the dominion of the English.

The small islands of St. Thomas and Santa Cruz, are the only countries in the new world that have been possessed by the Danes. These little settlements, too, were under the government of an exclusive company, which had the sole right, both of purchasing the surplus produce of the colonies, and of supplying them with such goods of other countries as they wanted, and which, therefore, both in its purchases and sales, had not only the power of oppressing them, but the greatest temptation to do so. The government of an exclusive company of merchants is, perhaps, the worst of all governments for any country whatever. It was not, however, able to stop altogether the progress of these colonies, though it rendered it more slow and languid. The late king of Denmark dissolved this company, and since that time the prosperity of these colonies has been very great.

The Dutch settlements in the West, as well as those in the East Indies, were originally put under the government of an exclusive company. The progress of some of them, therefore, though it has been considerable in comparison with that of almost any country that has been long peopled and established, has been languid and slow in comparison with that of the greater part of new colonies. The colony of Surinam, though very considerable, is still inferior to the greater part of the sugar colonies of the other European nations. The colony of Nova Belgia, now divided into the two provinces of New York and New Jersey, would probably have soon become considerable too, even though it had remained under the government of the Dutch. The plenty and cheapness of good land are such powerful causes of prosperity, that the very worst government is scarce capable of checking altogether the efficacy of their operation. The great distance, too, from the mother country, would enable the colonists to evade more or less, by smuggling, the monopoly which the company enjoyed against them. At present, the company allows all Dutch ships to trade to Surinam, upon paying two and a-half per cent. upon the value of their cargo for a license; and only reserves to itself exclusively, the direct trade from Africa to America, which consists almost entirely in the slave trade. This relaxation in the exclusive privileges of the company, is probably the principal cause of that degree of prosperity which that colony at present enjoys. Curaçoa and Eustatia, the two principal islands belonging to the Dutch, are free ports, open to the ships of all nations;

and this freedom, in the midst of better colonies, whose ports are open to those of one nation only, has been the great cause of the prosperity of those two barren islands.

The French colony of Canada was, during the greater part of the last century, and some part of the present, under the government of an exclusive company. Under so unfavourable administration, its progress was necessarily very slow, in comparison with that of other new colonies; but it became much more rapid when this company was dissolved, after the fall of what is called the Mississippi scheme. When the English got possession of this country, they found in it near double the number of inhabitants which father Charlevoix had assigned to it between twenty and thirty years before. That jesuit had travelled over the whole country, and had no inclination to represent it as less inconsiderable than it really was.

The French colony of St. Domingo was established by pirates and freebooters, who, for a long time, neither required the protection, nor acknowledged the authority of France; and when that race of banditti became so far citizens as to acknowledge this authority, it was for a long time necessary to exercise it with very great gentleness. During this period, the population and improvement of this colony increased very fast. Even the oppression of the exclusive company, to which it was for some time subjected with all the other colonies of France, though it no doubt retarded, had not been able to stop its progress altogether. The course of its prosperity returned as soon as it was relieved from that oppression. It is now the most important of the sugar colonies of the West Indies, and its produce is said to be greater than that of all the English sugar colonies put together. The other sugar colonies of France are in general all very thriving.

But there are no colonies of which the progress has been more rapid than that of the English in North America.

Plenty of good land, and liberty to manage their own affairs their own way, seem to be the two great causes of the prosperity of all new colonies.

In the plenty of good land, the English colonies of North America, though no doubt very abundantly provided, are, however, inferior to those of the Spaniards and Portuguese, and not superior to some of those possessed by the French before the last war. But the political institutions of the English colonies have been more favourable to the improvement and cultivation of this land, than those of the other three nations.

First, The engrossing of uncultivated land, though it has by no means been prevented altogether, has been more restrained in the English colonies than in any other. The colony law, which imposes upon every proprietor the obligation of improving and cultivating, within a limited time, a certain proportion of his lands, and which, in case of failure, declares those neglected lands grantable to any other person; though it has not perhaps been very strictly executed, has, however, had some effect.

Secondly, In Pennsylvania there is no right of primogeniture, and lands, like moveables, are divided equally among all the children of the family. In three of the provinces of New England, the oldest has only a double share, as in the Mosaical law. Though in those provinces, therefore, too great a quantity of land should sometimes be engrossed by a particular individual, it is likely, in the course of a generation or two, to be sufficiently divided again. In the other English colonies, indeed, the right of primogeniture takes place, as in the law of England: But in all the English colonies, the tenure of the lands, which are all held by free soccage, facilitates alienation; and the grantee of an extensive tract of land generally finds it for his interest to alienate, as fast as he can, the greater part of it, reserving only a small quit-rent. In the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, what is called the right of majorazzo takes place in the succession of all those great estates to which any title of honour is annexed. Such estates go all to one person, and are in effect entailed and unalienable. The French colonies, indeed, are subject to the custom of Paris, which, in the inheritance of land, is much more favourable to the younger children than the law of England. But, in the French colonies, if any part of an estate, held by the noble tenure of chivalry and homage, is alienated, it is, for a limited time, subject to the right of redemption, either by the heir of the superior, or by the heir of the family; and all the largest estates of the country are held by such noble tenures, which necessarily embarrass alienation. But, in a new colony, a great uncultivated estate is likely to be much more speedily divided by alienation than by succession. The plenty and cheapness of good land, it has already been observed, are the principal causes of the rapid prosperity of new colonies. The engrossing of land, in effect, destroys this plenty and cheapness. The engrossing of uncultivated land, besides, is the greatest obstruction to its improvement; but the labour that is employed in the improvement and cultivation of land affords the greatest and most valuable produce to the society. The produce of labour, in this case, pays not only its own wages and the profit of the stock which

employs it, but the rent of the land too upon which it is employed. The labour of the English colonies, therefore, being more employed in the improvement and cultivation of land, is likely to afford a greater and more valuable produce than that of any of the other three nations, which, by the engrossing of land, is more or less diverted towards other employments.

Thirdly, The labour of the English colonists is not only likely to afford a greater and more valuable produce, but, in consequence of the moderation of their taxes, a greater proportion of this produce belongs to themselves, which they may store up and employ in putting into motion a still greater quantity of labour. The English colonists have never yet contributed any thing towards the defence of the mother country, or towards the support of its civil government. They themselves, on the contrary, have hitherto been defended almost entirely at the expense of the mother country; but the expense of fleets and armies is out of all proportion greater than the necessary expense of civil government. The expense of their own civil government has always been very moderate. It has generally been confined to what was necessary for paying competent salaries to the governor, to the judges, and to some other officers of police, and for maintaining a few of the must useful public works. The expense of the civil establishment of Massachusetts Bay, before the commencement of the present disturbances, used to be but about L.18,000 a-year; that of New Hampshire and Rhode Island, L.3500 each; that of Connecticut, L.4000; that of New York and Pennsylvania, L.4500 each; that of New Jersey, L.1200; that of Virginia and South Carolina, L.8000 each. The civil establishments of Nova Scotia and Georgia are partly supported by an annual grant of parliament; but Nova Scotia pays, besides, about L.7000 a-year towards the public expenses of the colony, and Georgia about L.2500 a-year. All the different civil establishments in North America, in short, exclusive of those of Maryland and North Carolina, of which no exact account has been got, did not, before the commencement of the present disturbances, cost the inhabitants above L.64,700 a-year; an ever memorable example, at how small an expense three millions of people may not only be governed but well governed. The must important part of the expense of government, indeed, that of defence and protection, has constantly fallen upon the mother country. The ceremonial, too, of the civil government in the colonies, upon the reception of a new governor, upon the opening of a new assembly, &c. though sufficiently decent, is not accompanied with any expensive pomp or parade. Their ecclesiastical government is conducted upon a plan

equally frugal. Tithes are unknown among them; and their clergy, who are far from being numerous, are maintained either by moderate stipends, or by the voluntary contributions of the people. The power of Spain and Portugal, on the contrary, derives some support from the taxes levied upon their colonies. France, indeed, has never drawn any considerable revenue from its colonies, the taxes which it levies upon them being generally spent among them. But the colony government of all these three nations is conducted upon a much more extensive plan, and is accompanied with a much more expensive ceremonial. The sums spent upon the reception of a new viceroy of Peru, for example, have frequently been enormous. Such ceremonials are not only real taxes paid by the rich colonists upon those particular occasions, but they serve to introduce among them the habit of vanity and expense upon all other occasions. They are not only very grievous occasional taxes, but they contribute to establish perpetual taxes, of the same kind, still more grievous; the ruinous taxes of private luxury and extravagance. In the colonies of all those three nations, too, the ecclesiastical government is extremely oppressive. Tithes take place in all of them, and are levied with the utmost rigour in those of Spain and Portugal. All of them, besides, are oppressed with numerous race of mendicant friars, whose beggary being not only licensed but consecrated by religion, is a most grievous tax upon the poor people, who are most carefully taught that it is a duty to give, and a very great sin to refuse them their charity. Over and above all this, the clergy are, in all of them, the greatest engrossers of land.

Fourthly, In the disposal of their surplus produce, or of what is over and above their own consumption, the English colonies have been more favoured, and have been allowed a more extensive market, than those of any other European nation. Every European nation has endeavoured, more or less, to monopolize to itself the commerce of its colonies, and, upon that account, has prohibited the ships of foreign nations from trading to them, and has prohibited them from importing European goods from any foreign nation. But the manner in which this monopoly has been exercised in different nations, has been very different.

Some nations have given up the whole commerce of their colonies to an exclusive company, of whom the colonists were obliged to buy all such European goods as they wanted, and to whom they were obliged to sell the whole of their surplus produce. It was the interest of the company, therefore, not only to sell the former as dear, and to buy the latter as cheap as possible, but to buy no more of the latter, even at this

low price, than what they could dispose of for a very high price in Europe. It was their interest not only to degrade in all cases the value of the surplus produce of the colony, but in many cases to discourage and keep down the natural increase of its quantity. Of all the expedients that can well be contrived to stunt the natural growth of a new colony, that of an exclusive company is undoubtedly the most effectual. This, however, has been the policy of Holland, though their company, in the course of the present century, has given up in many respects the exertion of their exclusive privilege. This, too, was the policy of Denmark, till the reign of the late king. It has occasionally been the policy of France; and of late, since 1755, after it had been abandoned by all other nations on account of its absurdity, it has become the policy of Portugal, with regard at least to two of the principal provinces of Brazil, Pernambucco, and Marannon.

Other nations, without establishing an exclusive company, have confined the whole commerce of their colonies to a particular port of the mother country, from whence no ship was allowed to sail, but either in a fleet and at a particular season, or, if single, in consequence of a particular license, which in most cases was very well paid for. This policy opened, indeed, the trade of the colonies to all the natives of the mother country, provided they traded from the proper port, at the proper season, and in the proper vessels. But as all the different merchants, who joined their stocks in order to fit out those licensed vessels, would find it for their interest to act in concert, the trade which was carried on in this manner would necessarily be conducted very nearly upon the same principles as that of an exclusive company. The profit of those merchants would be almost equally exorbitant and oppressive. The colonies would be ill supplied, and would be obliged both to buy very dear, and to sell very cheap. This, however, till within these few years, had always been the policy of Spain; and the price of all European goods, accordingly, is said to have been enormous in the Spanish West Indies. At Quito, we are told by Ulloa, a pound of iron sold for about 4s. 6d., and a pound of steel for about 6s. 9d. sterling. But it is chiefly in order to purchase European goods that the colonies part with their own produce. The more, therefore, they pay for the one, the less they really get for the other, and the dearness of the one is the same thing with the cheapness of the other. The policy of Portugal is, in this respect, the same as the ancient policy of Spain, with regard to all its colonies, except Pernambucco and Marannon; and with regard to these it has lately adopted a still worse.

Other nations leave the trade of their colonies free to all their subjects, who may carry it on from all the different ports of the mother country,

and who have occasion for no other license than the common despatches of the custom-house. In this case the number and dispersed situation of the different traders renders it impossible for them to enter into any general combination, and their competition is sufficient to hinder them from making very exorbitant profits. Under so liberal a policy, the colonies are enabled both to sell their own produce, and to buy the goods of Europe at a reasonable price; but since the dissolution of the Plymouth company, when our colonies were but in their infancy, this has always been the policy of England. It has generally, too, been that of France, and has been uniformly so since the dissolution of what in England is commonly called their Mississippi company. The profits of the trade, therefore, which France and England carry on with their colonies, though no doubt somewhat higher than if the competition were free to all other nations, are, however, by no means exorbitant; and the price of European goods, accordingly, is not extravagantly high in the greater part of the colonies of either of those nations.

In the exportation of their own surplus produce, too, it is only with regard to certain commodities that the colonies of Great Britain are confined to the market of the mother country. These commodities having been enumerated in the act of navigation, and in some other subsequent acts, have upon that account been called *enumerated commodities*. The rest are called *non-enumerated*, and may be exported directly to other countries, provided it is in British or plantation ships, of which the owners and three fourths of the mariners are British subjects.

Among the non-enumerated commodities are some of the most important productions of America and the West Indies, grain of all sorts, lumber, salt provisions, fish, sugar, and rum.

Grain is naturally the first and principal object of the culture of all new colonies. By allowing them a very extensive market for it, the law encourages them to extend this culture much beyond the consumption of a thinly inhabited country, and thus to provide beforehand an ample subsistence for a continually increasing population.

In a country quite covered with wood, where timber consequently is of little or no value, the expense of clearing the ground is the principal obstacle to improvement. By allowing the colonies a very extensive market for their lumber, the law endeavours to facilitate improvement by raising the price of a commodity which would otherwise be of little value, and thereby enabling them to make some profit of what would otherwise be mere expense.

In a country neither half peopled nor half cultivated, cattle naturally multiply beyond the consumption of the inhabitants, and are often, upon that account, of little or no value. But it is necessary, it has already been shown, that the price of cattle should bear a certain proportion to that of corn, before the greater part of the lands of any country can be improved. By allowing to American cattle, in all shapes, dead and alive, a very extensive market, the law endeavours to raise the value of a commodity, of which the high price is so very essential to improvement. The good effects of this liberty, however, must be somewhat diminished by the 4th of Geo. III. c. 15, which puts hides and skins among the enumerated commodities and thereby tends to reduce the value of American cattle.

To increase the shipping and naval power of Great Britain by the extension of the fisheries of our colonies, is an object which the legislature seems to have had almost constantly in view. Those fisheries, upon this account, have had all the encouragement which freedom can give them, and they have flourished accordingly. The New England fishery, in particular, was, before the late disturbances, one of the most important, perhaps, in the world. The whale fishery which, notwithstanding an extravagant bounty, is in Great Britain carried on to so little purpose, that in the opinion of many people (which I do not, however, pretend to warrant), the whole produce does not much exceed the value of the bounties which are annually paid for it, is in New England carried on, without any bounty, to a very great extent. Fish is one of the principal articles with which the North Americans trade to Spain, Portugal, and the Mediterranean.

Sugar was originally an enumerated commodity, which could only be exported to Great Britain; but in 1731, upon a representation of the sugar-planters, its exportation was permitted to all parts of the world. The restrictions, however, with which this liberty was granted, joined to the high price of sugar in Great Britain, have rendered it in a great measure ineffectual. Great Britain and her colonies still continue to be almost the sole market for all sugar produced in the British plantations. Their consumption increases so fast, that, though in consequence of the increasing improvement of Jamaica, as well as of the ceded islands, the importation of sugar has increased very greatly within these twenty years, the exportation to foreign countries is said to be not much greater than before.

Rum is a very important article in the trade which the Americans carry on to the coast of Africa, from which they bring back negro slaves in return.

If the whole surplus produce of America, in grain of all sorts, in salt provisions, and in fish, had been put into the enumeration, and thereby forced into the market of Great Britain, it would have interfered too much with the produce of the industry of our own people. It was probably not so much from any regard to the interest of America, as from a jealousy of this interference, that those important commodities have not only been kept out of the enumeration, but that the importation into Great Britain of all grain, except rice, and of all salt provisions, has, in the ordinary state of the law, been prohibited.

The non-enumerated commodities could originally be exported to all parts of the world. Lumber and rice having been once put into the enumeration, when they were afterwards taken out of it, were confined, as to the European market, to the countries that lie south of Cape Finisterre. By the 6th of George III. c. 52, all non-enumerated commodities were subjected to the like restriction. The parts of Europe which lie south of Cape Finisterre are not manufacturing countries, and we are less jealous of the colony ships carrying home from them any manufactures which could interfere with our own.

The enumerated commodities are of two sorts; first, such as are either the peculiar produce of America, or as cannot be produced, or at least are not produced in the mother country. Of this kind are molasses, coffee, cocoa-nuts, tobacco, pimento, ginger, whale-fins, raw silk, cotton, wool, beaver, and other peltry of America, indigo, fustick, and other dyeing woods; secondly, such as are not the peculiar produce of America, but which are, and may be produced in the mother country, though not in such quantities as to supply the greater part of her demand, which is principally supplied from foreign countries. Of this kind are all naval stores, masts, yards, and bowsprits, tar, pitch, and turpentine, pig and bar iron, copper ore, hides and skins, pot and pearl ashes. The largest importation of commodities of the first kind could not discourage the growth, or interfere with the sale, of any part of the produce of the mother country. By confining them to the home market, our merchants, it was expected, would not only be enabled to buy them cheaper in the plantations, and consequently to sell them with a better profit at home, but to establish between the plantations and foreign countries an advantageous carrying trade, of which Great Britain was necessarily to be the centre or emporium, as the European country into which those commodities were first to be imported. The importation of commodities of the second kind might be so managed too, it was supposed, as to interfere, not with the sale of those of the same kind which were

produced at home, but with that of those which were imported from foreign countries; because, by means of proper duties, they might be rendered always somewhat dearer than the former, and yet a good deal cheaper than the latter. By confining such commodities to the home market, therefore, it was proposed to discourage the produce, not of Great Britain, but of some foreign countries with which the balance of trade was believed to be unfavourable to Great Britain.

The prohibition of exporting from the colonies to any other country but Great Britain, masts, yards, and bowsprits, tar, pitch, and turpentine, naturally tended to lower the price of timber in the colonies, and consequently to increase the expense of clearing their lands, the principal obstacle to their improvement. But about the beginning of the present century, in 1703, the pitch and tar company of Sweden endeavoured to raise the price of their commodities to Great Britain, by prohibiting their exportation, except in their own ships, at their own price, and in such quantities as they thought proper. In order to counteract this notable piece of mercantile policy, and to render herself as much as possible independent, not only of Sweden, but of all the other northern powers, Great Britain gave a bounty upon the importation of naval stores from America; and the effect of this bounty was to raise the price of timber in America much more than the confinement to the home market could lower it; and as both regulations were enacted at the same time, their joint effect was rather to encourage than to discourage the clearing of land in America.

Though pig and bar iron, too, have been put among the enumerated commodities, yet as, when imported from America, they are exempted from considerable duties to which they are subject when imported from any other country, the one part of the regulation contributes more to encourage the erection of furnaces in America than the other to discourage it. There is no manufacture which occasions so great a consumption of wood as a furnace, or which can contribute so much to the clearing of a country overgrown with it.

The tendency of some of these regulations to raise the value of timber in America, and thereby to facilitate the clearing of the land, was neither, perhaps, intended nor understood by the legislature. Though their beneficial effects, however, have been in this respect accidental, they have not upon that account been less real.

The most perfect freedom of trade is permitted between the British colonies of America and the West Indies, both in the enumerated and in the non-enumerated commodities. Those colonies are now become so

populous and thriving, that each of them finds in some of the others a great and extensive market for every part of its produce. All of them taken together, they make a great internal market for the produce of one another.

The liberality of England, however, towards the trade of her colonies, has been confined chiefly to what concerns the market for their produce, either in its rude state, or in what may be called the very first stage of manufacture. The more advanced or more refined manufactures, even of the colony produce, the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain chuse to reserve to themselves, and have prevailed upon the legislature to prevent their establishment in the colonies, sometimes by high duties, and sometimes by absolute prohibitions.

While, for example, Muscovado sugars from the British plantations pay, upon importation, only 6s. 4d. the hundred weight, white sugars pay L.1 : 1 : 1; and refined, either double or single, in loaves, L.4 : 2 : $5^{8}\!/_{20}$ths. When those high duties were imposed, Great Britain was the sole, and she still continues to be, the principal market, to which the sugars of the British colonies could be exported. They amounted, therefore, to a prohibition, at first of claying or refining sugar for any foreign market, and at present of claying or refining it for the market which takes off, perhaps, more than nine-tenths of the whole produce. The manufacture of claying or refining sugar, accordingly, though it has flourished in all the sugar colonies of France, has been little cultivated in any of those of England, except for the market of the colonies themselves. While Grenada was in the hands of the French, there was a refinery of sugar, by claying, at least upon almost every plantation. Since it fell into those of the English, almost all works of this kind have been given up; and there are at present (October 1773), I am assured, not above two or three remaining in the island. At present, however, by an indulgence of the custom-house, clayed or refined sugar, if reduced from loaves into powder, is commonly imported as Muscovado.

While Great Britain encourages in America the manufacturing of pig and bar iron, by exempting them from duties to which the like commodities are subject when imported from any other country, she imposes an absolute prohibition upon the erection of steel furnaces and slit-mills in any of her American plantations. She will not suffer her colonies to work in those more refined manufactures, even for their own consumption; but insists upon their purchasing of her merchants and manufacturers all goods of this kind which they have occasion for.

She prohibits the exportation from one province to another by water, and even the carriage by land upon horseback, or in a cart, of hats, of wools, and woollen goods, of the produce of America; a regulation which effectually prevents the establishment of any manufacture of such commodities for distant sale, and confines the industry of her colonists in this way to such coarse and household manufactures as a private family commonly makes for its own use, or for that of some of its neighbours in the same province.

To prohibit a great people, however, from making all that they can of every part of their own produce, or from employing their stock and industry in the way that they judge most advantageous to themselves, is a manifest violation of the most sacred rights of mankind. Unjust, however, as such prohibitions may be, they have not hitherto been very hurtful to the colonies. Land is still so cheap, and, consequently, labour so dear among them, that they can import from the mother country almost all the more refined or more advanced manufactures cheaper than they could make them for themselves. Though they had not, therefore, been prohibited from establishing such manufactures, yet, in their present state of improvement, a regard to their own interest would probably have prevented them from doing so. In their present state of improvement, those prohibitions, perhaps, without cramping their industry, or restraining it from any employment to which it would have gone of its own accord, are only impertinent badges of slavery imposed upon them, without any sufficient reason, by the groundless jealousy of the merchants and manufacturers of the mother country. In a more advanced state, they might be really oppressive and insupportable.

Great Britain, too, as she confines to her own market some of the most important productions of the colonies, so, in compensation, she gives to some of them an advantage in that market, sometimes by imposing higher duties upon the like productions when imported from other countries, and sometimes by giving bounties upon their importation from the colonies. In the first way, she gives an advantage in the home market to the sugar, tobacco, and iron of her own colonies; and, in the second, to their raw silk, to their hemp and flax, to their indigo, to their naval stores, and to their building timber. This second way of encouraging the colony produce, by bounties upon importation, is, so far as I have been able to learn, peculiar to Great Britain: the first is not. Portugal does not content herself with imposing higher duties upon the importation of tobacco from any other country, but prohibits it under the severest penalties.

With regard to the importation of goods from Europe, England has likewise dealt more liberally with her colonies than any other nation.

Great Britain allows a part, almost always the half, generally a larger portion, and sometimes the whole, of the duty which is paid upon the importation of foreign goods, to be drawn back upon their exportation to any foreign country. No independent foreign country, it was easy to foresee, would receive them, if they came to it loaded with the heavy duties to which almost all foreign goods are subjected on their importation into Great Britain. Unless, therefore, some part of those duties was drawn back upon exportation, there was an end of the carrying trade; a trade so much favoured by the mercantile system.

Our colonies, however, are by no means independent foreign countries; and Great Britain having assumed to herself the exclusive right of supplying them with all goods from Europe, might have forced them (in the same manner as other countries have done their colonies) to receive such goods loaded with all the same duties which they paid in the mother country. But, on the contrary, till 1763, the same drawbacks were paid upon the exportation of the greater part of foreign goods to our colonies, as to any independent foreign country. In 1763, indeed, by the 4th of Geo. III. c. 15, this indulgence was a good deal abated, and it was enacted, “That no part of the duty called the old subsidy should be drawn back for any goods of the growth, production, or manufacture of Europe or the East Indies, which should be exported from this kingdom to any British colony or plantation in America; wines, white calicoes, and muslins, excepted.” Before this law, many different sorts of foreign goods might have been bought cheaper in the plantations than in the mother country, and some may still.

Of the greater part of the regulations concerning the colony trade, the merchants who carry it on, it must be observed, have been the principal advisers. We must not wonder, therefore, if, in a great part of them, their interest has been more considered than either that of the colonies or that of the mother country. In their exclusive privilege of supplying the colonies with all the goods which they wanted from Europe, and of purchasing all such parts of their surplus produce as could not interfere with any of the trades which they themselves carried on at home, the interest of the colonies was sacrificed to the interest of those merchants. In allowing the same drawbacks upon the re-exportation of the greater part of European and East India goods to the colonies, as upon their re-exportation to any independent country, the interest of the mother country was sacrificed to it, even according to the mercantile ideas of

that interest. It was for the interest of the merchants to pay as little as possible for the foreign goods which they sent to the colonies, and, consequently, to get back as much as possible of the duties which they advanced upon their importation into Great Britain. They might thereby be enabled to sell in the colonies, either the some quantity of goods with a greater profit, or a greater quantity with the same profit, and, consequently, to gain something either in the one way or the other. It was likewise for the interest of the colonies to get all such goods as cheap, and in as great abundance as possible. But this might not always be for the interest of the mother country. She might frequently suffer, both in her revenue, by giving back a great part of the duties which had been paid upon the importation of such goods; and in her manufactures, by being undersold in the colony market in consequence of the easy terms upon which foreign manufactures could be carried thither by means of those drawbacks. The progress of the linen manufacture of Great Britain, it is commonly said, has been a good deal retarded by the drawbacks upon the re-exportation of German linen to the American colonies.

But though the policy of Great Britain, with regard to the trade of her colonies, has been dictated by the same mercantile spirit as that of other nations, it has, however, upon the whole, been less illiberal and oppressive than that of any of them.

In every thing except their foreign trade, the liberty of the English colonists to manage their own affairs their own way, is complete. It is in every respect equal to that of their fellow-citizens at home, and is secured in the same manner, by an assembly of the representatives of the people, who claim the sole right of imposing taxes for the support of the colony government. The authority of this assembly overawes the executive power; and neither the meanest nor the most obnoxious colonist, as long as he obeys the law, has any thing to fear from the resentment, either of the governor, or of any other civil or military officer in the province. The colony assemblies, though, like the house of commons in England, they are not always a very equal representation of the people, yet they approach more nearly to that character; and as the executive power either has not the means to corrupt them, or, on account of the support which it receives from the mother country, is not under the necessity of doing so, they are, perhaps, in general more influenced by the inclinations of their constituents. The councils, which, in the colony legislatures, correspond to the house of lords in Great Britain, are not composed of a hereditary nobility. In some of the colonies, as in three of the governments of New England, those councils are not appointed by

the king, but chosen by the representatives of the people. In none of the English colonies is there any hereditary nobility. In all of them, indeed, as in all other free countries, the descendant of an old colony family is more respected than an upstart of equal merit and fortune; but he is only more respected, and he has no privileges by which he can be troublesome to his neighbours. Before the commencement of the present disturbances, the colony assemblies had not only the legislative, but a part of the executive power. In Connecticut and Rhode Island, they elected the governor. In the other colonies, they appointed the revenue officers, who collected the taxes imposed by those respective assemblies, to whom those officers were immediately responsible. There is more equality, therefore, among the English colonists than among the inhabitants of the mother country. Their manners are more republican; and their governments, those of three of the provinces of New England in particular, have hitherto been more republican too.

The absolute governments of Spain, Portugal, and France, on the contrary, take place in their colonies; and the discretionary powers which such governments commonly delegate to all their inferior officers are, on account of the great distance, naturally exercised there with more than ordinary violence. Under all absolute governments, there is more liberty in the capital than in any other part of the country. The sovereign himself can never have either interest or inclination to pervert the order of justice, or to oppress the great body of the people. In the capital, his presence overawes, more or less, all his inferior officers, who, in the remoter provinces, from whence the complaints of the people are less likely to reach him, can exercise their tyranny with much more safety. But the European colonies in America are more remote than the most distant provinces of the greatest empires which had ever been known before. The government of the English colonies is, perhaps, the only one which, since the world began, could give perfect security to the inhabitants of so very distant a province. The administration of the French colonies, however, has always been conducted with much more gentleness and moderation than that of the Spanish and Portuguese. This superiority of conduct is suitable both to the character of the French nation, and to what forms the character of every nation, the nature of their government, which, though arbitrary and violent in comparison with that of Great Britain, is legal and free in comparison with those of Spain and Portugal.

It is in the progress of the North American colonies, however, that the superiority of the English policy chiefly appears. The progress of the

sugar colonies of France has been at least equal, perhaps superior, to that of the greater part of those of England; and yet the sugar colonies of England enjoy a free government, nearly of the same kind with that which takes place in her colonies of North America. But the sugar colonies of France are not discouraged, like those of England, from refining their own sugar; and what is still of greater importance, the genius of their government naturally introduces a better management of their negro slaves.

In all European colonies, the culture of the sugar-cane is carried on by negro slaves. The constitution of those who have been born in the temperate climate of Europe could not, it is supposed, support the labour of digging the ground under the burning sun of the West Indies; and the culture of the sugar-cane, as it is managed at present, is all hand labour; though, in the opinion of many, the drill plough might be introduced into it with great advantage. But, as the profit and success of the cultivation which is carried on by means of cattle, depend very much upon the good management of those cattle; so the profit and success of that which is carried on by slaves must depend equally upon the good management of those slaves; and in the good management of their slaves the French planters, I think it is generally allowed, are superior to the English. The law, so far as it gives some weak protection to the slave against the violence of his master, is likely to be better executed in a colony where the government is in a great measure arbitrary, than in one where it is altogether free. In every country where the unfortunate law of slavery is established, the magistrate, when he protects the slave, intermeddles in some measure in the management of the private property of the master; and, in a free country, where the master is, perhaps, either a member of the colony assembly, or an elector of such a member, he dares not do this but with the greatest caution and circumspection. The respect which he is obliged to pay to the master, renders it more difficult for him to protect the slave. But in a country where the government is in a great measure arbitrary, where it is usual for the magistrate to intermeddle even in the management of the private property of individuals, and to send them, perhaps, a lettre de cachet, if they do not manage it according to his liking, it is much easier for him to give some protection to the slave; and common humanity naturally disposes him to do so. The protection of the magistrate renders the slave less contemptible in the eyes of his master, who is thereby induced to consider him with more regard, and to treat him with more gentleness. Gentle usage renders the slave not only more faithful, but more intelligent, and, therefore, upon a double account,

more useful. He approaches more to the condition of a free servant, and may possess some degree of integrity and attachment to his master's interest; virtues which frequently belong to free servants, but which never can belong to a slave, who is treated as slaves commonly are in countries where the master is perfectly free and secure.

That the condition of a slave is better under an arbitrary than under a free government, is, I believe, supported by the history of all ages and nations. In the Roman history, the first time we read of the magistrate interposing to protect the slave from the violence of his master, is under the emperors. When Vidius Pollio, in the presence of Augustus, ordered one of his slaves, who had committed a slight fault, to be cut into pieces and thrown into his fish-pond, in order to feed his fishes, the emperor commanded him, with indignation, to emancipate immediately, not only that slave, but all the others that belonged to him. Under the republic no magistrate could have had authority enough to protect the slave, much less to punish the master.

The stock, it is to be observed, which has improved the sugar colonies of France, particularly the great colony of St Domingo, has been raised almost entirely from the gradual improvement and cultivation of those colonies. It has been almost altogether the produce of the soil and of the industry of the colonists, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of that produce, gradually accumulated by good management, and employed in raising a still greater produce. But the stock which has improved and cultivated the sugar colonies of England, has, a great part of it, been sent out from England, and has by no means been altogether the produce of the soil and industry of the colonists. The prosperity of the English sugar colonies has been in a great measure owing to the great riches of England, of which a part has overflowed, if one may say so, upon these colonies. But the prosperity of the sugar colonies of France has been entirely owing to the good conduct of the colonists, which must therefore have had some superiority over that of the English; and this superiority has been remarked in nothing so much as in the good management of their slaves.

Such have been the general outlines of the policy of the different European nations with regard to their colonies.

The policy of Europe, therefore, has very little to boast of, either in the original establishment, or, so far as concerns their internal government, in the subsequent prosperity of the colonies of America.

Folly and injustice seem to have been the principles which presided over and directed the first project of establishing those colonies; the folly

of hunting after gold and silver mines, and the injustice of coveting the possession of a country whose harmless natives, far from having ever injured the people of Europe, had received the first adventurers with every mark of kindness and hospitality.

The adventurers, indeed, who formed some of the latter establishments, joined to the chimerical project of finding gold and silver mines, other motives more reasonable and more laudable; but even these motives do very little honour to the policy of Europe.

The English puritans, restrained at home, fled for freedom to America, and established there the four governments of New England. The English catholics, treated with much greater injustice, established that of Maryland; the quakers, that of Pennsylvania. The Portuguese Jews, persecuted by the inquisition, stript of their fortunes, and banished to Brazil, introduced, by their example, some sort of order and industry among the transported felons and strumpets by whom that colony was originally peopled, and taught them the culture of the sugar-cane. Upon all these different occasions, it was not the wisdom and policy, but the disorder and injustice of the European governments, which peopled and cultivated America.

In effectuating some of the most important of these establishments, the different governments of Europe had as little merit as in projecting them. The conquest of Mexico was the project, not of the council of Spain, but of a governor of Cuba; and it was effectuated by the spirit of the bold adventurer to whom it was entrusted, in spite of every thing which that governor, who soon repented of having trusted such a person, could do to thwart it. The conquerors of Chili and Peru, and of almost all the other Spanish settlements upon the continent of America, carried out with them no other public encouragement, but a general permission to make settlements and conquests in the name of the king of Spain. Those adventures were all at the private risk and expense of the adventurers. The government of Spain contributed scarce any thing to any of them. That of England contributed as little towards effectuating the establishment of some of its most important colonies in North America.

When those establishments were effectuated, and had become so considerable as to attract the attention of the mother country, the first regulations which she made with regard to them, had always in view to secure to herself the monopoly of their commerce; to confine their market, and to enlarge her own at their expense, and, consequently, rather to damp and discourage, than to quicken and forward the course of their prosperity. In the different ways in which this monopoly has been

exercised, consists one of the most essential differences in the policy of the different European nations with regard to their colonies. The best of them all, that of England, is only somewhat less illiberal and oppressive than that of any of the rest.

In what way, therefore, has the policy of Europe contributed either to the first establishment, or to the present grandeur of the colonies of America? In one way, and in one way only, it has contributed a good deal. *Magna virûm mater!* It bred and formed the men who were capable of achieving such great actions, and of laying the foundation of so great an empire; and there is no other quarter of the world, of which the policy is capable of forming, or has ever actually, and in fact, formed such men. The colonies owe to the policy of Europe the education and great views of their active and enterprising founders; and some of the greatest and most important of them, so far as concerns their internal government, owe to it scarce any thing else.

PART III.

Of the Advantages which Europe has derived from the Discovery of America, and from that of a Passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope.

Such are the advantages which the colonies of America have derived from the policy of Europe.

What are these which Europe has derived from the discovery and colonization of America?

Those advantages may be divided, first, into the general advantages which Europe, considered as one great country, has derived from those great events; and, secondly, into the particular advantages which each colonizing country has derived from the colonies which particularly belong to it, in consequence of the authority or dominion which it exercises over them.

The general advantages which Europe, considered as one great country, has derived from the discovery and colonization of America, consist, first, in the increase of its enjoyments; and, secondly, in the augmentation of its industry.

The surplus produce of America imported into Europe, furnishes the inhabitants of this great continent with a variety of commodities which they could not otherwise have possessed; some for conveniency and use,

some for pleasure, and some for ornament; and thereby contributes to increase their enjoyments.

The discovery and colonization of America, it will readily be allowed, have contributed to augment the industry, first, of all the countries which trade to it directly, such as Spain, Portugal, France, and England; and, secondly, of all those which, without trading to it directly, send, through the medium of other countries, goods to it of their own produce, such as Austrian Flanders, and some provinces of Germany, which, through the medium of the countries before mentioned, send to it a considerable quantity of linen and other goods. All such countries have evidently gained a more extensive market for their surplus produce, and must consequently have been encouraged to increase its quantity.

But that those great events should likewise have contributed to encourage the industry of countries such as Hungary and Poland, which may never, perhaps, have sent a single commodity of their own produce to America, is not, perhaps, altogether so evident. That those events have done so, however, cannot be doubted. Some part of the produce of America is consumed in Hungary and Poland, and there in some demand there for the sugar, chocolate, and tobacco, of that new quarter of the world. But those commodities must be purchased with something which is either the produce of the industry of Hungary and Poland, or with something which had been purchased with some part of that produce. Those commodities of America are new values, new equivalents, introduced into Hungary and Poland, to be exchanged there for the surplus produce of these countries. By being carried thither, they create a new and more extensive market for that surplus produce. They raise its value, and thereby contribute to encourage its increase. Though no part of it may ever be carried to America, it may be carried to other countries, which purchase it with a part of their share of the surplus produce of America, and it may find a market by means of the circulation of that trade which was originally put into motion by the surplus produce of America.

Those great events may even have contributed to increase the enjoyments, and to augment the industry, of countries which not only never sent any commodities to America, but never received any from it. Even such countries may have received a greater abundance of other commodities from countries, of which the surplus produce had been augmented by means of the American trade. This greater abundance, as it must necessarily have increased their enjoyments, so it must likewise have augmented their industry. A greater number of new equivalents, of

some kind or other, must have been presented to them to be exchanged for the surplus produce of that industry. A more extensive market must have been created for that surplus produce, so as to raise its value, and thereby encourage its increase. The mass of commodities annually thrown into the great circle of European commerce, and by its various revolutions annually distributed among all the different nations comprehended within it, must have been augmented by the whole surplus produce of America. A greater share of this greater mass, therefore, is likely to have fallen to each of those nations, to have increased their enjoyments, and augmented their industry.

The exclusive trade of the mother countries tends to diminish, or at least to keep down below what they would otherwise rise to, both the enjoyments and industry of all those nations in general, and of the American colonies in particular. It is a dead weight upon the action of one of the great springs which puts into motion a great part of the business of mankind. By rendering the colony produce dearer in all other countries, it lessens its consumption, and thereby cramps the industry of the colonies, and both the enjoyments and the industry or all other countries, which both enjoy less when they pay more for what they enjoy, and produce less when they get less for what they produce. By rendering the produce of all other countries dearer in the colonies, it cramps in the same manner the industry of all other colonies, and both the enjoyments and the industry of the colonies. It is a clog which, for the supposed benefit of some particular countries, embarrasses the pleasures and encumbers the industry of all other countries, but of the colonies more than of any other. It not only excludes as much as possible all other countries from one particular market, but it confines as much as possible the colonies to one particular market; and the difference is very great between being excluded from one particular market when all others are open, and being confined to one particular market when all others are shut up. The surplus produce of the colonies, however, is the original source of all that increase of enjoyments and industry which Europe derives from the discovery and colonization of America, and the exclusive trade of the mother countries tends to render this source much less abundant than it otherwise would be.

The particular advantages which each colonizing country derives from the colonies which particularly belong to it, are of two different kinds; first, those common advantages which every empire derives from the provinces subject to its dominion; and, secondly, those peculiar

advantages which are supposed to result from provinces of so very peculiar a nature as the European colonies of America.

The common advantages which every empire derives from the provinces subject to its dominion consist, first, in the military force which they furnish for its defence; and, secondly, in the revenue which they furnish for the support of its civil government. The Roman colonies furnished occasionally both the one and the other. The Greek colonies sometimes furnished a military force, but seldom any revenue. They seldom acknowledged themselves subject to the dominion of the mother city. They were generally her allies in war, but very seldom her subjects in peace.

The European colonies of America have never yet furnished any military force for the defence of the mother country. The military force has never yet been sufficient for their own defence; and in the different wars in which the mother countries have been engaged, the defence of their colonies has generally occasioned a very considerable distraction of the military force of those countries. In this respect, therefore, all the European colonies have, without exception, been a cause rather of weakness than of strength to their respective mother countries.

The colonies of Spain and Portugal only have contributed any revenue towards the defence of the mother country, or the support of her civil government. The taxes which have been levied upon those of other European nations, upon those of England in particular, have seldom been equal to the expense laid out upon them in time of peace, and never sufficient to defray that which they occasioned in time of war. Such colonies, therefore, have been a source of expense, and not of revenue, to their respective mother countries.

The advantages of such colonies to their respective mother countries, consist altogether in those peculiar advantages which are supposed to result from provinces of so very peculiar a nature as the European colonies of America; and the exclusive trade, it is acknowledged, is the sole source of all those peculiar advantages.

In consequence of this exclusive trade, all that part of the surplus produce of the English colonies, for example, which consists in what are called enumerated commodities, can be sent to no other country but England. Other countries must afterwards buy it of her. It must be cheaper, therefore, in England than it can be in any other country, and must contribute more to increase the enjoyments of England than those of any other country. It must likewise contribute more to encourage her industry. For all those parts of her own surplus produce which England

exchanges for those enumerated commodities, she must get a better price than any other countries can get for the like parts of theirs, when they exchange them for the same commodities. The manufactures of England, for example, will purchase a greater quantity of the sugar and tobacco of her own colonies than the like manufactures of other countries can purchase of that sugar and tobacco. So far, therefore, as the manufactures of England and those of other countries are both to be exchanged for the sugar and tobacco of the English colonies, this superiority of price gives an encouragement to the former beyond what the latter can, in these circumstances, enjoy. The exclusive trade of the colonies, therefore, as it diminishes, or at least keeps down below what they would otherwise rise to, both the enjoyments and the industry of the countries which do not possess it, so it gives an evident advantage to the countries which do possess it over those other countries.

This advantage, however, will, perhaps, be found to be rather what may be called a relative than an absolute advantage, and to give a superiority to the country which enjoys it, rather by depressing the industry and produce of other countries, than by raising those of that particular country above what they would naturally rise to in the case of a free trade.

The tobacco of Maryland and Virginia, for example, by means of the monopoly which England enjoys of it, certainly comes cheaper to England than it can do to France, to whom England commonly sells a considerable part of it. But had France and all other European countries been at all times allowed a free trade to Maryland and Virginia, the tobacco of those colonies might by this time have come cheaper than it actually does, not only to all those other countries, but likewise to England. The produce of tobacco, in consequence of a market so much more extensive than any which it has hitherto enjoyed, might, and probably would, by this time have been so much increased as to reduce the profits of a tobacco plantation to their natural level with those of a corn plantation, which it is supposed they are still somewhat above. The price of tobacco might, and probably would, by this time have fallen somewhat lower than it is at present. An equal quantity of the commodities, either of England or of those other countries, might have purchased in Maryland and Virginia a greater quantity of tobacco than it can do at present, and consequently have been sold there for so much a better price. So far as that weed, therefore, can, by its cheapness and abundance, increase the enjoyments, or augment the industry, either of England or of any other country, it would probably, in the case of a free

trade, have produced both these effects in somewhat a greater degree than it can do at present. England, indeed, would not, in this case, have had any advantage over other countries. She might have bought the tobacco of her colonies somewhat cheaper, and consequently have sold some of her own commodities somewhat dearer, than she actually does; but she could neither have bought the one cheaper, nor sold the other dearer, than any other country might have done. She might, perhaps, have gained an absolute, but she would certainly have lost a relative advantage.

In order, however, to obtain this relative advantage in the colony trade, in order to execute the invidious and malignant project of excluding, as much as possible, other nations from any share in it, England, there are very probable reasons for believing, has not only sacrificed a part of the absolute advantage which she, as well as every other nation, might have derived from that trade, but has subjected herself both to an absolute and to a relative disadvantage in almost every other branch of trade.

When, by the act of navigation, England assumed to herself the monopoly of the colony trade, the foreign capitals which had before been employed in it, were necessarily withdrawn from it. The English capital, which had before carried on but a part of it, was now to carry on the whole. The capital which had before supplied the colonies with but a part of the goods which they wanted from Europe, was now all that was employed to supply them with the whole. But it could not supply them with the whole; and the goods with which it did supply them were necessarily sold very dear. The capital which had before bought but a part of the surplus produce of the colonies, was now all that was employed to buy the whole. But it could not buy the whole at anything near the old price; and therefore, whatever it did buy, it necessarily bought very cheap. But in an employment of capital, in which the merchant sold very dear, and bought very cheap, the profit must have been very great, and much above the ordinary level of profit in other branches of trade. This superiority of profit in the colony trade could not fail to draw from other branches of trade a part of the capital which had before been employed in them. But this revulsion of capital, as it must have gradually increased the competition of capitals in the colony trade, so it must have gradually diminished that competition in all those other branches of trade; as it must have gradually lowered the profits of the one, so it must have gradually raised those of the other, till the profits of

all came to a new level, different from, and somewhat higher, than that at which they had been before.

This double effect of drawing capital from all other trades, and of raising the rate of profit somewhat higher than it otherwise would have been in all trades, was not only produced by this monopoly upon its first establishment, but has continued to be produced by it ever since.

First, This monopoly has been continually drawing capital from all other trades, to be employed in that of the colonies.

Though the wealth of Great Britain has increased very much since the establishment of the act of navigation, it certainly has not increased in the same proportion as that of the colonies. But the foreign trade of every country naturally increases in proportion to its wealth, its surplus produce in proportion to its whole produce; and Great Britain having engrossed to herself almost the whole of what may be called the foreign trade of the colonies, and her capital not having increased in the same proportion as the extent of that trade, she could not carry it on without continually withdrawing from other branches of trade some part of the capital which had before been employed in them, as well as withholding from them a great deal more which would otherwise have gone to them. Since the establishment of the act of navigation, accordingly, the colony trade has been continually increasing, while many other branches of foreign trade, particularly of that to other parts of Europe, have been continually decaying. Our manufactures for foreign sale, instead of being suited, as before the act of navigation, to the neighbouring market of Europe, or to the more distant one of the countries which lie round the Mediterranean sea, have, the greater part of them, been accommodated to the still more distant one of the colonies; to the market in which they have the monopoly, rather than to that in which they have many competitors. The causes of decay in other branches of foreign trade, which, by Sir Matthew Decker and other writers, have been sought for in the excess and improper made of taxation, in the high price of labour, in the increase of luxury, &c. may all be found in the overgrowth of the colony trade. The mercantile capital of Great Britain, though very great, yet not being infinite, and though greatly increased since the act of navigation, yet not being increased in the same proportion as the colony trade, that trade could not possibly be carried on without withdrawing some part of that capital from other branches of trade, nor consequently without some decay of those other branches.

England, it must be observed, was a great trading country, her mercantile capital was very great, and likely to become still greater and

greater every day, not only before the act of navigation had established the monopoly of the corn trade, but before that trade was very considerable. In the Dutch war, during the government of Cromwell, her navy was superior to that of Holland; and in that which broke out in the beginning of the reign of Charles II., it was at least equal, perhaps superior to the united navies of France and Holland. Its superiority, perhaps, would scarce appear greater in the present times, at least if the Dutch navy were to bear the same proportion to the Dutch commerce now which it did then. But this great naval power could not, in either of those wars, be owing to the act of navigation. During the first of them, the plan of that act had been but just formed; and though, before the breaking out of the second, it had been fully enacted by legal authority, yet no part of it could have had time to produce any considerable effect, and least of all that part which established the exclusive trade to the colonies. Both the colonies and their trade were inconsiderable then, in comparison of what they are now. The island of Jamaica was an unwholesome desert, little inhabited, and less cultivated. New York and New Jersey were in the possession of the Dutch, the half of St. Christopher's in that of the French. The island of Antigua, the two Carolinas, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Nova Scotia, were not planted. Virginia, Maryland, and New England were planted; and though they were very thriving colonies, yet there was not perhaps at that time, either in Europe or America, a single person who foresaw, or even suspected, the rapid progress which they have since made in wealth, population, and improvement. The island of Barbadoes, in short, was the only British colony of any consequence, of which the condition at that time bore any resemblance to what it is at present. The trade of the colonies, of which England, even for some time after the act of navigation, enjoyed but a part (for the act of navigation was not very strictly executed till several years after it was enacted), could not at that time be the cause of the great trade of England, nor of the great naval power which was supported by that trade. The trade which at that time supported that great naval power was the trade of Europe, and of the countries which lie round the Mediterranean sea. But the share which Great Britain at present enjoys of that trade could not support any such great naval power. Had the growing trade of the colonies been left free to all nations, whatever share of it might have fallen to Great Britain, and a very considerable share would probably have fallen to her, must have been all an addition to this great trade of which she was before in possession. In consequence of the monopoly, the increase of the colony trade has not so much occasioned

an addition to the trade which Great Britain had before, as a total change in its direction.

Secondly, This monopoly has necessarily contributed to keep up the rate of profit, in all the different branches of British trade, higher than it naturally would have been, had all nations been allowed a free trade to the British colonies.

The monopoly of the colony trade, as it necessarily drew towards that trade a greater proportion of the capital of Great Britain than what would have gone to it of its own accord, so, by the expulsion of all foreign capitals, it necessarily reduced the whole quantity of capital employed in that trade below what it naturally would have been in the case of a free trade. But, by lessening the competition of capitals in that branch of trade, it necessarily raised the rate of profit in that branch. By lessening, too, the competition of British capitals in all other branches of trade, it necessarily raised the rate of British profit in all those other branches. Whatever may have been, at any particular period since the establishment of the act of navigation, the state or extent of the mercantile capital of Great Britain, the monopoly of the colony trade must, during the continuance of that state, have raised the ordinary rate of British profit higher than it otherwise would have been, both in that and in all the other branches of British trade. If, since the establishment of the act of navigation, the ordinary rate of British profit has fallen considerably, as it certainly has, it must have fallen still lower, had not the monopoly established by that act contributed to keep it up.

But whatever raises, in any country, the ordinary rate of profit higher than it otherwise would be, necessarily subjects that country both to an absolute, and to a relative disadvantage in every branch of trade of which she has not the monopoly.

It subjects her to an absolute disadvantage; because, in such branches of trade, her merchants cannot get this greater profit without selling dearer than they otherwise would do, both the goods of foreign countries which they import into their own, and the goods of their own country which they export to foreign countries. Their own country must both buy dearer and sell dearer; must both buy less, and sell less; must both enjoy less and produce less, than she otherwise would do.

It subjects her to a relative disadvantage; because, in such branches of trade, it sets other countries, which are not subject to the same absolute disadvantage, either more above her or less below her, than they otherwise would be. It enables them both to enjoy more and to produce more, in proportion to what she enjoys and produces. It renders their

superiority greater, or their inferiority less, than it otherwise would be. By raising the price of her produce above what it otherwise would be, it enables the merchants of other countries to undersell her in foreign markets, and thereby to justle her out of almost all those branches of trade, of which she has not the monopoly.

Our merchants frequently complain of the high wages of British labour, as the cause of their manufactures being undersold in foreign markets; but they are silent about the high profits of stock. They complain of the extravagant gain of other people; but they say nothing of their own. The high profits of British stock, however, may contribute towards raising the price of British manufactures, in many cases, as much, and in some perhaps more, than the high wages of British labour.

It is in this manner that the capital of Great Britain, one may justly say, has partly been drawn and partly been driven from the greater part of the different branches of trade of which she has not the monopoly; from the trade of Europe, in particular, and from that of the countries which lie round the Mediterranean sea.

It has partly been drawn from those branches of trade, by the attraction of superior profit in the colony trade, in consequence of the continual increase of that trade, and of the continual insufficiency of the capital which had carried it on one year to carry it on the next.

It has partly been driven from them, by the advantage which the high rate of profit established in Great Britain gives to other countries, in all the different branches of trade of which Great Britain has not the monopoly.

As the monopoly of the colony trade has drawn from those other branches a part of the British capital, which would otherwise have been employed in them, so it has forced into them many foreign capitals which would never have gone to them, had they not been expelled from the colony trade. In those other branches of trade, it has diminished the competition of British capitals, and thereby raised the rate of British profit higher than it otherwise would have been. On the contrary, it has increased the competition of foreign capitals, and thereby sunk the rate of foreign profit lower than it otherwise would have been. Both in the one way and in the other, it must evidently have subjected Great Britain to a relative disadvantage in all those other branches of trade.

The colony trade, however, it may perhaps be said, is more advantageous to Great Britain than any other; and the monopoly, by forcing into that trade a greater proportion of the capital of Great Britain than what would otherwise have gone to it, has turned that capital into an

employment, more advantageous to the country than any other which it could have found.

The most advantageous employment of any capital to the country to which it belongs, is that which maintains there the greatest quantity of productive labour, and increases the most the annual produce of the land and labour of that country. But the quantity of productive labour which any capital employed in the foreign trade of consumption can maintain, is exactly in proportion, it has been shown in the second book, to the frequency of its returns. A capital of a thousand pounds, for example, employed in a foreign trade of consumption, of which the returns are made regularly once in the year, can keep in constant employment, in the country to which it belongs, a quantity of productive labour, equal to what a thousand pounds can maintain there for a year. If the returns are made twice or thrice in the year, it can keep in constant employment a quantity of productive labour, equal to what two or three thousand pounds can maintain there for a year. A foreign trade of consumption carried on with a neighbouring, is, upon that account, in general, more advantageous than one carried on with a distant country; and, for the same reason, a direct foreign trade of consumption, as it has likewise been shown in the second book, is in general more advantageous than a round-about one.

But the monopoly of the colony trade, so far as it has operated upon the employment of the capital of Great Britain, has, in all cases, forced some part of it from a foreign trade of consumption carried on with a neighbouring, to one carried on with a more distant country, and in many cases from a direct foreign trade of consumption to a round-about one.

First, The monopoly of the colony trade has, in all cases, forced some part of the capital of Great Britain from a foreign trade of consumption carried on with a neighbouring, to one carried on with a more distant country.

It has, in all cases, forced some part of that capital from the trade with Europe, and with the countries which lie round the Mediterranean sea, to that with the more distant regions of America and the West Indies; from which the returns are necessarily less frequent, not only on account of the greater distance, but on account of the peculiar circumstances of those countries. New colonies, it has already been observed, are always understocked. Their capital in always much less than what they could employ with great profit and advantage in the improvement and cultivation of their land. They have a constant demand, therefore, for more capital than they have of their own; and, in order to supply the

deficiency of their own, they endeavour to borrow as much as they can of the mother country, to whom they are, therefore, always in debt. The most common way in which the colonies contract this debt, is not by borrowing upon bond of the rich people of the mother country, though they sometimes do this too, but by running as much in arrear to their correspondents, who supply them with goods from Europe, as those correspondents will allow them. Their annual returns frequently do not amount to more than a third, and sometimes not to so great a proportion of what they owe. The whole capital, therefore, which their correspondents advance to them, is seldom returned to Britain in less than three, and sometimes not in less than four or five years. But a British capital of a thousand pounds, for example, which is returned to Great Britain only once in five years, can keep in constant employment only one-fifth part of the British industry which it could maintain, if the whole was returned once in the year; and, instead of the quantity of industry which a thousand pounds could maintain for a year, can keep in constant employment the quantity only which two hundred pounds can maintain for a year. The planter, no doubt, by the high price which he pays for the goods from Europe, by the interest upon the bills which he grants at distant dates, and by the commission upon the renewal of those which he grants at near dates, makes up, and probably more than makes up, all the loss which his correspondent can sustain by this delay. But, though he make up the loss of his correspondent, he cannot make up that of Great Britain. In a trade of which the returns are very distant, the profit of the merchant may be as great or greater than in one in which they are very frequent and near; but the advantage of the country in which he resides, the quantity of productive labour constantly maintained there, the annual produce of the land and labour, must always be much less. That the returns of the trade to America, and still more those of that to the West Indies, are, in general, not only more distant, but more irregular and more uncertain, too, than those of the trade to any part of Europe, or even of the countries which lie round the Mediterranean sea, will readily be allowed, I imagine, by every body who has any experience of these different branches of trade.

Secondly, The monopoly of the colony trade, has, in many cases, forced some part of the capital of Great Britain from a direct foreign trade of consumption, into a round-about one.

Among the enumerated commodities which can be sent to no other market but Great Britain, there are several of which the quantity exceeds very much the consumption of Great Britain, and of which, a part,

therefore, must be exported to other countries. But this cannot be done without forcing some part of the capital of Great Britain into a round-about foreign trade of consumption. Maryland, and Virginia, for example, send annually to Great Britain upwards of ninety-six thousand hogsheads of tobacco, and the consumption of Great Britain is said not to exceed fourteen thousand. Upwards of eighty-two thousand hogsheads, therefore, must be exported to other countries, to France, to Holland, and, to the countries which lie round the Baltic and Mediterranean seas. But that part of the capital of Great Britain which brings those eighty-two thousand hogsheads to Great Britain, which re-exports them from thence to those other countries, and which brings back from those countries to Great Britain either goods or money in return, is employed in a round-about foreign trade of consumption; and is necessarily forced into this employment, in order to dispose of this great surplus. If we would compute in how many years the whole of this capital is likely to come back to Great Britain, we must add to the distance of the American returns that of the returns from those other countries. If, in the direct foreign trade of consumption which we carry on with America, the whole capital employed frequently does not come back in less than three or four years, the whole capital employed in this round-about one is not likely to come back in less than four or five. If the one can keep in constant employment but a third or a fourth part of the domestic industry which could be maintained by a capital returned once in the year, the other can keep in constant employment but a fourth or a fifth part of that industry. At some of the out-ports a credit is commonly given to those foreign correspondents to whom they export their tobacco. At the port of London, indeed, it is commonly sold for ready money: the rule is Weigh and pay. At the port of London, therefore, the final returns of the whole round-about trade are more distant than the returns from America, by the time only which the goods may lie unsold in the warehouse; where, however, they may sometimes lie long enough. But, had not the colonies been confined to the market of Great Britain for the sale of their tobacco, very little more of it would probably have come to us than what was necessary for the home consumption. The goods which Great Britain purchases at present for her own consumption with the great surplus of tobacco which she exports to other countries, she would, in this case, probably have purchased with the immediate produce of her own industry, or with some part of her own manufactures. That produce, those manufactures, instead of being almost entirely suited to one great market, as at present, would probably have been fitted to a great number of

smaller markets. Instead of one great round-about foreign trade of consumption, Great Britain would probably have carried on a great number of small direct foreign trades of the same kind. On account of the frequency of the returns, a part, and probably but a small part, perhaps not above a third or a fourth of the capital which at present carries on this great round-about trade, might have been sufficient to carry on all those small direct ones; might have kept in constant employment an equal quantity of British industry; and have equally supported the annual produce of the land and labour of Great Britain. All the purposes of this trade being, in this manner, answered by a much smaller capital, there would have been a large spare capital to apply to other purposes; to improve the lands, to increase the manufactures, and to extend the commerce of Great Britain; to come into competition at least with the other British capitals employed in all those different ways, to reduce the rate of profit in them all, and thereby to give to Great Britain, in all of them, a superiority over other countries, still greater than what she at present enjoys.

The monopoly of the colony trade, too, has forced some part of the capital of Great Britain from all foreign trade of consumption to a carrying trade; and, consequently from supporting more or less the industry of Great Britain, to be employed altogether in supporting partly that of the colonies, and partly that of some other countries.

The goods, for example, which are annually purchased with the great surplus of eighty-two thousand hogsheads of tobacco annually re-exported from Great Britain, are not all consumed in Great Britain. Part of them, linen from Germany and Holland, for example, is returned to the colonies for their particular consumption. But that part of the capital of Great Britain which buys the tobacco with which this linen is afterwards bought, is necessarily withdrawn from supporting the industry of Great Britain, to be employed altogether in supporting, partly that of the colonies, and partly that of the particular countries who pay for this tobacco with the produce of their own industry.

The monopoly of the colony trade, besides, by forcing towards it a much greater proportion of the capital of Great Britain than what would naturally have gone to it, seems to have broken altogether that natural balance which would otherwise have taken place among all the different branches of British industry. The industry of Great Britain, instead of being accommodated to a great number of small markets, has been principally suited to one great market. Her commerce, instead of running in a great number of small channels, has been taught to run principally in

one great channel. But the whole system of her industry and commerce has thereby been rendered less secure; the whole state of her body politic less healthful than it otherwise would have been. In her present condition, Great Britain resembles one of those unwholesome bodies in which some of the vital parts are overgrown, and which, upon that account, are liable to many dangerous disorders, scarce incident to those in which all the parts are more properly proportioned. A small stop in that great blood-vessel, which has been artificially swelled beyond its natural dimensions, and through which an unnatural proportion of the industry and commerce of the country has been forced to circulate, is very likely to bring on the most dangerous disorders upon the whole body politic. The expectation of a rupture with the colonies, accordingly, has struck the people of Great Britain with more terror than they ever felt for a Spanish armada, or a French invasion. It was this terror, whether well or ill grounded, which rendered the repeal of the stamp act, among the merchants at least, a popular measure. In the total exclusion from the colony market, was it to last only for a few years, the greater part of our merchants used to fancy that they foresaw an entire stop to their trade; the greater part of our master manufacturers, the entire ruin of their business; and the greater part of our workmen, an end of their employment. A rupture with any of our neighbours upon the continent, though likely, too, to occasion some stop or interruption in the employments of some of all these different orders of people, is foreseen, however, without any such general emotion. The blood, of which the circulation is stopt in some of the smaller vessels, easily disgorges itself into the greater, without occasioning any dangerous disorder; but, when it is stopt in any of the greater vessels, convulsions, apoplexy, or death, are the immediate and unavoidable consequences. If but one of those overgrown manufactures, which, by means either of bounties or of the monopoly of the home and colony markets, have been artificially raised up to any unnatural height, finds some small stop or interruption in its employment, it frequently occasions a mutiny and disorder alarming to government, and embarrassing even to the deliberations of the legislature. How great, therefore, would be the disorder and confusion, it was thought, which must necessarily be occasioned by a sudden and entire stop in the employment of so great a proportion of our principal manufacturers?

Some moderate and gradual relaxation of the laws which give to Great Britain the exclusive trade to the colonies, till it is rendered in a great measure free, seems to be the only expedient which can, in all

future times, deliver her from this danger; which can enable her, or even force her, to withdraw some part of her capital from this overgrown employment, and to turn it, though with less profit, towards other employments; and which, by gradually diminishing one branch of her industry, and gradually increasing all the rest, can, by degrees, restore all the different branches of it to that natural, healthful, and proper proportion, which perfect liberty necessarily establishes, and which perfect liberty can alone preserve. To open the colony trade all at once to all nations, might not only occasion some transitory inconveniency, but a great permanent loss, to the greater part of those whose industry or capital is at present engaged in it. The sudden loss of the employment, even of the ships which import the eighty-two thousand hogsheads of tobacco, which are over and above the consumption of Great Britain, might alone be felt very sensibly. Such are the unfortunate effects of all the regulations of the mercantile system. They not only introduce very dangerous disorders into the state of the body politic, but disorders which it is often difficult to remedy, without occasioning, for a time at least, still greater disorders. In what manner, therefore, the colony trade ought gradually to be opened; what are the restraints which ought first, and what are those which ought last, to be taken away; or in what manner the natural system of perfect liberty and justice ought gradually to be restored, we must leave to the wisdom of future statesmen and legislators to determine.

Five different events, unforeseen and unthought of, have very fortunately concurred to hinder Great Britain from feeling, so sensibly as it was generally expected she would, the total exclusion which has now taken place for more than a year (from the first of December 1774) from a very important branch of the colony trade, that of the twelve associated provinces of North America. First, those colonies, in preparing themselves for their non-importation agreement, drained Great Britain completely of all the commodities which were fit for their market; secondly, the extraordinary demand of the Spanish flota has, this year, drained Germany and the north of many commodities, linen in particular, which used to come into competition, even in the British market, with the manufactures of Great Britain; thirdly, the peace between Russia and Turkey has occasioned an extraordinary demand from the Turkey market, which, during the distress of the country, and while a Russian fleet was cruising in the Archipelago, had been very poorly supplied; fourthly, the demand of the north of Europe for the manufactures of Great Britain has been increasing from year to year, for some time past;

and, fifthly, the late partition, and consequential pacification of Poland, by opening the market of that great country, have, this year, added an extraordinary demand from thence to the increasing demand of the north. These events are all, except the fourth, in their nature transitory and accidental; and the exclusion from so important a branch of the colony trade, if unfortunately it should continue much longer, may still occasion some degree of distress. This distress, however, as it will come on gradually, will be felt much less severely than if it had come on all at once; and, in the mean time, the industry and capital of the country may find a new employment and direction, so as to prevent this distress from ever rising to any considerable height.

The monopoly of the colony trade, therefore, so far as it has turned towards that trade a greater proportion of the capital of Great Britain than what would otherwise have gone to it, has in all cases turned it, from a foreign trade of consumption with a neighbouring, into one with a more distant country; in many cases from a direct foreign trade of consumption into a round-about one; and, in some cases, from all foreign trade of consumption into a carrying trade. It has, in all cases, therefore, turned it from a direction in which it would have maintained a greater quantity of productive labour, into one in which it can maintain a much smaller quantity. By suiting, besides, to one particular market only, so great a part of the industry and commerce of Great Britain, it has rendered the whole state of that industry and commerce more precarious and less secure, than if their produce had been accommodated to a greater variety of markets.

We must carefully distinguish between the effects of the colony trade and those of the monopoly of that trade. The former are always and necessarily beneficial; the latter always and necessarily hurtful. But the former are so beneficial, that the colony trade, though subject to a monopoly, and, notwithstanding the hurtful effects of that monopoly, is still, upon the whole, beneficial, and greatly beneficial, though a good deal less so than it otherwise would be.

The effect of the colony trade, in its natural and free state, is to open a great though distant market, for such parts of the produce of British industry as may exceed the demand of the markets nearer home, of those of Europe, and of the countries which lie round the Mediterranean sea. In its natural and free state, the colony trade, without drawing from those markets any part of the produce which had ever been sent to them, encourages Great Britain to increase the surplus continually, by continually presenting new equivalents to be exchanged for it. In its

natural and free state, the colony trade tends to increase the quantity of productive labour in Great Britain, but without altering in any respect the direction of that which had been employed there before. In the natural and free state of the colony trade, the competition of all other nations would hinder the rate of profit from rising above the common level, either in the new market, or in the new employment. The new market, without drawing any thing from the old one, would create, if one may say so, a new produce for its own supply; and that new produce would constitute a new capital for carrying on the new employment, which, in the same manner, would draw nothing from the old one.

The monopoly of the colony trade, on the contrary, by excluding the competition of other nations, and thereby raising the rate of profit, both in the new market and in the new employment, draws produce from the old market, and capital from the old employment. To augment our share of the colony trade beyond what it otherwise would be, is the avowed purpose of the monopoly. If our share of that trade were to be no greater with, than it would have been without the monopoly, there could have been no reason for establishing the monopoly. But whatever forces into a branch of trade, of which the returns are slower and more distant than those of the greater part of other trades, a greater proportion of the capital of any country, than what of its own accord would go to that branch, necessarily renders the whole quantity of productive labour annually maintained there, the whole annual produce of the land and labour of that country, less than they otherwise would be. It keeps down the revenue of the inhabitants of that country below what it would naturally rise to, and thereby diminishes their power of accumulation. It not only hinders, at all times, their capital from maintaining so great a quantity of productive labour as it would otherwise maintain, but it hinders it from increasing so fast as it would otherwise increase, and, consequently, from maintaining a still greater quantity of productive labour.

The natural good effects of the colony trade, however, more than counterbalance to Great Britain the bad effects of the monopoly; so that, monopoly and altogether, that trade, even as it is carried on at present, is not only advantageous, but greatly advantageous. The new market and the new employment which are opened by the colony trade, are of much greater extent than that portion of the old market and of the old employment which is lost by the monopoly. The new produce and the new capital which has been created, if one may say so, by the colony trade, maintain in Great Britain a greater quantity of productive labour

than what can have been thrown out of employment by the revulsion of capital from other trades of which the returns are more frequent. If the colony trade, however, even as it is carried on at present, is advantageous to Great Britain, it is not by means of the monopoly, but in spite of the monopoly.

It is rather for the manufactured than for the rude produce of Europe, that the colony trade opens a new market. Agriculture is the proper business of all new colonies; a business which the cheapness of land renders more advantageous than any other. They abound, therefore, in the rude produce of land; and instead of importing it from other countries, they have generally a large surplus to export. In new colonies, agriculture either draws hands from all other employments, or keeps them from going to any other employment. There are few hands to spare for the necessary, and none for the ornamental manufactures. The greater part of the manufactures of both kinds they find it cheaper to purchase of other countries than to make for themselves. It is chiefly by encouraging the manufactures of Europe, that the colony trade indirectly encourages its agriculture. The manufacturers of Europe, to whom that trade gives employment, constitute a new market for the produce of the land, and the most advantageous of all markets; the home market for the corn and cattle, for the bread and butcher’s meat of Europe, is thus greatly extended by means of the trade to America.

But that the monopoly of the trade of populous and thriving colonies is not alone sufficient to establish, or even to maintain, manufactures in any country, the examples of Spain and Portugal sufficiently demonstrate. Spain and Portugal were manufacturing countries before they had any considerable colonies. Since they had the richest and most fertile in the world, they have both ceased to be so.

In Spain and Portugal, the bad effects of the monopoly, aggravated by other causes, have, perhaps, nearly overbalanced the natural good effects of the colony trade. These causes seem to be other monopolies of different kinds: the degradation of the value of gold and silver below what it is in most other countries; the exclusion from foreign markets by improper taxes upon exportation, and the narrowing of the home market, by still more improper taxes upon the transportation of goods from one part of the country to another; but above all, that irregular and partial administration of justice which often protects the rich and powerful debtor from the pursuit of his injured creditor, and which makes the industrious part of the nation afraid to prepare goods for the consumption

of those haughty and great men, to whom they dare not refuse to sell upon credit, and from whom they are altogether uncertain of repayment.

In England, on the contrary, the natural good effects of the colony trade, assisted by other causes, have in a great measure conquered the bad effects of the monopoly. These causes seem to be, the general liberty of trade, which, notwithstanding some restraints, is at least equal, perhaps superior, to what it is in any other country; the liberty of exporting, duty free, almost all sorts of goods which are the produce of domestic industry, to almost any foreign country; and what, perhaps, is of still greater importance, the unbounded liberty of transporting them from one part of our own country to any other, without being obliged to give any account to any public office, without being liable to question or examination of any kind; but, above all, that equal and impartial administration of justice, which renders the rights of the meanest British subject respectable to the greatest, and which, by securing to every man the fruits of his own industry, gives the greatest and most effectual encouragement to every sort of industry.

If the manufactures of Great Britain, however, have been advanced, as they certainly have, by the colony trade, it has not been by means of the monopoly of that trade, but in spite of the monopoly. The effect of the monopoly has been, not to augment the quantity, but to alter the quality and shape of a part of the manufactures of Great Britain, and to accommodate to a market, from which the returns are slow and distant, what would otherwise have been accommodated to one from which the returns are frequent and near. Its effect has consequently been, to turn a part of the capital of Great Britain from an employment in which it would have maintained a greater quantity of manufacturing industry, to one in which it maintains a much smaller, and thereby to diminish, instead of increasing, the whole quantity of manufacturing industry maintained in Great Britain.

The monopoly of the colony trade, therefore, like all the other mean and malignant expedients of the mercantile system, depresses the industry of all other countries, but chiefly that of the colonies, without in the least increasing, but on the contrary diminishing, that of the country in whose favour it is established.

The monopoly hinders the capital of that country, whatever may, at any particular time, be the extent of that capital, from maintaining so great a quantity of productive labour as it would otherwise maintain, and from affording so great a revenue to the industrious inhabitants as it would otherwise afford. But as capital can be increased only by savings

from revenue, the monopoly, by hindering it from affording so great a revenue as it would otherwise afford, necessarily hinders it from increasing so fast as it would otherwise increase, and consequently from maintaining a still greater quantity of productive labour, and affording a still greater revenue to the industrious inhabitants of that country. One great original source of revenue, therefore, the wages of labour, the monopoly must necessarily have rendered, at all times, less abundant than it otherwise would have been.

By raising the rate of mercantile profit, the monopoly discourages the improvement of land. The profit of improvement depends upon the difference between what the land actually produces, and what, by the application of a certain capital, it can be made to produce. If this difference affords a greater profit than what can be drawn from an equal capital in any mercantile employment, the improvement of land will draw capital from all mercantile employments. If the profit in less, mercantile employments will draw capital from the improvement of land. Whatever, therefore, raises the rate of mercantile profit, either lessens the superiority, or increases the inferiority of the profit of improvement: and, in the one case, hinders capital from going to improvement, and in the other draws capital from it; but by discouraging improvement, the monopoly necessarily retards the natural increase of another great original source of revenue, the rent of land. By raising the rate of profit, too, the monopoly necessarily keeps up the market rate of interest higher than it otherwise would be. But the price of land, in proportion to the rent which it affords, the number of years purchase which is commonly paid for it, necessarily falls as the rate of interest rises, and rises as the rate of interest falls. The monopoly, therefore, hurts the interest of the landlord two different ways, by retarding the natural increase, first, of his rent, and, secondly, of the price which he would get for his land, in proportion to the rent which it affords.

The monopoly, indeed, raises the rate of mercantile profit, and thereby augments somewhat the gain of our merchants. But as it obstructs the natural increase of capital, it tends rather to diminish than to increase the sum total of the revenue which the inhabitants of the country derive from the profits of stock; a small profit upon a great capital generally affording a greater revenue than a great profit upon a small one. The monopoly raises the rate of profit, but it hinders the sum of profit from rising so high as it otherwise would do.

All the original sources of revenue, the wages of labour, the rent of land, and the profits of stock, the monopoly renders much less abundant

than they otherwise would be. To promote the little interest of one little order of men in one country, it hurts the interest of all other orders of men in that country, and of all the men in all other countries.

It is solely by raising the ordinary rate of profit, that the monopoly either has proved, or could prove, advantageous to any one particular order of men. But besides all the bad effects to the country in general, which have already been mentioned as necessarily resulting from a higher rate of profit, there is one more fatal, perhaps, than all these put together, but which, if we may judge from experience, is inseparably connected with it. The high rate of profit seems everywhere to destroy that parsimony which, in other circumstances, is natural to the character of the merchant. When profits are high, that sober virtue seems to be superfluous, and expensive luxury to suit better the affluence of his situation. But the owners of the great mercantile capitals are necessarily the leaders and conductors of the whole industry of every nation; and their example has a much greater influence upon the manners of the whole industrious part of it than that of any other order of men. If his employer is attentive and parsimonious, the workman is very likely to be so too; but if the master in dissolute and disorderly, the servant, who shapes his work according to the pattern which his master prescribes to him, will shape his life, too, according to the example which he sets him. Accumulation is thus prevented in the hands of all those who are naturally the most disposed to accumulate; and the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour, receive no augmentation from the revenue of those who ought naturally to augment them the most. The capital of the country, instead of increasing, gradually dwindles away, and the quantity of productive labour maintained in it grows every day less and less. Have the exorbitant profits of the merchants of Cadiz and Lisbon augmented the capital of Spain and Portugal? Have they alleviated the poverty, have they promoted the industry, of those two beggarly countries? Such has been the tone of mercantile expense in those two trading cities, that those exorbitant profits, far from augmenting the general capital of the country, seem scarce to have been sufficient to keep up the capitals upon which they were made. Foreign capitals are every day intruding themselves, if I may say so, more and more into the trade of Cadiz and Lisbon. It is to expel those foreign capitals from a trade which their own grows every day more and more insufficient for carrying on, that the Spaniards and Portuguese endeavour every day to straiten more and more the galling bands of their absurd monopoly. Compare the mercantile manners of Cadiz and Lisbon with

those of Amsterdam, and you will be sensible how differently the conduct and character of merchants are affected by the high and by the low profits of stock. The merchants of London, indeed, have not yet generally become such magnificent lords as those of Cadiz and Lisbon; but neither are they in general such attentive and parsimonious burghers as those of Amsterdam. They are supposed, however, many of them, to be a good deal richer than the greater part of the former, and not quite so rich as many of the latter: but the rate of their profit is commonly much lower than that of the former, and a good deal higher than that of the latter. Light come, light go, says the proverb; and the ordinary tone of expense seems everywhere to be regulated, not so much according to the real ability of spending, as to the supposed facility of getting money to spend.

It is thus that the single advantage which the monopoly procures to a single order of men, is in many different ways hurtful to the general interest of the country.

To found a great empire for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers, may at first sight, appear a project fit only for a nation of shopkeepers. It is, however, a project altogether unfit for a nation of shopkeepers, but extremely fit for a nation whose government is influenced by shopkeepers. Such statesmen, and such statesmen only, are capable of fancying that they will find some advantage in employing the blood and treasure of their fellow-citizens, to found and maintain such an empire. Say to a shopkeeper, Buy me a good estate, and I shall always buy my clothes at your shop, even though I should pay somewhat dearer than what I can have them for at other shops; and you will not find him very forward to embrace your proposal. But should any other person buy you such an estate, the shopkeeper will be much obliged to your benefactor if he would enjoin you to buy all your clothes at his shop. England purchased for some of her subjects, who found themselves uneasy at home, a great estate in a distant country. The price, indeed, was very small, and instead of thirty years purchase, the ordinary price of land in the present times, it amounted to little more than the expense of the different equipments which made the first discovery, reconoitered the coast, and took a fictitious possession of the country. The land was good, and of great extent; and the cultivators having plenty of good ground to work upon, and being for some time at liberty to sell their produce where they pleased, became, in the course of little more than thirty or forty years (between 1620 and 1660), so numerous and thriving a people, that the shopkeepers and other traders of England wished to secure to

themselves the monopoly of their custom. Without pretending, therefore, that they had paid any part, either of the original purchase money, or of the subsequent expense of improvement, they petitioned the parliament, that the cultivators of America might for the future be confined to their shop; first, for buying all the goods which they wanted from Europe; and, secondly, for selling all such parts of their own produce as these traders might find it convenient to buy. For they did not find it convenient to buy every part of it. Some parts of it imported into England, might have interfered with some of the trades which they themselves carried on at home. Those particular parts of it, therefore, they were willing that the colonists should sell where they could; the farther off the better; and upon that account proposed that their market should be confined to the countries south of Cape Finisterre. A clause in the famous act of navigation established this truly shopkeeper proposal into a law.

The maintenance of this monopoly has hitherto been the principal, or more properly, perhaps, the sole end and purpose of the dominion which Great Britain assumes over her colonies. In the exclusive trade, it is supposed, consists the great advantage of provinces, which have never yet afforded either revenue or military force for the support of the civil government, or the defence of the mother country. The monopoly is the principal badge of their dependency, and it is the sole fruit which has hitherto been gathered from that dependency. Whatever expense Great Britain has hitherto laid out in maintaining this dependency, has really been laid out in order to support this monopoly. The expense of the ordinary peace establishment of the colonies amounted, before the commencement of the present disturbances to the pay of twenty regiments of foot; to the expense of the artillery, stores, and extraordinary provisions, with which it was necessary to supply them; and to the expense of a very considerable naval force, which was constantly kept up, in order to guard from the smuggling vessels of other nations, the immense coast of North America, and that of our West Indian islands. The whole expense of this peace establishment was a charge upon the revenue of Great Britain, and was, at the same time, the smallest part of what the dominion of the colonies has cost the mother country. If we would know the amount of the whole, we must add to the annual expense of this peace establishment, the interest of the sums which, in consequence of their considering her colonies as provinces subject to her dominion, Great Britain has, upon different occasions, laid out upon their defence. We must add to it, in particular, the whole

expense of the late war, and a great part of that of the war which preceded it. The late war was altogether a colony quarrel; and the whole expense of it, in whatever part of the world it might have been laid out, whether in Germany or the East Indies, ought justly to be stated to the account of the colonies. It amounted to more than ninety millions sterling, including not only the new debt which was contracted, but the two shillings in the pound additional land tax, and the sums which were every year borrowed from the sinking fund. The Spanish war which began in 1739 was principally a colony quarrel. Its principal object was to prevent the search of the colony ships, which carried on a contraband trade with the Spanish Main. This whole expense is, in reality, a bounty which has been given in order to support a monopoly. The pretended purpose of it was to encourage the manufactures, and to increase the commerce of Great Britain. But its real effect has been to raise the rate of mercantile profit, and to enable our merchants to turn into a branch of trade, of which the returns are more slow and distant than those of the greater part of other trades, a greater proportion of their capital than they otherwise would have done; two events which, if a bounty could have prevented, it might perhaps have been very well worth while to give such a bounty.

Under the present system of management, therefore, Great Britain derives nothing but loss from the dominion which she assumes over her colonies.

To propose that Great Britain should voluntarily give up all authority over her colonies, and leave them to elect their own magistrates, to enact their own laws, and to make peace and war, as they might think proper, would be to propose such a measure as never was, and never will be, adopted by any nation in the world. No nation ever voluntarily gave up the dominion of any province, how troublesome soever it might be to govern it, and how small soever the revenue which it afforded might be in proportion to the expense which it occasioned. Such sacrifices, though they might frequently be agreeable to the interest, are always mortifying to the pride of every nation; and, what is perhaps of still greater consequence, they are always contrary to the private interest of the governing part of it, who would thereby be deprived of the disposal of many places of trust and profit, of many opportunities of acquiring wealth and distinction, which the possession of the most turbulent, and, to the great body of the people, the most unprofitable province, seldom fails to afford. The most visionary enthusiasts would scarce be capable of proposing such a measure, with any serious hopes at least of its ever

being adopted. If it was adopted, however, Great Britain would not only be immediately freed from the whole annual expense of the peace establishment of the colonies, but might settle with them such a treaty of commerce as would effectually secure to her a free trade, more advantageous to the great body of the people, though less so to the merchants, than the monopoly which she at present enjoys. By thus parting good friends, the natural affection of the colonies to the mother country, which, perhaps our late dissensions have well nigh extinguished, would quickly revive. It might dispose them not only to respect, for whole centuries together, that treaty of commerce which they had concluded with us at parting, but to favour us in war as in trade, and instead of turbulent and factious subjects, to become our most faithful, affectionate, and generous allies; and the same sort of parental affection on the one side, and filial respect on the other, might revive between Great Britain and her colonies, which used to subsist between those of ancient Greece and the mother city from which they descended.

In order to render any province advantageous to the empire to which it belongs, it ought to afford, in time of peace, a revenue to the public, sufficient not only for defraying the whole expense of its own peace establishment, but for contributing its proportion to the support of the general government of the empire. Every province necessarily contributes, more or less, to increase the expense of that general government. If any particular province, therefore, does not contribute its share towards defraying this expense, an unequal burden must be thrown upon some other part of the empire. The extraordinary revenue, too, which every province affords to the public in time of war, ought, from parity of reason, to bear the same proportion to the extraordinary revenue of the whole empire, which its ordinary revenue does in time of peace. That neither the ordinary nor extraordinary revenue which Great Britain derives from her colonies, bears this proportion to the whole revenue of the British empire, will readily be allowed. The monopoly, it has been supposed, indeed, by increasing the private revenue of the people of Great Britain, and thereby enabling them to pay greater taxes, compensates the deficiency of the public revenue of the colonies. But this monopoly, I have endeavoured to show, though a very grievous tax upon the colonies, and though it may increase the revenue of a particular order of men in Great Britain, diminishes, instead of increasing, that of the great body of the people, and consequently diminishes, instead of increasing, the ability of the great body of the people to pay taxes. The men, too, whose revenue the monopoly increases, constitute a particular

order, which it is both absolutely impossible to tax beyond the proportion of other orders, and extremely impolitic even to attempt to tax beyond that proportion, as I shall endeavour to show in the following book. No particular resource, therefore, can be drawn from this particular order.

The colonies may be taxed either by their own assemblies, or by the parliament of Great Britain.

That the colony assemblies can never be so managed as to levy upon their constituents a public revenue, sufficient, not only to maintain at all times their own civil and military establishment, but to pay their proper proportion of the expense of the general government of the British empire, seems not very probable. It was a long time before even the parliament of England, though placed immediately under the eye of the sovereign, could be brought under such a system of management, or could be rendered sufficiently liberal in their grants for supporting the civil and military establishments even of their own country. It was only by distributing among the particular members of parliament a great part either of the offices, or of the disposal of the offices arising from this civil and military establishment, that such a system of management could be established, even with regard to the parliament of England. But the distance of the colony assemblies from the eye of the sovereign, their number, their dispersed situation, and their various constitutions, would render it very difficult to manage them in the same manner, even though the sovereign had the same means of doing it; and those means are wanting. It would be absolutely impossible to distribute among all the leading members of all the colony assemblies such a share, either of the offices, or of the disposal of the offices, arising from the general government of the British empire, as to dispose them to give up their popularity at home, and to tax their constituents for the support of that general government, of which almost the whole emoluments were to be divided among people who were strangers to them. The unavoidable ignorance of administration, besides, concerning the relative importance of the different members of those different assemblies, the offences which must frequently be given, the blunders which must constantly be committed, in attempting to manage them in this manner, seems to render such a system of management altogether impracticable with regard to them.

The colony assemblies, besides, cannot be supposed the proper judges of what is necessary for the defence and support of the whole empire. The care of that defence and support is not entrusted to them. It is not their business, and they have no regular means of information concerning

it. The assembly of a province, like the vestry of a parish, may judge very properly concerning the affairs of its own particular district, but can have no proper means of judging concerning those of the whole empire. It cannot even judge properly concerning the proportion which its own province bears to the whole empire, or concerning the relative degree of its wealth and importance, compared with the other provinces; because those other provinces are not under the inspection and superintendency of the assembly of a particular province. What is necessary for the defence and support of the whole empire, and in what proportion each part ought to contribute, can be judged of only by that assembly which inspects and superintends the affairs of the whole empire.

It has been proposed, accordingly, that the colonies should be taxed by requisition, the parliament of Great Britain determining the sum which each colony ought to pay, and the provincial assembly assessing and levying it in the way that suited best the circumstances of the province. What concerned the whole empire would in this way be determined by the assembly which inspects and superintends the affairs of the whole empire; and the provincial affairs of each colony might still be regulated by its own assembly. Though the colonies should, in this case, have no representatives in the British parliament, yet, if we may judge by experience, there is no probability that the parliamentary requisition would be unreasonable. The parliament of England has not, upon any occasion, shewn the smallest disposition to overburden those parts of the empire which are not represented in parliament. The islands of Guernsey and Jersey, without any means of resisting the authority of parliament, are more lightly taxed than any part of Great Britain. Parliament, in attempting to exercise its supposed right, whether well or ill grounded, of taxing the colonies, has never hitherto demanded of them any thing which even approached to a just proportion to what was paid by their fellow-subjects at home. If the contribution of the colonies, besides, was to rise or fall in proportion to the rise or fall of the land-tax, parliament could not tax them without taxing, at the same time, its own constituents, and the colonies might, in this case, be considered as virtually represented in parliament.

Examples are not wanting of empires in which all the different provinces are not taxed, if I may be allowed the expression, in one mass; but in which the sovereign regulates the sum which each province ought to pay, and in some provinces assesses and levies it as he thinks proper; while in others he leaves it to be assessed and levied as the respective states of each province shall determine. In some provinces of France, the

king not only imposes what taxes he thinks proper, but assesses and levies them in the way he thinks proper. From others he demands a certain sum, but leaves it to the states of each province to assess and levy that sum as they think proper. According to the scheme of taxing by requisition, the parliament of Great Britain would stand nearly in the same situation towards the colony assemblies, as the king of France does towards the states of those provinces which still enjoy the privilege of having states of their own, the provinces of France which are supposed to be the best governed.

But though, according to this scheme, the colonies could have no just reason to fear that their share of the public burdens should ever exceed the proper proportion to that of their fellow-citizens at home, Great Britain might have just reason to fear that it never would amount to that proper proportion. The parliament of Great Britain has not, for some time past, had the same established authority in the colonies, which the French king has in those provinces of France which still enjoy the privilege of having states of their own. The colony assemblies, if they were not very favourably disposed (and unless more skilfully managed than they ever have been hitherto, they are not very likely to be so), might still find many pretences for evading or rejecting the most reasonable requisitions of parliament. A French war breaks out, we shall suppose; ten millions must immediately be raised, in order to defend the seat of the empire. This sum must be borrowed upon the credit of some parliamentary fund mortgaged for paying the interest. Part of this fund parliament proposes to raise by a tax to be levied in Great Britain, and part of it by a requisition to all the different colony assemblies of America and the West Indies. Would people readily advance their money upon the credit of a fund which partly depended upon the good humour of all these assemblies, far distant from the seat of the war, and sometimes, perhaps, thinking themselves not much concerned in the event of it? Upon such a fund, no more money would probably be advanced than what the tax to be levied in Great Britain might be supposed to answer for. The whole burden of the debt contracted on account of the war would in this manner fall, as it always has done hitherto, upon Great Britain; upon a part of the empire, and not upon the whole empire. Great Britain is, perhaps, since the world began, the only state which, as it has extended its empire, has only increased its expense, without once augmenting its resources. Other states have generally disburdened themselves, upon their subject and subordinate provinces, of the most considerable part of the expense of defending the empire. Great

Britain has hitherto suffered her subject and subordinate provinces to disburden themselves upon her of almost this whole expense. In order to put Great Britain upon a footing of equality with her own colonies, which the law has hitherto supposed to be subject and subordinate, it seems necessary, upon the scheme of taxing them by parliamentary requisition, that parliament should have some means of rendering its requisitions immediately effectual, in case the colony assemblies should attempt to evade or reject them; and what those means are, it is not very easy to conceive, and it has not yet been explained.

Should the parliament of Great Britain, at the same time, be ever fully established in the right of taxing the colonies, even independent of the consent of their own assemblies, the importance of those assemblies would, from that moment, be at an end, and with it, that of all the leading men of British America. Men desire to have some share in the management of public affairs, chiefly on account of the importance which it gives them. Upon the power which the greater part of the leading men, the natural aristocracy of every country, have of preserving or defending their respective importance, depends the stability and duration of every system of free government. In the attacks which those leading men are continually making upon the importance of one another, and in the defence of their own, consists the whole play of domestic faction and ambition. The leading men of America, like those of all other countries, desire to preserve their own importance. They feel, or imagine, that if their assemblies, which they are fond of calling parliaments, and of considering as equal in authority to the parliament of Great Britain, should be so far degraded as to become the humble ministers and executive officers of that parliament, the greater part of their own importance would be at an end. They have rejected, therefore, the proposal of being taxed by parliamentary requisition, and, like other ambitious and high-spirited men, have rather chosen to draw the sword in defence of their own importance.

Towards the declension of the Roman republic, the allies of Rome, who had borne the principal burden of defending the state and extending the empire, demanded to be admitted to all the privileges of Roman citizens. Upon being refused, the social war broke out. During the course of that war, Rome granted those privileges to the greater part of them, one by one, and in proportion as they detached themselves from the general confederacy. The parliament of Great Britain insists upon taxing the colonies; and they refuse to be taxed by a parliament in which they are not represented. If to each colony which should detach itself from the

general confederacy, Great Britain should allow such a number of representatives as suited the proportion of what it contributed to the public revenue of the empire, in consequence of its being subjected to the same taxes, and in compensation admitted to the same freedom of trade with its fellow-subjects at home; the number of its representatives to be augmented as the proportion of its contribution might afterwards augment; a new method of acquiring importance, a new and more dazzling object of ambition, would be presented to the leading men of each colony. Instead of piddling for the little prizes which are to be found in what may be called the paltry raffle of colony faction, they might then hope, from the presumption which men naturally have in their own ability and good fortune, to draw some of the great prizes which sometimes come from the wheel of the great state lottery of British politics. Unless this or some other method is fallen upon, and there seems to be none more obvious than this, of preserving the importance and of gratifying the ambition of the leading men of America, it is not very probable that they will ever voluntarily submit to us; and we ought to consider, that the blood which must be shed in forcing them to do so, is, every drop of it, the blood either of those who are, or of those whom we wish to have for our fellow-citizens. They are very weak who flatter themselves that, in the state to which things have come, our colonies will be easily conquered by force alone. The persons who now govern the resolutions of what they call their continental congress, feel in themselves at this moment a degree of importance which, perhaps, the greatest subjects in Europe scarce feel. From shopkeepers, tradesmen, and attorneys, they are become statesmen and legislators, and are employed in contriving a new form of government for an extensive empire, which, they flatter themselves, will become, and which, indeed, seems very likely to become, one of the greatest and most formidable that ever was in the world. Five hundred different people, perhaps, who, in different ways, act immediately under the continental congress, and five hundred thousand, perhaps, who act under those five hundred, all feel, in the same manner, a proportionable rise in their own importance. Almost every individual of the governing party in America fills, at present, in his own fancy, a station superior, not only to what he had ever filled before, but to what he had ever expected to fill; and unless some new object of ambition is presented either to him or to his leaders, if he has the ordinary spirit of a man, he will die in defence of that station.

It is a remark of the President Heynaut, that we now read with pleasure the account of many little transactions of the Ligue, which,

when they happened, were not, perhaps, considered as very important pieces of news. But every man then, says he, fancied himself of some importance; and the innumerable memoirs which have come down to us from those times, were the greater part of them written by people who took pleasure in recording and magnifying events, in which they flattered themselves they had been considerable actors. How obstinately the city of Paris, upon that occasion, defended itself, what a dreadful famine it supported, rather than submit to the best, and afterwards the most beloved of all the French kings, is well known. The greater part of the citizens, or those who governed the greater part of them, fought in defence of their own importance, which, they foresaw, was to be at an end whenever the ancient government should be re-established. Our colonies, unless they can be induced to consent to a union, are very likely to defend themselves, against the best of all mother countries, as obstinately as the city of Paris did against one of the best of kings.

The idea of representation was unknown in ancient times. When the people of one state were admitted to the right of citizenship in another, they had no other means of exercising that right, but by coming in a body to vote and deliberate with the people of that other state. The admission of the greater part of the inhabitants of Italy to the privileges of Roman citizens, completely ruined the Roman republic. It was no longer possible to distinguish between who was, and who was not, a Roman citizen. No tribe could know its own members. A rabble of any kind could be introduced into the assemblies of the people, could drive out the real citizens, and decide upon the affairs of the republic, as if they themselves had been such. But though America were to send fifty or sixty new representatives to parliament, the door-keeper of the house of commons could not find any great difficulty in distinguishing between who was and who was not a member. Though the Roman constitution, therefore, was necessarily ruined by the union of Rome with the allied states of Italy, there is not the least probability that the British constitution would be hurt by the union of Great Britain with her colonies. That constitution, on the contrary, would be completed by it, and seems to be imperfect without it. The assembly which deliberates and decides concerning the affairs of every part of the empire, in order to be properly informed, ought certainly to have representatives from every part of it. That this union, however, could be easily effectuated, or that difficulties, and great difficulties, might not occur in the execution, I do not pretend. I have yet heard of none, however, which appear insurmountable. The principal, perhaps, arise, not from the nature of

things, but from the prejudices and opinions of the people, both on this and on the other side of the Atlantic.

We on this side of the water are afraid lest the multitude of American representatives should overturn the balance of the constitution, and increase too much either the influence of the crown on the one hand, or the force of the democracy on the other. But if the number of American representatives were to be in proportion to the produce of American taxation, the number of people to be managed would increase exactly in proportion to the means of managing them, and the means of managing to the number of people to be managed. The monarchical and democratical parts of the constitution would, after the union, stand exactly in the same degree of relative force with regard to one another as they had done before.

The people on the other side of the water are afraid lest their distance from the seat of government might expose them to many oppressions; but their representatives in parliament, of which the number ought from the first to be considerable, would easily be able to protect them from all oppression. The distance could not much weaken the dependency of the representative upon the constituent, and the former would still feel that he owed his seat in parliament, and all the consequence which he derived from it, to the good-will of the latter. It would be the interest of the former, therefore, to cultivate that good-will, by complaining, with all the authority of a member of the legislature, of every outrage which any civil or military officer might be guilty of in those remote parts of the empire. The distance of America from the seat of government, besides, the natives of that country might flatter themselves, with some appearance of reason too, would not be of very long continuance. Such has hitherto been the rapid progress of that country in wealth, population, and improvement, that in the course of little more than a century, perhaps, the produce of the American might exceed that of the British taxation. The seat of the empire would then naturally remove itself to that part of the empire which contributed most to the general defence and support of the whole.

The discovery of America, and that of a passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope, are the two greatest and most important events recorded in the history of mankind. Their consequences have already been great; but, in the short period of between two and three centuries which has elapsed since these discoveries were made, it is impossible that the whole extent of their consequences can have been seen. What benefits or what misfortunes to mankind may hereafter result from those

great events, no human wisdom can foresee. By uniting in some measure the most distant parts of the world, by enabling them to relieve one another's wants, to increase one another's enjoyments, and to encourage one another's industry, their general tendency would seem to be beneficial. To the natives, however, both of the East and West Indies, all the commercial benefits which can have resulted from those events have been sunk and lost in the dreadful misfortunes which they have occasioned. These misfortunes, however, seem to have arisen rather from accident than from any thing in the nature of those events themselves. At the particular time when these discoveries were made, the superiority of force happened to be so great on the side of the Europeans, that they were enabled to commit with impunity every sort of injustice in those remote countries. Hereafter, perhaps, the natives of those countries may grow stronger, or those of Europe may grow weaker; and the inhabitants of all the different quarters of the world may arrive at that equality of courage and force which, by inspiring mutual fear, can alone overawe the injustice of independent nations into some sort of respect for the rights of one another. But nothing seems more likely to establish this equality of force, than that mutual communication of knowledge, and of all sorts of improvements, which an extensive commerce from all countries to all countries naturally, or rather necessarily, carries along with it.

In the mean time, one of the principal effects of those discoveries has been, to raise the mercantile system to a degree of splendour and glory which it could never otherwise have attained to. It is the object of that system to enrich a great nation, rather by trade and manufactures than by the improvement and cultivation of land, rather by the industry of the towns than by that of the country. But in consequence of those discoveries, the commercial towns of Europe, instead of being the manufacturers and carriers for but a very small part of the world (that part of Europe which is washed by the Atlantic ocean, and the countries which lie round the Baltic and Mediterranean seas), have now become the manufacturers for the numerous and thriving cultivators of America, and the carriers, and in some respects the manufacturers too, for almost all the different nations of Asia, Africa, and America. Two new worlds have been opened to their industry, each of them much greater and more extensive than the old one, and the market of one of them growing still greater and greater every day.

The countries which possess the colonies of America, and which trade directly to the East Indies, enjoy indeed the whole show and splendour of this great commerce. Other countries, however, notwithstanding all the

invidious restraints by which it is meant to exclude them, frequently enjoy a greater share of the real benefit of it. The colonies of Spain and Portugal, for example, give more real encouragement to the industry of other countries than to that of Spain and Portugal. In the single article of linen alone, the consumption of those colonies amounts, it is said (but I do not pretend to warrant the quantity), to more than three millions sterling a-year. But this great consumption is almost entirely supplied by France, Flanders, Holland, and Germany. Spain and Portugal furnish but a small part of it. The capital which supplies the colonies with this great quantity of linen, is annually distributed among, and furnishes a revenue to, the inhabitants of those other countries. The profits of it only are spent in Spain and Portugal, where they help to support the sumptuous profusion of the merchants of Cadiz and Lisbon.

Even the regulations by which each nation endeavours to secure to itself the exclusive trade of its own colonies, are frequently more hurtful to the countries in favour of which they are established, than to those against which they are established. The unjust oppression of the industry of other countries falls back, if I may say so, upon the heads of the oppressors, and crushes their industry more than it does that of those other countries. By those regulations, for example, the merchant of Hamburg must send the linen which he destines for the American market to London, and he must bring back from thence the tobacco which he destines for the German market; because he can neither send the one directly to America, nor bring the other directly from thence. By this restraint he is probably obliged to sell the one somewhat cheaper, and to buy the other somewhat dearer, than he otherwise might have done; and his profits are probably somewhat abridged by means of it. In this trade, however, between Hamburg and London, he certainly receives the returns of his capital much more quickly than he could possibly have done in the direct trade to America, even though we should suppose, what is by no means the case, that the payments of America were as punctual as those of London. In the trade, therefore, to which those regulations confine the merchant of Hamburg, his capital can keep in constant employment a much greater quantity of German industry than he possibly could have done in the trade from which he is excluded. Though the one employment, therefore, may to him perhaps be less profitable than the other, it cannot be less advantageous to his country. It is quite otherwise with the employment into which the monopoly naturally attracts, if I may say so, the capital of the London merchant. That employment may, perhaps, be more profitable to him than the

greater part of other employments; but on account of the slowness of the returns, it cannot be more advantageous to his country.

After all the unjust attempts, therefore, of every country in Europe to engross to itself the whole advantage of the trade of its own colonies, no country has yet been able to engross to itself any thing but the expense of supporting in time of peace, and of defending in time of war, the oppressive authority which it assumes over them. The inconveniencies resulting from the possession of its colonies, every country has engrossed to itself completely. The advantages resulting from their trade, it has been obliged to share with many other countries.

At first sight, no doubt, the monopoly of the great commerce of America naturally seems to be an acquisition of the highest value. To the undiscerning eye of giddy ambition it naturally presents itself, amidst the confused scramble of politics and war, as a very dazzling object to fight for. The dazzling splendour of the object, however, the immense greatness of the commerce, is the very quality which renders the monopoly of it hurtful, or which makes one employment, in its own nature necessarily less advantageous to the country than the greater part of other employments, absorb a much greater proportion of the capital of the country than what would otherwise have gone to it.

The mercantile stock of every country, it has been shown in the second book, naturally seeks, if one may say so, the employment most advantageous to that country. If it is employed in the carrying trade, the country to which it belongs becomes the emporium of the goods of all the countries whose trade that stock carries on. But the owner of that stock necessarily wishes to dispose of as great a part of those goods as he can at home. He thereby saves himself the trouble, risk, and expense of exportation; and he will upon that account be glad to sell them at home, not only for a much smaller price, but with somewhat a smaller profit, than he might expect to make by sending them abroad. He naturally, therefore, endeavours as much as he can to turn his carrying trade into a foreign trade of consumption. If his stock, again, is employed in a foreign trade of consumption, he will, for the same reason, be glad to dispose of, at home, as great a part as he can of the home goods which he collects in order to export to some foreign market, and he will thus endeavour, as much as he can, to turn his foreign trade of consumption into a home trade. The mercantile stock of every country naturally courts in this manner the near, and shuns the distant employment; naturally courts the employment in which the returns are frequent, and shuns that in which they are distant and slow; naturally courts the employment in

which it can maintain the greatest quantity of productive labour in the country to which it belongs, or in which its owner resides, and shuns that in which it can maintain there the smallest quantity. It naturally courts the employment which in ordinary cases is most advantageous, and shuns that which in ordinary cases is least advantageous to that country.

But if, in any one of these distant employments, which in ordinary cases are less advantageous to the country, the profit should happen to rise somewhat higher than what is sufficient to balance the natural preference which is given to nearer employments, this superiority of profit will draw stock from those nearer employments, till the profits of all return to their proper level. This superiority of profit, however, is a proof that, in the actual circumstances of the society, those distant employments are somewhat understocked in proportion to other employments, and that the stock of the society is not distributed in the properest manner among all the different employments carried on in it. It is a proof that something is either bought cheaper or sold dearer than it ought to be, and that some particular class of citizens is more or less oppressed, either by paying more, or by getting less than what is suitable to that equality which ought to take place, and which naturally does take place, among all the different classes of them. Though the same capital never will maintain the same quantity of productive labour in a distant as in a near employment, yet a distant employment may be as necessary for the welfare of the society as a near one; the goods which the distant employment deals in being necessary, perhaps, for carrying on many of the nearer employments. But if the profits of those who deal in such goods are above their proper level, those goods will be sold dearer than they ought to be, or somewhat above their natural price, and all those engaged in the nearer employments will be more or less oppressed by this high price. Their interest, therefore, in this case, requires, that some stock should be withdrawn from those nearer employments, and turned towards that distant one, in order to reduce its profits to their proper level, and the price of the goods which it deals in to their natural price. In this extraordinary case, the public interest requires that some stock should be withdrawn from those employments which, in ordinary cases, are more advantageous, and turned towards one which, in ordinary cases, is less advantageous to the public; and, in this extraordinary case, the natural interests and inclinations of men coincide as exactly with the public interests as in all other ordinary cases, and lead them to withdraw stock from the near, and to turn it towards the distant employments.

It is thus that the private interests and passions of individuals naturally dispose them to turn their stock towards the employments which in ordinary cases, are most advantageous to the society. But if from this natural preference they should turn too much of it towards those employments, the fall of profit in them, and the rise of it in all others, immediately dispose them to alter this faulty distribution. Without any intervention of law, therefore, the private interests and passions of men naturally lead them to divide and distribute the stock of every society among all the different employments carried on in it, as nearly as possible in the proportion which is most agreeable to the interest of the whole society.

All the different regulations of the mercantile system necessarily derange more or less this natural and most advantageous distribution of stock. But those which concern the trade to America and the East Indies derange it, perhaps, more than any other; because the trade to those two great continents absorbs a greater quantity of stock than any two other branches of trade. The regulations, however, by which this derangement is effected in those two different branches of trade, are not altogether the same. Monopoly is the great engine of both; but it is a different sort of monopoly. Monopoly of one kind or another, indeed, seems to be the sole engine of the mercantile system.

In the trade to America, every nation endeavours to engross as much as possible the whole market of its own colonies, by fairly excluding all other nations from any direct trade to them. During the greater part of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese endeavoured to manage the trade to the East Indies in the same manner, by claiming the sole right of sailing in the Indian seas, on account of the merit of having first found out the road to them. The Dutch still continue to exclude all other European nations from any direct trade to their spice islands. Monopolies of this kind are evidently established against all other European nations, who are thereby not only excluded from a trade to which it might be convenient for them to turn some part of their stock, but are obliged to buy the goods which that trade deals in, somewhat dearer than if they could import them themselves directly from the countries which produced them.

But since the fall of the power of Portugal, no European nation has claimed the exclusive right of sailing in the Indian seas, of which the principal ports are now open to the ships of all European nations. Except in Portugal, however, and within these few years in France, the trade to the East Indies has, in every European country, been subjected to an exclusive company. Monopolies of this kind are properly established

against the very nation which erects them. The greater part of that nation are thereby not only excluded from a trade to which it might be convenient for them to turn some part of their stock, but are obliged to buy the goods which that trade deals in somewhat dearer than if it was open and free to all their countrymen. Since the establishment of the English East India company, for example, the other inhabitants of England, over and above being excluded from the trade, must have paid, in the price of the East India goods which they have consumed, not only for all the extraordinary profits which the company may have made upon those goods in consequence of their monopoly, but for all the extraordinary waste which the fraud and abuse inseparable from the management of the affairs of so great a company must necessarily have occasioned. The absurdity of this second kind of monopoly, therefore, is much more manifest than that of the first.

Both these kinds of monopolies derange more or less the natural distribution of the stock of the society; but they do not always derange it in the same way.

Monopolies of the first kind always attract to the particular trade in which they are established a greater proportion of the stock of the society than what would go to that trade of its own accord.

Monopolies of the second kind may sometimes attract stock towards the particular trade in which they are established, and sometimes repel it from that trade, according to different circumstances. In poor countries, they naturally attract towards the trade more stock than would otherwise go to it. In rich countries, they naturally repel from it a good deal of stock which would otherwise go to it.

Such poor countries as Sweden and Denmark, for example, would probably have never sent a single ship to the East Indies, had not the trade been subjected to an exclusive company. The establishment of such a company necessarily encourages adventurers. Their monopoly secures them against all competitors in the home market, and they have the same chance for foreign markets with the traders of other nations. Their monopoly shows them the certainty of a great profit upon a considerable quantity of goods, and the chance of a considerable profit upon a great quantity. Without such extraordinary encouragement, the poor traders of such poor countries would probably never have thought of hazarding their small capitals in so very distant and uncertain an adventure as the trade to the East Indies must naturally have appeared to them.

Such a rich country as Holland, on the contrary, would probably, in the case of a free trade, send many more ships to the East Indies than it

actually does. The limited stock of the Dutch East India company probably repels from that trade many great mercantile capitals which would otherwise go to it. The mercantile capital of Holland is so great, that it is, as it were, continually overflowing, sometimes into the public funds of foreign countries, sometimes into loans to private traders and adventurers of foreign countries, sometimes into the most round-about foreign trades consumption, and sometimes into the carrying trade. All near employments being completely filled up, all the capital which can be placed in them with any tolerable profit being already placed in them, the capital of Holland necessarily flows towards the most distant employments. The trade to the East Indies, if it were altogether free, would probably absorb the greater part of this redundant capital. The East Indies offer a market both for the manufactures of Europe, and for the gold and silver, as well as for the several other productions of America, greater and more extensive than both Europe and America put together.

Every derangement of the natural distribution of stock is necessarily hurtful to the society in which it takes place; whether it be by repelling from a particular trade the stock which would otherwise go to it, or by attracting towards a particular trade that which would not otherwise come to it. If, without any exclusive company, the trade of Holland to the East Indies would be greater than it actually is, that country must suffer a considerable loss, by part of its capital being excluded from the employment most convenient for that port. And, in the same manner, if, without an exclusive company, the trade of Sweden and Denmark to the East Indies would be less than it actually is, or, what perhaps is more probable, would not exist at all, those two countries must likewise suffer a considerable loss, by part of their capital being drawn into an employment which must be more or less unsuitable to their present circumstances. Better for them, perhaps, in the present circumstances, to buy East India goods of other nations, even though they should pay somewhat dearer, than to turn so great a part of their small capital to so very distant a trade, in which the returns are so very slow, in which that capital can maintain so small a quantity of productive labour at home, where productive labour is so much wanted, where so little is done, and where so much is to do.

Though without an exclusive company, therefore, a particular country should not be able to carry on any direct trade to the East Indies, it will not from thence follow, that such a company ought to be established there, but only that such a country ought not, in these circumstances, to

trade directly to the East Indies. That such companies are not in general necessary for carrying on the East India trade, is sufficiently demonstrated by the experience of the Portuguese, who enjoyed almost the whole of it for more than a century together, without any exclusive company.

No private merchant, it has been said, could well have capital sufficient to maintain factors and agents in the different ports of the East Indies, in order to provide goods for the ships which he might occasionally send thither; and yet, unless he was able to do this, the difficulty of finding a cargo might frequently make his ships lose the season for returning; and the expense of so long a delay would not only eat up the whole profit of the adventure, but frequently occasion a very considerable loss. This argument, however, if it proved any thing at all, would prove that no one great branch of trade could be carried on without an exclusive company, which is contrary to the experience of all nations. There is no great branch of trade, in which the capital of any one private merchant is sufficient for carrying on all the subordinate branches which must be carried on, in order to carry on the principal one. But when a nation is ripe for any great branch of trade, some merchants naturally turn their capitals towards some principal, and some towards the subordinate branches of it; and though all the different branches of it are in this manner carried on, yet it very seldom happens that they are all carried on by the capital of one private merchant. If a nation, therefore, is ripe for the East India trade, a certain portion of its capital will naturally divide itself among all the different branches of that trade. Some of its merchants will find it for their interest to reside in the East Indies, and to employ their capitals there in providing goods for the ships which are to be sent out by other merchants who reside in Europe. The settlements which different European nations have obtained in the East Indies, if they were taken from the exclusive companies to which they at present belong, and put under the immediate protection of the sovereign, would render this residence both safe and easy, at least to the merchants of the particular nations to whom those settlements belong. If, at any particular time, that part of the capital of any country which of its own accord tended and inclined, if I may say so, towards the East India trade, was not sufficient for carrying on all those different branches of it, it would be a proof that, at that particular time, that country was not ripe for that trade, and that it would do better to buy for some time, even at a higher price, from other European nations, the East India goods it had occasion for, than to import them itself directly from the East Indies. What it

might lose by the high price of those goods, could seldom be equal to the loss which it would sustain by the distraction of a large portion of its capital from other employments more necessary, or more useful, or more suitable to its circumstances and situation, than a direct trade to the East Indies.

Though the Europeans possess many considerable settlements both upon the coast of Africa and in the East Indies, they have not yet established, in either of those countries, such numerous and thriving colonies as those in the islands and continent of America. Africa, however, as well as several of the countries comprehended under the general name of the East Indies, is inhabited by barbarous nations. But those nations were by no means so weak and defenceless as the miserable and helpless Americans; and in proportion to the natural fertility of the countries which they inhabited, they were, besides, much more populous. The most barbarous nations, either of Africa or of the East Indies, were shepherds; even the Hottentots were so. But the natives of every part of America, except Mexico and Peru, were only hunters; and the difference is very great between the number of shepherds and that of hunters, whom the same extent of equally fertile territory can maintain. In Africa and the East Indies, therefore, it was more difficult to displace the natives, and to extend the European plantations over the greater part of the lands of the original inhabitants. The genius of exclusive companies, besides, is unfavourable, it has already been observed, to the growth of new colonies, and has probably been the principal cause of the little progress which they have made in the East Indies. The Portuguese carried on the trade both to Africa and the East Indies, without any exclusive companies; and their settlements at Congo, Angola, and Benguela, on the coast of Africa, and at Goa in the East Indies, though much depressed by superstition and every sort of bad government, yet bear some resemblance to the colonies of America, and are partly inhabited by Portuguese who have been established there for several generations. The Dutch settlements at the Cape of Good Hope and at Batavia, are at present the most considerable colonies which the Europeans have established, either in Africa or in the East Indies; and both those settlements are peculiarly fortunate in their situation. The Cape of Good Hope was inhabited by a race of people almost as barbarous, and quite as incapable of defending themselves, as the natives of America. It is, besides, the half-way house, if one may say so, between Europe and the East Indies, at which almost every European ship makes some stay, both in going and returning. The supplying of

those ships with every sort of fresh provisions, with fruit, and sometimes with wine, affords alone a very extensive market for the surplus produce of the colonies. What the Cape of Good Hope is between Europe and every part of the East Indies, Batavia is between the principal countries of the East Indies. It lies upon the most frequented road from Indostan to China and Japan, and is nearly about mid-way upon that road. Almost all the ships too, that sail between Europe and China, touch at Batavia; and it is, over and above all this, the centre and principal mart of what is called the country trade of the East Indies; not only of that part of it which is carried on by Europeans, but of that which is carried on by the native Indians; and vessels navigated by the inhabitants of China and Japan, of Tonquin, Malacca, Cochin-China, and the island of Celebes, are frequently to be seen in its port. Such advantageous situations have enabled those two colonies to surmount all the obstacles which the oppressive genius of an exclusive company may have occasionally opposed to their growth. They have enabled Batavia to surmount the additional disadvantage of perhaps the most unwholesome climate in the world.

The English and Dutch companies, though they have established no considerable colonies, except the two above mentioned, have both made considerable conquests in the East Indies. But in the manner in which they both govern their new subjects, the natural genius of an exclusive company has shewn itself most distinctly. In the spice islands, the Dutch are said to burn all the spiceries which a fertile season produces, beyond what they expect to dispose of in Europe with such a profit as they think sufficient. In the islands where they have no settlements, they give a premium to those who collect the young blossoms and green leaves of the clove and nutmeg trees, which naturally grow there, but which this savage policy has now, it is said, almost completely extirpated. Even in the islands where they have settlements, they have very much reduced, it is said, the number of those trees. If the produce even of their own islands was much greater than what suited their market, the natives, they suspect, might find means to convey some part of it to other nations; and the best way, they imagine, to secure their own monopoly, is to take care that no more shall grow than what they themselves carry to market. By different arts of oppression, they have reduced the population of several of the Moluccas nearly to the number which is sufficient to supply with fresh provisions, and other necessaries of life, their own insignificant garrisons, and such of their ships as occasionally come there for a cargo of spices. Under the government even of the Portuguese, however, those

islands are said to have been tolerably well inhabited. The English company have not yet had time to establish in Bengal so perfectly destructive a system. The plan of their government, however, has had exactly the same tendency. It has not been uncommon, I am well assured, for the chief, that is, the first clerk of a factory, to order a peasant to plough up a rich field of poppies, and sow it with rice, or some other grain. The pretence was, to prevent a scarcity of provisions; but the real reason, to give the chief an opportunity of selling at a better price a large quantity of opium which he happened then to have upon hand. Upon other occasions, the order has been reversed; and a rich field of rice or other grain has been ploughed up, in order to make room for a plantation of poppies, when the chief foresaw that extraordinary profit was likely to be made by opium. The servants of the company have, upon several occasions, attempted to establish in their own favour the monopoly of some of the most important branches, not only of the foreign, but of the inland trade of the country. Had they been allowed to go on, it is impossible that they should not, at some time or another, have attempted to restrain the production of the particular articles of which they had thus usurped the monopoly, not only to the quantity which they themselves could purchase, but to that which they could expect to sell with such a profit as they might think sufficient. In the course of a century or two, the policy of the English company would, in this manner, have probably proved as completely destructive as that of the Dutch.

Nothing, however, can be more directly contrary to the real interest of those companies, considered as the sovereigns of the countries which they have conquered, than this destructive plan. In almost all countries, the revenue of the sovereign is drawn from that of the people. The greater the revenue of the people, therefore, the greater the annual produce of their land and labour, the more they can afford to the sovereign. It is his interest, therefore, to increase as much as possible that annual produce. But if this is the interest of every sovereign, it is peculiarly so of one whose revenue, like that of the sovereign of Bengal, arises chiefly from a land-rent. That rent must necessarily be in proportion to the quantity and value of the produce; and both the one and the other must depend upon the extent of the market. The quantity will always be suited, with more or less exactness, to the consumption of those who can afford to pay for it; and the price which they will pay will always be in proportion to the eagerness of their competition. It is the interest of such a sovereign, therefore, to open the most extensive market for the produce of his country, to allow the most perfect freedom of

commerce, in order to increase as much as possible the number and competition of buyers; and upon this account to abolish, not only all monopolies, but all restraints upon the transportation of the home produce from one part of the country to another, upon its exportation to foreign countries, or upon the importation of goods of any kind for which it can be exchanged. He is in this manner most likely to increase both the quantity and value of that produce, and consequently of his own share of it, or of his own revenue.

But a company of merchants, are, it seems, incapable of considering themselves as sovereigns, even after they have become such. Trade, or buying in order to sell again, they still consider as their principal business, and by a strange absurdity, regard the character of the sovereign as but an appendix to that of the merchant; as something which ought to be made subservient to it, or by means of which they may be enabled to buy cheaper in India, and thereby to sell with a better profit in Europe. They endeavour, for this purpose, to keep out as much as possible all competitors from the market of the countries which are subject to their government, and consequently to reduce, at least, some part of the surplus produce of those countries to what is barely sufficient for supplying their own demand, or to what they can expect to sell in Europe, with such a profit as they may think reasonable. Their mercantile habits draw them in this manner, almost necessarily, though perhaps insensibly, to prefer, upon all ordinary occasions, the little and transitory profit of the monopolist to the great and permanent revenue of the sovereign; and would gradually lead them to treat the countries subject to their government nearly as the Dutch treat the Moluccas. It is the interest of the East India company, considered as sovereigns, that the European goods which are carried to their Indian dominions should be sold there as cheap as possible; and that the Indian goods which are brought from thence should bring there as good a price, or should be sold there as dear as possible. But the reverse of this is their interest as merchants. As sovereigns, their interest is exactly the same with that of the country which they govern. As merchants, their interest is directly opposite to that interest.

But if the genius of such a government, even as to what concerns its direction in Europe, is in this manner essentially, and perhaps incurably faulty, that of its administration in India is still more so. That administration is necessarily composed of a council of merchants, a profession no doubt extremely respectable, but which in no country in the world carries along with it that sort of authority which naturally

overawes the people, and without force commands their willing obedience. Such a council can command obedience only by the military force with which they are accompanied; and their government is, therefore, necessarily military and despotical. Their proper business, however, is that of merchants. It is to sell, upon their master's account, the European goods consigned to them, and to buy, in return, Indian goods for the European market. It is to sell the one as dear, and to buy the other as cheap as possible, and consequently to exclude, as much as possible, all rivals from the particular market where they keep their shop. The genius of the administration, therefore, so far as concerns the trade of the company, is the same as that of the direction. It tends to make government subservient to the interest of monopoly, and consequently to stunt the natural growth of some parts, at least, of the surplus produce of the country, to what is barely sufficient for answering the demand of the company.

All the members of the administration, besides, trade more or less upon their own account; and it is in vain to prohibit them from doing so. Nothing can be more completely foolish than to expect that the clerks of a great counting-house, at ten thousand miles distance, and consequently almost quite out of sight, should, upon a simple order from their master, give up at once doing any sort of business upon their own account; abandon for ever all hopes of making a fortune, of which they have the means in their hands; and content themselves with the moderate salaries which those masters allow them, and which, moderate as they are, can seldom be augmented, being commonly as large as the real profits of the company trade can afford. In such circumstances, to prohibit the servants of the company from trading upon their own account, can have scarce any other effect than to enable its superior servants, under pretence of executing their master's order, to oppress such of the inferior ones as have had the misfortune to fall under their displeasure. The servants naturally endeavour to establish the same monopoly in favour of their own private trade as of the public trade of the company. If they are suffered to act as they could wish, they will establish this monopoly openly and directly, by fairly prohibiting all other people from trading in the articles in which they choose to deal; and this, perhaps, is the best and least oppressive way of establishing it. But if, by an order from Europe, they are prohibited from doing this, they will, notwithstanding, endeavour to establish a monopoly of the same kind secretly and indirectly, in a way that is much more destructive to the country. They will employ the whole authority of government, and pervert the

administration of justice, in order to harass and ruin those who interfere with them in any branch of commerce, which by means of agents, either concealed, or at least not publicly avowed, they may choose to carry on. But the private trade of the servants will naturally extend to a much greater variety of articles than the public trade of the company. The public trade of the company extends no further than the trade with Europe, and comprehends a part only of the foreign trade of the country. But the private trade of the servants may extend to all the different branches both of its inland and foreign trade. The monopoly of the company can tend only to stunt the natural growth of that part of the surplus produce which, in the case of a free trade, would be exported to Europe. That of the servants tends to stunt the natural growth of every part of the produce in which they choose to deal; of what is destined for home consumption, as well as of what is destined for exportation; and consequently to degrade the cultivation of the whole country, and to reduce the number of its inhabitants. It tends to reduce the quantity of every sort of produce, even that of the necessaries of life, whenever the servants of the country choose to deal in them, to what those servants can both afford to buy and expect to sell with such a profit as pleases them.

From the nature of their situation, too, the servants must be more disposed to support with rigourous severity their own interest, against that of the country which they govern, than their masters can be to support theirs. The country belongs to their masters, who cannot avoid having some regard for the interest of what belongs to them; but it does not belong to the servants. The real interest of their masters, if they were capable of understanding it, is the same with that of the country;[42]* and it is from ignorance chiefly, and the meanness of mercantile prejudice, that they ever oppress it. But the real interest of the servants is by no means the same with that of the country, and the most perfect information would not necessarily put an end to their oppressions. The regulations, accordingly, which have been sent out from Europe, though they have been frequently weak, have upon most occasions been well meaning. More intelligence, and perhaps less good meaning, has sometimes appeared in those established by the servants in India. It is a very singular government in which every member of the administration wishes to get out of the country, and consequently to have done with the government, as soon as he can, and to whose interest, the day after he has left it, and carried his whole fortune with him, it is perfectly indifferent though the whole country was swallowed up by an earthquake.

I mean not, however, by any thing which I have here said, to throw any odious imputation upon the general character of the servants of the East India company, and much less upon that of any particular persons. It is the system of government, the situation in which they are placed, that I mean to censure, not the character of those who have acted in it. They acted as their situation naturally directed, and they who have clamoured the loudest against them would probably not have acted better themselves. In war and negotiation, the councils of Madras and Calcutta, have upon several occasions, conducted themselves with a resolution and decisive wisdom, which would have done honour to the senate of Rome in the best days of that republic. The members of those councils, however, had been bred to professions very different from war and politics. But their situation alone, without education, experience, or even example, seems to have formed in them all at once the great qualities which it required, and to have inspired them both with abilities and virtues which they themselves could not well know that they possessed. If upon some occasions, therefore, it has animated them to actions of magnanimity which could not well have been expected from them, we should not wonder if, upon others, it has prompted them to exploits of somewhat a different nature.

Such exclusive companies, therefore, are nuisances in every respect; always more or less inconvenient to the countries in which they are established, and destructive to those which have the misfortune to fall under their government.

CHAP. VIII. CONCLUSION OF THE MERCANTILE SYSTEM.

Though the encouragement of exportation, and the discouragement of importation, are the two great engines by which the mercantile system proposes to enrich every country, yet, with regard to some particular commodities, it seems to follow an opposite plan: to discourage exportation, and to encourage importation. Its ultimate object, however, it pretends, is always the same, to enrich the country by an advantageous balance of trade. It discourages the exportation of the materials of manufacture, and of the instruments of trade, in order to give our own workmen an advantage, and to enable them to undersell those of other nations in all foreign markets; and by restraining, in this manner, the exportation of a few commodities, of no great price, it proposes to occasion a much greater and more valuable exportation of others. It encourages the importation of the materials of manufacture, in order that our own people may be enabled to work them up more cheaply, and thereby prevent a greater and more valuable importation of the manufactured commodities. I do not observe, at least in our statute book, any encouragement given to the importation of the instruments of trade. When manufactures have advanced to a certain pitch of greatness, the fabrication of the instruments of trade becomes itself the object of a great number of very important manufactures. To give any particular encouragement to the importation of such instruments, would interfere too much with the interest of those manufactures. Such importation, therefore, instead of being encouraged, has frequently been prohibited. Thus the importation of wool cards, except from Ireland, or when brought in as wreck or prize goods, was prohibited by the 3d of Edward IV.; which prohibition was renewed by the 39th of Elizabeth, and has been continued and rendered perpetual by subsequent laws.

The importation of the materials of manufacture has sometimes been encouraged by an exemption from the duties to which other goods are subject, and sometimes by bounties.

The importation of sheep’s wool from several different countries, of cotton wool from all countries, of undressed flax, of the greater part of dyeing drugs, of the greater part of undressed hides from Ireland, or the British colonies, of seal skins from the British Greenland fishery, of pig and bar iron from the British colonies, as well as of several other

materials of manufacture, has been encouraged by an exemption from all duties, if properly entered at the custom-house. The private interest of our merchants and manufacturers may, perhaps, have extorted from the legislature these exemptions, as well as the greater part of our other commercial regulations. They are, however, perfectly just and reasonable; and if, consistently with the necessities of the state, they could be extended to all the other materials of manufacture, the public would certainly be a gainer.

The avidity of our great manufacturers, however, has in some cases extended these exemptions a good deal beyond what can justly be considered as the rude materials of their work. By the 24th Geo. II. cha, a small duty of only 1d. the pound was imposed upon the importation of foreign brown linen yarn, instead of much higher duties, to which it had been subjected before, viz. of 6d. the pound upon sail yarn, of 1s. the pound upon all French and Dutch yarn, and of L.2 : 13 : 4 upon the hundred weight of all spruce or Muscovia yarn. But our manufacturers were not long satisfied with this reduction: by the 29th of the same king, cha, the same law which gave a bounty upon the exportation of British and Irish linen, of which the price did not exceed 18d. the yard, even this small duty upon the importation of brown linen yarn was taken away. In the different operations, however, which are necessary for the preparation of linen yarn, a good deal more industry is employed, than in the subsequent operation of preparing linen cloth from linen yarn. To say nothing of the industry of the flax-growers and flax-dressers, three or four spinners at least are necessary in order to keep one weaver in constant employment; and more than four-fifths of the whole quantity of labour necessary for the preparation of linen cloth, is employed in that of linen yarn; but our spinners are poor people; women commonly scattered about in all different parts of the country, without support or protection. It is not by the sale of their work, but by that of the complete work of the weavers, that our great master manufactures make their profits. As it is their interest to sell the complete manufacture as dear, so it is to buy the materials as cheap as possible. By extorting from the legislature bounties upon the exportation of their own linen, high duties upon the importation of all foreign linen, and a total prohibition of the home consumption of some sorts of French linen, they endeavour to sell their own goods as dear as possible. By encouraging the importation of foreign linen yarn, and thereby bringing it into competition with that which is made by our own people, they endeavour to buy the work of the poor spinners as cheap as possible. They are as intent to keep down the wages of their

own weavers, as the earnings of the poor spinners; and it is by no means for the benefit of the workmen that they endeavour either to raise the price of the complete work, or to lower that of the rude materials. It is the industry which is carried on for the benefit of the rich and the powerful, that is principally encouraged by our mercantile system. That which is carried on for the benefit of the poor and the indigent is too often either neglected or oppressed.

Both the bounty upon the exportation of linen, and the exemption from the duty upon the importation of foreign yarn, which were granted only for fifteen years, but continued by two different prolongations, expire with the end of the session of parliament which shall immediately follow the 24th of June 1786.

The encouragement given to the importation of the materials of manufacture by bounties, has been principally confined to such as were imported from our American plantations.

The first bounties of this kind were those granted about the beginning of the present century, upon the importation of naval stores from America. Under this denomination were comprehended timber fit for masts, yards, and bowsprits; hemp, tar, pitch, and turpentine. The bounty, however, of L.1 the ton upon masting-timber, and that of L.6 the ton upon hemp, were extended to such as should be imported into England from Scotland. Both these bounties continued, without any variation, at the same rate, till they were severally allowed to expire; that upon hemp on the 1st of January 1741, and that upon masting-timber at the end of the session of parliament immediately following the 24th June 1781.

The bounties upon the importation of tar, pitch, and turpentine, underwent, during their continuance, several alterations. Originally, that upon tar was L.4 the ton; that upon pitch the same; and that upon turpentine L.3 the ton. The bounty of L.4 the ton upon tar was afterwards confined to such as had been prepared in a particular manner; this upon other good, clean, and merchantable tar was reduced to L.2, 4s. the ton. The bounty upon pitch was likewise reduced to L.1, and that upon turpentine to L.1 : 10s. the ton.

The second bounty upon the importation of any of the materials of manufacture, according to the order of time, was that granted by the 21st Geo. II. cha, upon the importation of indigo from the British plantations. When the plantation indigo was worth three-fourths of the price of the best French indigo, it was, by this act, entitled to a bounty of 6d. the pound. This bounty, which, like most others was granted only for a limited time, was continued by several prolongations, but was reduced to

4d. the pound. It was allowed to expire with the end of the session of parliament which followed the 25th March 1781.

The third bounty of this kind was that granted (much about the time that we were beginning sometimes to court, and sometimes to quarrel with our American colonies), by the 4th Geo. III. cha, upon the importation of hemp, or undressed flax, from the British plantations. This bounty was granted for twenty-one years, from the 24th June 1764 to the 24th June 1785. For the first seven years, it was to be at the rate of L.8 the ton; for the second at L.6; and for the third at L.4. It was not extended to Scotland, of which the climate (although hemp is sometimes times raised there in small quantities, and of an inferior quality) is not very fit for that produce. Such a bounty upon the importation of Scotch flax in England would have been too great a discouragement to the native produce of the southern part of the united kingdom.

The fourth bounty of this kind was that granted by the 5th Geo. III. cha, upon the importation of wood from America. It was granted for nine years from the 1st January 1766 to the 1st January 1775. During the first three years, it was to be for every hundred-and-twenty good deals, at the rate of L.1, and for every load containing fifty cubic feet of other square timber, at the rate of 12s. For the second three years, it was for deals, to be at the rate of 15s., and for other squared timber at the rate of 8s.; and for the third three years, it was for deals, to be at the rate of 10s.; and for every other squared timber at the rate of 5s.

The fifth bounty of this kind was that granted by the 9th Geo. III. cha, upon the importation of raw silk from the British plantations. It was granted for twenty-one years, from the 1st January 1770, to the 1st January 1791. For the first seven years, it was to be at the rate of L.25 for every hundred pounds value; for the second, at L.20; and for the third, at L.15. The management of the silk-worm, and the preparation of silk, requires so much hand-labour, and labour is so very dear in America, that even this great bounty, I have been informed, was not likely to produce any considerable effect.

The sixth bounty of this kind was that granted by 11th Geo. III. cha, for the importation of pipe, hogshead, and barrel-staves and heading from the British plantations. It was granted for nine years, from 1st January 1772 to the 1st January 1781. For the first three years, it was, for a certain quantity of each, to be at the rate of L.6; for the second three years at L.4; and for the third three years at L.2.

The seventh and last bounty of this kind was that granted by the 19th Geo. III. cha, upon the importation of hemp from Ireland. It was granted

in the same manner as that for the importation of hemp and undressed flax from America, for twenty-one years, from the 24th June 1779 to the 24th June 1800. The term is divided likewise into three periods, of seven years each; and in each of those periods, the rate of the Irish bounty is the same with that of the American. It does not, however, like the American bounty, extend to the importation of undressed flax. It would have been too great a discouragement to the cultivation of that plant in Great Britain. When this last bounty was granted, the British and Irish legislatures were not in much better humour with one another, than the British and American had been before. But this boon to Ireland, it is to be hoped, has been granted under more fortunate auspices than all those to America.

The same commodities, upon which we thus gave bounties, when imported from America, were subjected to considerable duties when imported from any other country. The interest of our American colonies was regarded as the same with that of the mother country. Their wealth was considered as our wealth. Whatever money was sent out to them, it was said, came all back to us by the balance of trade, and we could never become a farthing the poorer by any expense which we could lay out upon them. They were our own in every respect, and it was an expense laid out upon the improvement of our own property, and for the profitable employment of our own people. It is unnecessary, I apprehend, at present to any any thing further, in order to expose the folly of a system which fatal experience has now sufficiently exposed. Had our American colonies really been a part of Great Britain, those bounties might have been considered as bounties upon production, and would still have been liable to all the objections to which such bounties are liable, but to no other.

The exportation of the materials of manufacture is sometimes discouraged by absolute prohibitions, and sometimes by high duties.

Our woollen manufacturers have been more successful than any other class of workmen, in persuading the legislature that the prosperity of the nation depended upon the success and extension of their particular business. They have not only obtained a monopoly against the consumers, by an absolute prohibition of importing woollen cloths from any foreign country; but they have likewise obtained another monopoly against the sheep farmers and growers of wool, by a similar prohibition of the exportation of live sheep and wool. The severity of many of the laws which have been enacted for the security of the revenue is very justly complained of, as imposing heavy penalties upon actions which,

antecedent to the statutes that declared them to be crimes, had always been understood to be innocent. But the cruellest of our revenue laws, I will venture to affirm, are mild and gentle, in comparison to some of those which the clamour of our merchants and manufacturers has extorted from the legislature, for the support of their own absurd and oppressive monopolies. Like the laws of Draco, these laws may be said to be all written in blood.

By the 8th of Elizabeth, cha, the exporter of sheep, lambs, or rams, was for the first offence, to forfeit all his goods for ever, to suffer a year's imprisonment, and then to have his left hand cut off on a market town, upon a market day, to be there nailed up; and for the second offence, to be adjudged a felon, and to suffer death accordingly. To prevent the breed of our sheep from being propagated in foreign countries, seems to have been the object of this law. By the 13th and 14th of Charles II. cha, the exportation of wool was made felony, and the exporter subjected to the same penalties and forfeitures as a felon.

For the honour of the national humanity, it is to be hoped that neither of these statutes was ever executed. The first of them, however, so far as I know, has never been directly repealed, and serjeant Hawkins seems to consider it as still in force. It may, however, perhaps be considered as virtually repealed by the 12th of Charles II. cha, sect. 3, which, without expressly taking away the penalties imposed by former statutes, imposes a new penalty, viz. that of 20s. for every sheep exported, or attempted to be exported, together with the forfeiture of the sheep, and of the owner's share of the sheep. The second of them was expressly repealed by the 7th and 8th of William III. cha, sect. 4, by which it is declared that 'Whereas the statute of the 13th and 14th of king Charles II. made against the exportation of wool, among other things in the said act mentioned, doth enact the same to be deemed felony, by the severity of which penalty the prosecution of offenders hath not been so effectually put in execution; be it therefore enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that so much of the said act, which relates to the making the said offence felony, be repealed and made void.'

The penalties, however, which are either imposed by this milder statute, or which, though imposed by former statutes, are not repealed by this one, are still sufficiently severe. Besides the forfeiture of the goods, the exporter incurs the penalty of 3s. for every pound weight of wool, either exported or attempted to be exported, that is, about four or five times the value. Any merchant, or other person convicted of this offence, is disabled from requiring any debt or account belonging to him from

any factor or other person. Let his fortune be what it will, whether he is or is not able to pay those heavy penalties, the law means to ruin him completely. But, as the morals of the great body of people are not yet so corrupt as those of the contrivers of this statute, I have not heard that any advantage has ever been taken of this clause. If the person convicted of this offence is not able to pay the penalties within three months after judgment, he is to be transported for seven years; and if he returns before the expiration of that time, he is liable to the pains of felony, without benefit of clergy. The owner of the ship, knowing this offence, forfeits all his interest in the ship and furniture. The master and mariners knowing this offence, forfeit all their goods and chattels, and suffer three months imprisonment. By a subsequent statute, the master suffers six months imprisonment.

In order to prevent exportation, the whole inland commerce of wool is laid under very burdensome and oppressive restrictions. It cannot be packed in any box, barrel, cask, case, chest, or any other package, but only in packs of leather or pack-cloth, on which must be marked on the outside the words wool or yarn, in large letters, not less than three inches long, on pain of forfeiting the same and the package, and 3s. for every pound weight, to be paid by the owner or packer. It cannot be loaden on any horse or cart, or carried by land within five miles of the coast, but between sun-rising, and sun-setting, on pain of forfeiting the same, the horses and carriages. The hundred next adjoining to the sea coast, out of, or through which the wool is carried or exported, forfeits L.20, if the wool is under the value of L.10; and if of greater value, then treble that value, together with treble costs, to be sued for within the year. The execution to be against any two of the inhabitants, whom the sessions must reimburse, by an assessment on the other inhabitants, as in the cases of robbery. And if any person compounds with the hundred for less than this penalty, he is to be imprisoned for five years, and any other person may prosecute. These regulations take place through the whole kingdom.

But in the particular counties of Kent and Sussex, the restrictions are still more troublesome. Every owner of wool within ten miles of the sea coast must give an account in writing, three days after shearing, to the next officer of the customs, of the number of his fleeces, and of the places where they are lodged. And before he removes any part of them, he must give the like notice of the number and weight of the fleeces, and of the name and abode of the person to whom they are sold, and of the place to which it is intended they should be carried. No person within

fifteen miles of the sea, in the said counties, can buy any wool, before he enters into bond to the king, that no part of the wool which he shall so buy shall be sold by him to any other person within fifteen miles of the sea. If any wool is found carrying towards the sea side in the said counties, unless it has been entered and security given as aforesaid, it is forfeited, and the offender also forfeits 3s. for every pound weight. If any person lay any wool, not entered as aforesaid, within fifteen miles of the sea, it must be seized and forfeited; and if, after such seizure, any person shall claim the same, he must give security to the exchequer, that if he is cast upon trial he shall pay treble costs, besides all other penalties.

When such restrictions are imposed upon the inland trade, the coasting trade, we may believe, cannot be left very free. Every owner of wool, who carrieth, or causeth to be carried, any wool to any part or place on the sea coast, in order to be from thence transported by sea to any other place or port on the coast, must first cause an entry thereof to be made at the port from whence it is intended to be conveyed, containing the weight, marks, and number, of the packages, before he brings the same within five miles of that part, on pain of forfeiting the same, and also the horses, carts, and other carriages; and also of suffering and forfeiting, as by the other laws in force against the exportation of wool. This law, however (1st of William III. cha), is so very indulgent as to declare, that ‘this shall not hinder any person from carrying his wool home from the place of shearing, though it be within five miles of the sea, provided that in ten days after shearing, and before he remove the wool, he do under his hand certify to the next officer of the customs the true number of fleeces, and where it is housed; and do not remove the same, without certifying to such officer, under his hand, his intention so to do, three days before.’ Bond must be given that the wool to be carried coast-ways is to be landed at the particular port for which it is entered outwards; and if any part of it is landed without the presence of an officer, not only the forfeiture of the wool is incurred, as in other goods, but the usual additional penalty of 3s. for every pound weight is likewise incurred.

Our woollen manufacturers, in order to justify their demand of such extraordinary restrictions and regulations, confidently asserted, that English wool was of a peculiar quality, superior to that of any other country; that the wool of other countries could not, without some mixture of it, be wrought up into any tolerable manufacture; that fine cloth could not be made without it; that England, therefore, if the exportation of it could be totally prevented, could monopolize to herself almost the whole

woollen trade of the world; and thus, having no rivals, could sell at what price she pleased, and in a short time acquire the most incredible degree of wealth by the most advantageous balance of trade. This doctrine, like most other doctrines which are confidently asserted by any considerable number of people, was, and still continues to be, most implicitly believed by a much greater number: by almost all those who are either unacquainted with the woollen trade, or who have not made particular inquiries. It is, however, so perfectly false, that English wool is in any respect necessary for the making of fine cloth, that it is altogether unfit for it. Fine cloth is made altogether of Spanish wool. English wool, cannot be even so mixed with Spanish wool, as to enter into the composition without spoiling and degrading, in some degree, the fabric of the cloth.

It has been shown in the foregoing part of this work, that the effect of these regulations has been to depress the price of English wool, not only below what it naturally would be in the present times, but very much below what it actually was in the time of Edward III. The price of Scotch wool, when, in consequence of the Union, it became subject to the same regulations, is said to have fallen about one half. It is observed by the very accurate and intelligent author of the Memoirs of Wool, the Reverend Mr. John Smith, that the price of the best English wool in England, is generally below what wool of a very inferior quality commonly sells for in the market of Amsterdam. To depress the price of this commodity below what may be called its natural and proper price, was the avowed purpose of those regulations; and there seems to be no doubt of their having produced the effect that was expected from them.

This reduction of price, it may perhaps be thought, by discouraging the growing of wool, must have reduced very much the annual produce of that commodity, though not below what it formerly was, yet below what, in the present state of things, it would probably have been, had it, in consequence of an open and free market, been allowed to rise to the natural and proper price. I am, however, disposed to believe, that the quantity of the annual produce cannot have been much, though it may, perhaps, have been a little affected by these regulations. The growing of wool is not the chief purpose for which the sheep farmer employs his industry and stock. He expects his profit, not so much from the price of the fleece, as from that of the carcase; and the average or ordinary price of the latter must even, in many cases, make up to him whatever deficiency there may be in the average or ordinary price of the former. It has been observed, in the foregoing part of this work, that ‘whatever

regulations tend to sink the price, either of wool or of raw hides, below what it naturally would be, must, in an improved and cultivated country, have some tendency to raise the price of butcher’s meat. The price, both of the great and small cattle which are fed on improved and cultivated land, must be sufficient to pay the rent which the landlord, and the profit which the farmer, has reason to expect from improved and cultivated land. If it is not, they will soon cease to feed them. Whatever part of this price, therefore, is not paid by the wool and the hide, must be paid by the carcase. The less there is paid for the one, the more must be paid for the other. In what manner this price is to be divided upon the different parts of the beast, is indifferent to the landlords and farmers, provided it is all paid to them. In an improved and cultivated country, therefore, their interest as landlords and farmers cannot be much affected by such regulations, though their interest as consumers may, by the rise in the price of provisions.’ According to this reasoning, therefore, this degradation in the price of wool is not likely, in an improved and cultivated country, to occasion any diminution in the annual produce of that commodity; except so far as, by raising the price of mutton, it may somewhat diminish the demand for, and consequently the production of, that particular species of butcher’s meat. Its effect, however, even in this way, it is probable, is not very considerable.

But though its effect upon the quantity of the annual produce may not have been very considerable, its effect upon the quality, it may perhaps be thought, must necessarily have been very great. The degradation in the quality of English wool, if not below what it was in former times, yet below what it naturally would have been in the present state of improvement and cultivation, must have been, it may perhaps be supposed, very nearly in proportion to the degradation of price. As the quality depends upon the breed, upon the pasture, and upon the management and cleanliness of the sheep, during the whole progress of the growth of the fleece, the attention to these circumstances, it may naturally enough be imagined, can never be greater than in proportion to the recompence which the price of the fleece is likely to make for the labour and expense which that attention requires. It happens, however, that the goodness of the fleece depends, in great measure, upon the health, growth, and bulk of the animal: the same attention which is necessary for the improvement of the carcase is, in some respect, sufficient for that of the fleece. Notwithstanding the degradation of price, English wool is said to have been improved considerably during the course even of the present century. The improvement, might, perhaps,

have been greater if the price had been better; but the lowness of price, though it may have obstructed, yet certainly it has not altogether prevented that improvement.

The violence of these regulations, therefore, seems to have affected neither the quantity nor the quality of the annual produce of wool, so much as it might have been expected to do (though I think it probable that it may have affected the latter a good deal more than the former); and the interest of the growers of wool, though it must have been hurt in some degree, seems upon the whole, to have been much less hurt than could well have been imagined.

These considerations, however, will not justify the absolute prohibition of the exportation of wool; but they will fully justify the imposition of a considerable tax upon that exportation.

To hurt, in any degree, the interest of any one order of citizens, for no other purpose but to promote that of some other, is evidently contrary to that justice and equality of treatment which the sovereign owes to all the different orders of his subjects. But the prohibition certainly hurts, in some degree, the interest of the growers of wool, for no other purpose but to promote that of the manufacturers.

Every different order of citizens is bound to contribute to the support of the sovereign or commonwealth. A tax of five, or even of ten shillings, upon the exportation of every tod of wool, would produce a very considerable revenue to the sovereign. It would hurt the interest of the growers somewhat less than the prohibition, because it would not probably lower the price of wool quite so much. It would afford a sufficient advantage to the manufacturer, because, though he might not buy his wool altogether so cheap as under the prohibition, he would still buy it at least five or ten shillings cheaper than any foreign manufacturer could buy it, besides saving the freight and insurance which the other would be obliged to pay. It is scarce possible to devise a tax which could produce any considerable revenue to the sovereign, and at the same time occasion so little inconveniency to any body.

The prohibition, notwithstanding all the penalties which guard it, does not prevent the exportation of wool. It is exported, it is well known, in great quantities. The great difference between the price in the home and that in the foreign market, presents such a temptation to smuggling, that all the rigour of the law cannot prevent it. This illegal exportation is advantageous to nobody but the smuggler. A legal exportation, subject to a tax, by affording a revenue to the sovereign, and thereby saving the

imposition of some other, perhaps more burdensome and inconvenient taxes, might prove advantageous to all the different subjects of the state.

The exportation of fuller's earth, or fuller's clay, supposed to be necessary for preparing and cleansing the woollen manufactures, has been subjected to nearly the same penalties as the exportation of wool. Even tobacco-pipe clay, though acknowledged to be different from fuller's clay, yet, on account of their resemblance, and because fuller's clay might sometimes be exported as tobacco-pipe clay, has been laid under the same prohibitions and penalties.

By the 13th and 14th of Charles II. cha, the exportation, not only of raw hides, but of tanned leather, except in the shape of boots, shoes, or slippers, was prohibited; and the law gave a monopoly to our boot-makers and shoe-makers, not only against our graziers, but against our tanners. By subsequent statutes, our tanners have got themselves exempted from this monopoly, upon paying a small tax of only one shilling on the hundred weight of tanned leather, weighing one hundred and twelve pounds. They have obtained likewise the drawback of two-thirds of the excise duties imposed upon their commodity, even when exported without further manufacture. All manufactures of leather may be exported duty free; and the exporter is besides entitled to the drawback of the whole duties of excise. Our graziers still continue subject to the old monopoly. Graziers, separated from one another, and dispersed through all the different corners of the country, cannot, without great difficulty, combine together for the purpose either of imposing monopolies upon their fellow-citizens, or of exempting themselves from such as may have been imposed upon them by other people. Manufacturers of all kinds, collected together in numerous bodies in all great cities, easily can. Even the horns of cattle are prohibited to be exported; and the two insignificant trades of the horner and comb-maker enjoy, in this respect, a monopoly against the graziers.

Restraints, either by prohibitions, or by taxes, upon the exportation of goods which are partially, but not completely manufactured, are not peculiar to the manufacture of leather. As long as any thing remains to be done, in order to fit any commodity for immediate use and consumption, our manufacturers think that they themselves ought to the doing of it. Woollen yarn and worsted are prohibited to be exported, under the same penalties as wool. Even white cloths are subject to a duty upon exportation; and our dyers have so far obtained a monopoly against our clothiers. Our clothiers would

probably have been able to defend themselves against it; but it happens that the greater part of our principal clothiers are themselves likewise dyers. Watch-cases, clock-cases, and dial-plates for clocks and watches, have been prohibited to be exported. Our clock-makers and watch-makers are, it seems, unwilling that the price of this sort of workmanship should be raised upon them by the competition of foreigners.

By some old statutes of Edward III. Henry VIII. and Edward VI. the exportation of all metals was prohibited. Lead and tin were alone excepted, probably on account of the great abundance of those metals; in the exportation of which a considerable part of the trade of the kingdom in those days consisted. For the encouragement of the mining trade, the 5th of William and Mary, cha, exempted from this prohibition iron, copper, and mundic metal made from British ore. The exportation of all sorts of copper bars, foreign as well as British, was afterwards permitted by the 9th and 10th of William III. chap 26. The exportation of unmanufactured brass, of what is called gun-metal, bell-metal, and shroff-metal, still continues to be prohibited. Brass manufactures of all sorts may be exported duty free.

The exportation of the materials of manufacture, where it is not altogether prohibited, is, in many cases, subjected to considerable duties.

By the 8th Geo. I. cha, the exportation of all goods, the produce or manufacture of Great Britain, upon which any duties had been imposed by former statutes, was rendered duty free. The following goods, however, were excepted: alum, lead, lead-ore, tin, tanned leather, copperas, coals, wool, cards, white woolen cloths, lapis calaminaris, skins of all sorts, glue, coney hair or wool, hares wool, hair of all sorts, horses, and litharge of lead. If you expect horses, all these are either materials of manufacture, or incomplete manufactures (which may be considered as materials for still further manufacture), or instruments of trade. This statute leaves them subject to all the old duties which had ever been imposed upon them, the old subsidy, and one per cent. outwards.

By the same statute, a great number of foreign drugs for dyers use are exempted from all duties upon importation. Each of them, however, is afterwards subjected to a certain duty, not indeed a very heavy one, upon exportation. Our dyers, it seems, while they thought it for their interest to encourage the importation of those drugs, by an exemption from all duties, thought it likewise for their own interest to throw some small discouragement upon their exportation. The avidity, however, which

suggested this notable piece of mercantile ingenuity, most probably disappointed itself of its object. It necessarily taught the importers to be more careful than they might otherwise have been, that their importation should not exceed what was necessary for the supply of the home market. The home market was at all times likely to be more scantily supplied; the commodities were at all times likely to be somewhat dearer there than they would have been, had the exportation been rendered as free as the importation.

By the above-mentioned statute, gum senega, or gum arabic, being among the enumerated dyeing drugs, might be imported duty free. They were subjected, indeed, to a small poundage duty, amounting only to threepence in the hundred weight, upon their re-exportation. France enjoyed, at that time, an exclusive trade to the country most productive of those drugs, that which lies in the neighbourhood of the Senegal; and the British market could not easily be supplied by the immediate importation of them from the place of growth. By the 25th Geo. II. therefore, gum senega was allowed to be imported (contrary to the general dispositions of the act of navigation) from any part of Europe. As the law, however, did not mean to encourage this species of trade, so contrary to the general principles of the mercantile policy of England, it imposed a duty of ten shillings the hundred weight upon such importation, and no part of this duty was to be afterwards drawn back upon its exportation. The successful war which began in 1755 gave Great Britain the same exclusive trade to those countries which France had enjoyed before. Our manufactures, as soon as the peace was made, endeavoured to avail themselves of this advantage, and to establish a monopoly in their own favour both against the growers and against the importers of this commodity. By the 5th Geo. III. therefore, cha, the exportation of gum senega, from his majesty’s dominions in Africa, was confined to Great Britain, and was subjected to all the same restrictions, regulations, forfeitures, and penalties, as that of the enumerated commodities of the British colonies in America and the West Indies. Its importation, indeed, was subjected to a small duty of sixpence the hundred weight, but its re-exportation was subjected to the enormous duty of one pound ten shillings the hundred weight. It was the intention of our manufacturers, that the whole produce of those countries should be imported into Great Britain; and in order that they themselves might be enabled to buy it at their own price, that no part of it should be exported again, but at such an expense as would sufficiently discourage that exportation. Their avidity, however, upon this, as well as upon many

other occasions, disappointed itself of its object. This enormous duty presented such a temptation to smuggling, that great quantities of this commodity were clandestinely exported, probably to all the manufacturing countries of Europe, but particularly to Holland, not only from Great Britain, but from Africa. Upon this account, by the 14th Geo. III. cha, this duty upon exportation was reduced to five shillings the hundred weight.

In the book of rates, according to which the old subsidy was levied, beaver skins were estimated at six shillings and eight pence a-piece; and the different subsidies and imposts which, before the year 1722, had been laid upon their importation, amounted to one-fifth part of the rate, or to sixteen pence upon each skin; all of which, except half the old subsidy, amounting only to twopence, was drawn back upon exportation. This duty, upon the importation of so important a material of manufacture, had been thought too high; and, in the year 1722, the rate was reduced to two shillings and sixpence, which reduced the duty upon importation to sixpence, and of this only one-half was to be drawn back upon exportation. The same successful war put the country most productive of beaver under the dominion of Great Britain; and beaver skins being among the enumerated commodities, the exportation from America was consequently confined to the market of Great Britain. Our manufacturers soon bethought themselves of the advantage which they might make of this circumstance; and in the year 1764, the duty upon the importation of beaver skin was reduced to one penny, but the duty upon exportation was raised to sevenpence each skin, without any drawback of the duty upon importation. By the same law, a duty of eighteen pence the pound was imposed upon the exportation of beaver wool or woumbs, without making any alteration in the duty upon the importation of that commodity, which, when imported by British, and in British shipping, amounted at that time to between fourpence and fivepence the piece.

Coals may be considered both as a material of manufacture, and as an instrument of trade. Heavy duties, accordingly, have been imposed upon their exportation, amounting at present (1783) to more than five shillings the ton, or more than fifteen shillings the chaldron, Newcastle measure; which is, in most cases, more than the original value of the commodity at the coal-pit, or even at the shipping port for exportation.

The exportation, however, of the instruments of trade, properly so called, is commonly restrained, not by high duties, but by absolute prohibitions. Thus, by the 7th and 8th of William III. cha, sect. 8, the exportation of frames or engines for knitting gloves or stockings, is

prohibited, under the penalty, not only of the forfeiture of such frames or engines, so exported, or attempted to be exported, but of forty pounds, one half to the king, the other to the person who shall inform or sue for the same. In the same manner, by the 14th Geo. III. cha, the exportation to foreign parts, of any utensils made use of in the cotton, linen, woollen, and silk manufacturers, is prohibited under the penalty, not only of the forfeiture of such utensils, but of two hundred pounds, to be paid by the person who shall offend in this manner; and likewise of two hundred pounds, to be paid by the master of the ship, who shall knowingly suffer such utensils to be loaded on board his ship.

When such heavy penalties were imposed upon the exportation of the dead instruments of trade, it could not well be expected that the living instrument, the artificer, should be allowed to go free. Accordingly, by the 5th Geo. I. cha, the person who shall be convicted of enticing any artificer, of or in any of the manufactures of Great Britain, to go into any foreign parts, in order to practise or teach his trade, is liable, for the first offence, to be fined in any sum not exceeding one hundred pounds, and to three months imprisonment, and until the fine shall be paid; and for the second offence, to be fined in any sum, at the discretion of the court, and to imprisonment for twelve months, and until the fine shall be paid. By the 23d Geo. II. cha, this penalty is increased, for the first offence, to five hundred pounds for every artificer so enticed, and to twelve months imprisonment, and until the fine shall be paid; and for the second offence, to one thousand pounds, and to two years imprisonment, and until the fine shall be paid.

By the former of these two statutes, upon proof that any person has been enticing any artificer, or that any artificer has promised or contracted to go into foreign parts, for the purposes aforesaid, such artificer may be obliged to give security, at the discretion of the court, that he shall not go beyond the seas, and may be committed to prison until he give such security.

If any artificer has gone beyond the seas, and is exercising or teaching his trade in any foreign country, upon warning being given to him by any of his majesty’s ministers or consuls abroad, or by one of his majesty’s secretaries of state, for the time being, if he does not, within six months after such warning, return into this realm, and from henceforth abide and inhabit continually within the same, he is from thenceforth declared incapable of taking any legacy devised to him within this kingdom, or of being executor or administrator to any person, or of taking any lands within this kingdom, by descent, devise, or purchase. He likewise forfeits

to the king all his lands, goods, and chattels; is declared an alien in every respect; and is put out of the king’s protection.

It is unnecessary, I imagine, to observe how contrary such regulations are to the boasted liberty of the subject, of which we affect to be so very jealous; but which, in this case, is so plainly sacrificed to the futile interests of our merchants and manufacturers.

The laudable motive of all these regulations, is to extend our own manufactures, not by their own improvement, but by the depression of those of all our neighbours, and by putting an end, as much as possible, to the troublesome competition of such odious and disagreeable rivals. Our master manufacturers think it reasonable that they themselves should have the monopoly of the ingenuity of all their countrymen. Though by restraining, in some trades, the number of apprentices which can be employed at one time, and by imposing the necessity of a long apprenticeship in all trades, they endeavour, all of them, to confine the knowledge of their respective employments to as small a number as possible; they are unwilling, however, that any part of this small number should go abroad to instruct foreigners.

Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer.

The maxim is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it. But in the mercantile system, the interest of the consumer is almost constantly sacrificed to that of the producer; and it seems to consider production, and not consumption, as the ultimate end and object of all industry and commerce.

In the restraints upon the importation of all foreign commodities which can come into competition with those of our own growth or manufacture, the interest of the home consumer is evidently sacrificed to that of the producer. It is altogether for the benefit of the latter, that the former is obliged to pay that enhancement of price which this monopoly almost always occasions.

It is altogether for the benefit of the producer, that bounties are granted upon the exportation of some of his productions. The home consumer is obliged to pay, first, the tax which is necessary for paying the bounty; and, secondly, the still greater tax which necessarily arises from the enhancement of the price of the commodity in the home market.

By the famous treaty of commerce with Portugal, the consumer is prevented by high duties from purchasing of a neighbouring country, a commodity which our own climate does not produce; but is obliged to

purchase it of a distant country, though it is acknowledged, that the commodity of the distant country is of a worse quality than that of the near one. The home consumer is obliged to submit to this inconvenience, in order that the producer may import into the distant country some of his productions, upon more advantageous terms than he otherwise would have been allowed to do. The consumer, too, is obliged to pay whatever enhancement in the price of those very productions this forced exportation may occasion in the home market.

But in the system of laws which has been established for the management of our American and West Indies colonies, the interest of the home consumer has been sacrificed to that of the producer, which a more extravagant profusion than in all our other commercial regulations. A great empire has been established for the sole purpose of raising up a nation of customers, who should be obliged to buy, from the shops of our different producers, all the goods with which these could supply them. For the sake of that little enhancement of price which this monopoly might afford our producers, the home consumers have been burdened with the whole expense of maintaining and defending that empire. For this purpose, and for this purpose only, in the last two wars, more than two hundred millions have been spent, and a new debt of more than a hundred and seventy millions has been contracted, over and above all that had been expended for the same purpose in former wars. The interest of this debt alone is not only greater than the whole extraordinary profit which, it never could be pretended, was made by the monopoly of the colony trade, but than the whole value of that trade, or than the whole value of the goods which, at an average, have been annually exported to the colonies.

It cannot be very difficult to determine who have been the contrivers of this whole mercantile system; not the consumers, we may believe, whose interest has been entirely neglected; but the producers, whose interest has been so carefully attended to; and among this latter class, our merchants and manufacturers have been by far the principal architects. In the mercantile regulations, which have been taken notice of in this chapter, the interest of our manufacturers has been most peculiarly attended to; and the interest, not so much of the consumers, as that of some other sets of producers, has been sacrificed to it.

CHAP. IX. OF THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS, OR OF THOSE SYSTEMS OF POLITICAL ECONOMY WHICH REPRESENT THE PRODUCE OF LAND, AS EITHER THE SOLE OR THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF THE REVENUE AND WEALTH OF EVERY COUNTRY.

The agricultural systems of political economy will not require so long an explanation as that which I have thought it necessary to bestow upon the mercantile or commercial system.

That system which represents the produce of land as the sole source of the revenue and wealth of every country, has, so far as I know, never been adopted by any nation, and it at present exists only in the speculations of a few men of great learning and ingenuity in France. It would not, surely, be worth while to examine at great length the errors of a system which never has done, and probably never will do, any harm in any part of the world. I shall endeavour to explain, however, as distinctly as I can, the great outlines of this very ingenious system.

Mr. Colbert, the famous minister of Lewis XIV. was a man of probity, of great industry, and knowledge of detail; of great experience and acuteness in the examination of public accounts; and of abilities, in short, every way fitted for introducing method and good order into the collection and expenditure of the public revenue. That minister had unfortunately embraced all the prejudices of the mercantile system, in its nature and essence a system of restraint and regulation, and such as could scarce fail to be agreeable to a laborious and plodding man of business, who had been accustomed to regulate the different departments of public offices, and to establish the necessary checks and controuls for confining each to its proper sphere. The industry and commerce of a great country, he endeavoured to regulate upon the same model as the departments of a public office; and instead of allowing every man to pursue his own interest his own way, upon the liberal plan of equality, liberty, and justice, he bestowed upon certain branches of industry extraordinary privileges, while he laid others under as extraordinary restraints. He was not only disposed, like other European ministers, to encourage more the

industry of the towns than that of the country; but, in order to support the industry of the towns, he was willing even to depress and keep down that of the country. In order to render provisions cheap to the inhabitants of the towns, and thereby to encourage manufactures and foreign commerce, he prohibited altogether the exportation of corn, and thus excluded the inhabitants of the country from every foreign market, for by far the most important part of the produce of their industry. This prohibition, joined to the restraints imposed by the ancient provincial laws of France upon the transportation of corn from one province to another, and to the arbitrary and degrading taxes which are levied upon the cultivators in almost all the provinces, discouraged and kept down the agriculture of that country very much below the state to which it would naturally have risen in so very fertile a soil, and so very happy a climate. This state of discouragement and depression was felt more or less in every different part of the country, and many different inquiries were set on foot concerning the causes of it. One of those causes appeared to be the preference given, by the institutions of Mr. Colbert, to the industry of the towns above that of the country.

If the rod be bent too much one way, says the proverb, in order to make it straight, you must bend it as much the other. The French philosophers, who have proposed the system which represents agriculture as the sole source of the revenue and wealth of every country, seem to have adopted this proverbial maxim; and, as in the plan of Mr. Colbert, the industry of the towns was certainly overvalued in comparison with that of the country, so in their system it seems to be as certainly under-valued.

The different orders of people, who have ever been supposed to contribute in any respect towards the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, they divide into three classes. The first is the class of the proprietors of land. The second is the class of the cultivators, of farmers and country labourers, whom they honour with the peculiar appellation of the productive class. The third is the class of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, whom they endeavour to degrade by the humiliating appellation of the barren or unproductive class.

The class of proprietors contributes to the annual produce, by the expense which they may occasionally lay out upon the improvement of the land, upon the buildings, drains, inclosures, and other ameliorations, which they may either make or maintain upon it, and by means of which the cultivators are enabled, with the same capital, to raise a greater produce, and consequently to pay a greater rent. This advanced rent may

be considered as the interest or profit due to the proprietor, upon the expense or capital which he thus employs in the improvement of his land. Such expenses are in this system called ground expenses (*depenses foncieres*).

The cultivators or farmers contribute to the annual produce, by what are in this system called the original and annual expenses (*depenses primitives, et depenses annuelles*), which they lay out upon the cultivation of the land. The original expenses consist in the instruments of husbandry, in the stock of cattle, in the seed, and in the maintenance of the farmer's family, servants, and cattle, during at least a great part of the first year of his occupancy, or till he can receive some return from the land. The annual expenses consist in the seed, in the wear and tear of instruments of husbandry, and in the annual maintenance of the farmer's servants and cattle, and of his family too, so far as any part of them can be considered as servants employed in cultivation. That part of the produce of the land which remains to him after paying the rent, ought to be sufficient, first, to replace to him, within a reasonable time, at least during the term of his occupancy, the whole of his original expenses, together with the ordinary profits of stock; and, secondly, to replace to him annually the whole of his annual expenses, together likewise with the ordinary profits of stock. Those two sorts of expenses are two capitals which the farmer employs in cultivation; and unless they are regularly restored to him, together with a reasonable profit, he cannot carry on his employment upon a level with other employments; but, from a regard to his own interest, must desert it as soon as possible, and see some other. That part of the produce of the land which is thus necessary for enabling the farmer to continue his business, ought to be considered as a fund sacred to cultivation, which, if the landlord violates, he necessarily reduces the produce of his own land, and, in a few years, not only disables the farmer from paying this racked rent, but from paying the reasonable rent which he might otherwise have got for his land. The rent which properly belongs to the landlord, is no more than the neat produce which remains after paying, in the completest manner, all the necessary expenses which must be previously laid out, in order to raise the gross or the whole produce. It is because the labour of the cultivators, over and above paying completely all those necessary expenses, affords a neat produce of this kind, that this class of people are in this system peculiarly distinguished by the honourable appellation of the productive class. Their original and annual expenses are for the same reason called, in this system, productive expenses, because, over and above replacing

their own value, they occasion the annual reproduction of this neat produce.

The ground expenses, as they are called, or what the landlord lays out upon the improvement of his land, are, in this system, too, honoured with the appellation of productive expenses. Till the whole of those expenses, together with the ordinary profits of stock, have been completely repaid to him by the advanced rent which he gets from his land, that advanced rent ought to be regarded as sacred and inviolable, both by the church and by the king; ought to be subject neither to tithe nor to taxation. If it is otherwise, by discouraging the improvement of land, the church discourages the future increase of her own tithes, and the king the future increase of his own taxes. As in a well ordered state of things, therefore, those ground expenses, over and above reproducing in the completest manner their own value, occasion likewise, after a certain time, a reproduction of neat produce, they are in this system considered as productive expenses.

The ground expenses of the landlord, however, together with the original and the annual expenses of the farmer, are the only three sorts of expenses which in this system are considered as productive. All other expenses, and all other orders of people, even those who, in the common apprehensions of men, are regarded as the most productive, are, in this account of things, represented as altogether barren and unproductive.

Artificers and manufacturers, in particular, whose industry, in the common apprehensions of men, increases so much the value of the rude produce of land, are in this system represented as a class of people altogether barren and unproductive. Their labour, it is said, replaces only the stock which employs them, together with its ordinary profits. That stock consists in the materials, tools, and wages, advanced to them by their employer; and is the fund destined for their employment and maintenance. Its profits are the fund destined for the maintenance of their employer. Their employer, as he advances to them the stock of materials, tools, and wages, necessary for their employment, so he advances to himself what is necessary for his own maintenance; and this maintenance he generally proportions to the profit which he expects to make by the price of their work. Unless its price repays to him the maintenance which he advances to himself, as well as the materials, tools, and wages, which he advances to his workmen, it evidently does not repay to him the whole expense which he lays out upon it. The profits of manufacturing stock, therefore, are not, like the rent of land, a neat produce which remains after completely repaying the whole expense which must be laid

out in order to obtain them. The stock of the farmer yields him a profit, as well as that of the master manufacturer; and it yields a rent likewise to another person, which that of the master manufacturer does not. The expense, therefore, laid out in employing and maintaining artificers and manufacturers, does no more than continue, if one may say so, the existence of its own value, and does not produce any new value. It is, therefore, altogether a barren and unproductive expense. The expense, on the contrary, laid out in employing farmers and country labourers, over and above continuing the existence of its own value, produces a new value the rent of the landlord. It is, therefore, a productive expense.

Mercantile stock is equally barren and unproductive with manufacturing stock. It only continues the existence of its own value, without producing any new value. Its profits are only the repayment of the maintenance which its employer advances to himself during the time that he employs it, or till he receives the returns of it. They are only the repayment of a part of the expense which must be laid out in employing it.

The labour of artificers and manufacturers never adds any thing to the value of the whole annual amount of the rude produce of the land. It adds, indeed, greatly to the value of some particular parts of it. But the consumption which, in the mean time, it occasions of other parts, is precisely equal to the value which it adds to those parts; so that the value of the whole amount is not, at any one moment of time, in the least augmented by it. The person who works the lace of a pair of fine ruffles for example, will sometimes raise the value of, perhaps, a pennyworth of flax to L.30 sterling. But though, at first sight, he appears thereby to multiply the value of a part of the rude produce about seven thousand and two hundred times, he in reality adds nothing to the value of the whole annual amount of the rude produce. The working of that lace costs him, perhaps, two years labour. The L.30 which he gets for it when it is finished, is no more than the repayment of the subsistence which he advances to himself during the two years that he is employed about it. The value which, by every day’s, month’s, or year’s labour, he adds to the flax, does no more than replace the value of his own consumption during that day, month, or year. At no moment of time, therefore, does he add any thing to the value of the whole annual amount of the rude produce of the land: the portion of that produce which he is continually consuming, being always equal to the value which he is continually producing. The extreme poverty of the greater part of the persons employed in this expensive, though trifling manufacture, may satisfy us

that the price of their work does not, in ordinary cases, exceed the value of their subsistence. It is otherwise with the work of farmers and country labourers. The rent of the landlord is a value which, in ordinary cases, it is continually producing over and above replacing, in the most complete manner, the whole consumption, the whole expense laid out upon the employment and maintenance both of the workmen and of their employer.

Artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, can augment the revenue and wealth of their society by parsimony only; or, as it is expressed in this system, by privation, that is, by depriving themselves of a part of the funds destined for their own subsistence. They annually reproduce nothing but those funds. Unless, therefore, they annually save some part of them, unless they annually deprive themselves of the enjoyment of some part of them, the revenue and wealth of their society can never be, in the smallest degree, augmented by means of their industry. Farmers and country labourers, on the contrary, may enjoy completely the whole funds destined for their own subsistence, and yet augment, at the same time, the revenue and wealth of their society. Over and above what is destined for their own subsistence, their industry annually affords a neat produce, of which the augmentation necessarily augments the revenue and wealth of their society. Nations, therefore, which like France or England, consist in a great measure, of proprietors and cultivators, can be enriched by industry and enjoyment. Nations, on the contrary which, like Holland and Hamburgh, are composed chiefly of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, can grow rich only through parsimony and privation. As the interest of nations so differently circumstanced is very different, so is likewise the common character of the people. In those of the former kind, liberality, frankness, and good fellowship, naturally make a part of their common character; in the latter, narrowness, meanness, and a selfish disposition, averse to all social pleasure and enjoyment.

The unproductive class, that of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, is maintained and employed altogether at the expense of the two other classes, of that of proprietors, and of that of cultivators. They furnish it both with the materials of its work, and with the fund of its subsistence, with the corn and cattle which it consumes while it is employed about that work. The proprietors and cultivators finally pay both the wages of all the workmen of the unproductive class, and the profits of all their employers. Those workmen and their employers are properly the servants of the proprietors and cultivators. They are only servants who work without doors, as menial servants work within. Both

the one and the other, however, are equally maintained at the expense of the same masters. The labour of both is equally unproductive. It adds nothing to the value of the sum total of the rude produce of the land. Instead of increasing the value of that sum total, it is a charge and expense which must be paid out of it.

The unproductive class, however, is not only useful, but greatly useful, to the other two classes. By means of the industry of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, the proprietors and cultivators can purchase both the foreign goods and the manufactured produce of their own country, which they have occasion for, with the produce of a much smaller quantity of their own labour, than what they would be obliged to employ, if they were to attempt, in an awkward and unskilful manner, either to import the one, or to make the other, for their own use. By means of the unproductive class, the cultivators are delivered from many cares, which would otherwise distract their attention from the cultivation of land. The superiority of produce, which in consequence of this undivided attention, they are enabled to raise, is fully sufficient to pay the whole expense which the maintenance and employment of the unproductive class costs either the proprietors or themselves. The industry of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, though in its own nature altogether unproductive, yet contributes in this manner indirectly to increase the produce of the land. It increases the productive powers of productive labour, by leaving it at liberty to confine itself to its proper employment, the cultivation of land; and the plough goes frequently the easier and the better, by means of the labour of the man whose business is most remote from the plough.

It can never be the interest of the proprietors and cultivators, to restrain or to discourage, in any respect, the industry of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers. The greater the liberty which this unproductive class enjoys, the greater will be the competition in all the different trades which compose it, and the cheaper will the other two classes be supplied, both with foreign goods and with the manufactured produce of their own country.

It can never be the interest of the unproductive class to oppress the other two classes. It is the surplus produce of the land, or what remains after deducting the maintenance, first of the cultivators, and afterwards of the proprietors, that maintains and employs the unproductive class. The greater this surplus, the greater must likewise be the maintenance and employment of that class. The establishment of perfect justice, of perfect liberty, and of perfect equality, is the very simple secret which

most effectually secures the highest degree of prosperity to all the three classes.

The merchants, artificers, and manufacturers of those mercantile states, which, like Holland and Hamburgh, consist chiefly of this unproductive class, are in the same manner maintained and employed altogether at the expense of the proprietors and cultivators of land. The only difference is, that those proprietors and cultivators are, the greater part of them, placed at a most inconvenient distance from the merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, whom they supply with the materials of their work and the fund of their subsistence; are the inhabitants of other countries, and the subjects of other governments.

Such mercantile states, however, are not only useful, but greatly useful, to the inhabitants of these other countries. They fill up, in some measure, a very important void; and supply the place of the merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, whom the inhabitants of those countries ought to find at home, but whom, from some defect in their policy, they do not find at home.

It can never be the interest of those landed nations, if I may call them so, to discourage or distress the industry of such mercantile states, by imposing high duties upon their trade, or upon the commodities which they furnish. Such duties, by rendering those commodities dearer, could serve only to sink the real value of the surplus produce of their own land, with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which those commodities are purchased. Such duties could only serve to discourage the increase of that surplus produce, and consequently the improvement and cultivation of their own land. The most effectual expedient, on the contrary, for raising the value of that surplus produce, for encouraging its increase, and consequently the improvement and cultivation of their own land, would be to allow the most perfect freedom to the trade of all such mercantile nations.

This perfect freedom of trade would even be the most effectual expedient for supplying them, in due time, with all the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, whom they wanted at home; and for filling up, in the properest and most advantageous manner, that very important void which they felt there.

The continual increase of the surplus produce of their land would, in due time, create a greater capital than what would be employed with the ordinary rate of profit in the improvement and cultivation of land; and the surplus part of it would naturally turn itself to the employment of artificers and manufacturers, at home. But these artificers and

manufacturers, finding at home both the materials of their work and the fund of their subsistence, might immediately, even with much less art and skill be able to work as cheap as the little artificers and manufacturers of such mercantile states, who had both to bring from a greater distance. Even though, from want of art and skill, they might not for some time be able to work as cheap, yet, finding a market at home, they might be able to sell their work there as cheap as that of the artificers and manufacturers of such mercantile states, which could not be brought to that market but from so great a distance; and as their art and skill improved, they would soon be able to sell it cheaper. The artificers and manufacturers of such mercantile states, therefore, would immediately be rivalled in the market of those landed nations, and soon after undersold and justled out of it altogether. The cheapness of the manufactures of those landed nations, in consequence of the gradual improvements of art and skill, would, in due time, extend their sale beyond the home market, and carry them to many foreign markets, from which they would, in the same manner, gradually justle out many of the manufacturers of such mercantile nations.

This continual increase, both of the rude and manufactured produce of those landed nations, would, in due time, create a greater capital than could, with the ordinary rate of profit, be employed either in agriculture or in manufactures. The surplus of this capital would naturally turn itself to foreign trade, and be employed in exporting, to foreign countries, such parts of the rude and manufactured produce of its own country, as exceeded the demand of the home market. In the exportation of the produce of their own country, the merchants of a landed nation would have an advantage of the same kind over those of mercantile nations, which its artificers and manufacturers had over the artificers and manufacturers of such nations; the advantage of finding at home that cargo, and those stores and provisions, which the others were obliged to seek for at a distance. With inferior art and skill in navigation, therefore, they would be able to sell that cargo as cheap in foreign markets as the merchants of such mercantile nations; and with equal art and skill they would be able to sell it cheaper. They would soon, therefore, rival those mercantile nations in this branch of foreign trade, and, in due time, would justle them out of it altogether.

According to this liberal and generous system, therefore, the most advantageous method in which a landed nation can raise up artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of its own, is to grant the most perfect freedom of trade to the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of all

other nations. It thereby raises the value of the surplus produce of its own land, of which the continual increase gradually establishes a fund, which, in due time, necessarily raises up all the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, whom it has occasion for.

When a landed nation on the contrary, oppresses, either by high duties or by prohibitions, the trade of foreign nations, it necessarily hurts its own interest in two different ways. First, by raising the price of all foreign goods, and of all sorts of manufactures, it necessarily sinks the real value of the surplus produce of its own land, with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which, it purchases those foreign goods and manufactures. Secondly, by giving a sort of monopoly of the home market to its own merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, it raises the rate of mercantile and manufacturing profit, in proportion to that of agricultural profit; and, consequently, either draws from agriculture a part of the capital which had before been employed in it, or hinders from going to it a part of what would otherwise have gone to it. This policy, therefore, discourages agriculture in two different ways; first, by sinking the real value of its produce, and thereby lowering the rate of its profits; and, secondly, by raising the rate of profit in all other employments. Agriculture is rendered less advantageous, and trade and manufactures more advantageous, than they otherwise would be; and every man is tempted by his own interest to turn, as much as he can, both his capital and his industry from the former to the latter employments.

Though, by this oppressive policy, a landed nation should be able to raise up artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of its own, somewhat sooner than it could do by the freedom of trade; a matter, however, which is not a little doubtful; yet it would raise them up, if one may say so, prematurely, and before it was perfectly ripe for them. By raising up too hastily one species of industry, it would depress another more valuable species of industry. By raising up too hastily a species of industry which only replaces the stock which employs it, together with the ordinary profit, it would depress a species of industry which, over and above replacing that stock, with its profit, affords likewise a neat produce, a free rent to the landlord. It would depress productive labour, by encouraging too hastily that labour which is altogether barren and unproductive.

In what manner, according to this system, the sum total of the annual produce of the land is distributed among the three classes above mentioned, and in what manner the labour of the unproductive class does no more than replace the value of its own consumption, without

increasing in any respect the value of that sum total, is represented by Mr Quesnai, the very ingenious and profound author of this system, in some arithmetical formularies. The first of these formularies, which, by way of eminence, he peculiarly distinguishes by the name of the Economical Table, represents the manner in which he supposes this distribution takes place, in a state of the most perfect liberty, and, therefore, of the highest prosperity; in a state where the annual produce is such as to afford the greatest possible neat produce, and where each class enjoys its proper share of the whole annual produce. Some subsequent formularies represent the manner in which he supposes this distribution is made in different states of restraint and regulation; in which, either the class of proprietors, or the barren and unproductive class, is more favoured than the class of cultivators; and in which either the one or the other encroaches, more or less, upon the share which ought properly to belong to this productive class. Every such encroachment, every violation of that natural distribution, which the most perfect liberty would establish, must, according to this system, necessarily degrade, more or less, from one year to another, the value and sum total of the annual produce, and must necessarily occasion a gradual declension in the real wealth and revenue of the society; a declension, of which the progress must be quicker or slower, according to the degree of this encroachment, according as that natural distribution, which the most perfect liberty would establish, is more or less violated. Those subsequent formularies represent the different degrees of declension which, according to this system, correspond to the different degrees in which this natural distribution of things is violated.

Some speculative physicians seem to have imagined that the health of the human body could be preserved only by a certain precise regimen of diet and exercise, of which every, the smallest violation, necessarily occasioned some degree of disease or disorder proportionate to the degree of the violation. Experience, however, would seem to shew, that the human body frequently preserves, to all appearance at least, the most perfect state of health under a vast variety of different regimens; even under some which are generally believed to be very far from being perfectly wholesome. But the healthful state of the human body, it would seem, contains in itself some unknown principle of preservation, capable either of preventing or of correcting, in many respects, the bad effects even of a very faulty regimen. Mr Quesnai, who was himself a physician, and a very speculative physician, seems to have entertained a notion of the same kind concerning the political body, and to have imagined that it

would thrive and prosper only under a certain precise regimen, the exact regimen of perfect liberty and perfect justice. He seems not to have considered, that in the political body, the natural effort which every man is continually making to better his own condition, is a principle of preservation capable of preventing and correcting, in many respects, the bad effects of a political economy, in some degree both partial and oppressive. Such a political economy, though it no doubt retards more or less, is not always capable of stopping altogether, the natural progress of a nation towards wealth and prosperity, and still less of making it go backwards. If a nation could not prosper without the enjoyment of perfect liberty and perfect justice, there is not in the world a nation which could ever have prospered. In the political body, however, the wisdom of nature has fortunately made ample provision for remedying many of the bad effects of the folly and injustice of man; in the same manner as it has done in the natural body, for remedying those of his sloth and intemperance.

The capital error of this system, however, seems to lie in its representing the class of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, as altogether barren and unproductive. The following observations may serve to shew the impropriety of this representation: —

First, this class, it is acknowledged, reproduces annually the value of its own annual consumption, and continues, at least, the existence of the stock or capital which maintains and employs it. But, upon this account alone, the denomination of barren or unproductive should seem to be very improperly applied to it. We should not call a marriage barren or unproductive, though it produced only a son and a daughter, to replace the father and mother, and though it did not increase the number of the human species, but only continued it as it was before. Farmers and country labourers, indeed, over and above the stock which maintains and employs them, reproduce annually a neat produce, a free rent to the landlord. As a marriage which affords three children is certainly more productive than one which affords only two, so the labour of farmers and country labourers is certainly more productive than that of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers. The superior produce of the one class, however, does not, render the other barren or unproductive.

Secondly, it seems, on this account, altogether improper to consider artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, in the same light as menial servants. The labour of menial servants does not continue the existence of the fund which maintains and employs them. Their maintenance and employment is altogether at the expense of their masters, and the work

which they perform is not of a nature to repay that expense. That work consists in services which perish generally in the very instant of their performance, and does not fix or realize itself in any vendible commodity, which can replace the value of their wages and maintenance. The labour, on the contrary, of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, naturally does fix and realize itself in some such vendible commodity. It is upon this account that, in the chapter in which I treat of productive and unproductive labour, I have classed artificers, manufacturers, and merchants among the productive labourers, and menial servants among the barren or unproductive.

Thirdly, it seems, upon every supposition, improper to say, that the labour of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, does not increase the real revenue of the society. Though we should suppose, for example, as it seems to be supposed in this system, that the value of the daily, monthly, and yearly consumption of this class was exactly equal to that of its daily, monthly, and yearly production; yet it would not from thence follow, that its labour added nothing to the real revenue, to the real value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. An artificer, for example, who, in the first six months after harvest, executes ten pounds worth of work, though he should, in the same time, consume ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, yet really adds the value of ten pounds to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. While he has been consuming a half-yearly revenue of ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, he has produced an equal value of work, capable of purchasing, either to himself, or to some other person, an equal half-yearly revenue. The value, therefore, of what has been consumed and produced during these six months, is equal, not to ten, but to twenty pounds. It is possible, indeed, that no more than ten pounds worth of this value may ever have existed at any one moment of time. But if the ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries which were consumed by the artificer, had been consumed by a soldier, or by a menial servant, the value of that part of the annual produce which existed at the end of the six months, would have been ten pounds less than it actually is in consequence of the labour of the artificer. Though the value of what the artificer produces, therefore, should not, at any one moment of time, be supposed greater than the value he consumes, yet, at every moment of time, the actually existing value of goods in the market is, in consequence of what he produces, greater than it otherwise would be.

When the patrons of this system assert, that the consumption of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, is equal to the value of what

they produce, they probably mean no more than that their revenue, or the fund destined for their consumption, is equal to it. But if they had expressed themselves more accurately, and only asserted, that the revenue of this class was equal to the value of what they produced, it might readily have occurred to the reader, that what would naturally be saved out of this revenue, must necessarily increase more or less the real wealth of the society. In order, therefore, to make out something like an argument, it was necessary that they should express themselves as they have done; and this argument, even supposing things actually were as it seems to presume them to be, turns out to be a very inconclusive one.

Fourthly, farmers and country labourers can no more augment, without parsimony, the real revenue, the annual produce of the land and labour of their society, than artificers, manufacturers, and merchants. The annual produce of the land and labour of any society can be augmented only in two ways; either, first, by some improvement in the productive powers of the useful labour actually maintained within it; or, secondly, by some increase in the quantity of that labour.

The improvement in the productive powers of useful labour depends, first, upon the improvement in the ability of the workman; and, secondly, upon that of the machinery with which he works. But the labour of artificers and manufacturers, as it is capable of being more subdivided, and the labour of each workman reduced to a greater simplicity of operation, than that of farmers and country labourers; so it is likewise capable of both these sorts of improvement in a much higher degree.[43*] In this respect, therefore, the class of cultivators can have no sort of advantage over that of artificers and manufacturers.

The increase in the quantity of useful labour actually employed within any society must depend altogether upon the increase of the capital which employs it; and the increase of that capital, again, must be exactly equal to the amount of the savings from the revenue, either of the particular persons who manage and direct the employment of that capital, or of some other persons, who lend it to them. If merchants, artificers, and manufacturers are, as this system seems to suppose, naturally more inclined to parsimony and saving than proprietors and cultivators, they are, so far, more likely to augment the quantity of useful labour employed within their society, and consequently to increase its real revenue, the annual produce of its land and labour.

Fifthly and lastly, though the revenue of the inhabitants of every country was supposed to consist altogether, as this system seems to suppose, in the quantity of subsistence which their industry could

procure to them; yet, even upon this supposition, the revenue of a trading and manufacturing country must, other things being equal, always be much greater than that of one without trade or manufactures. By means of trade and manufactures, a greater quantity of subsistence can be annually imported into a particular country, than what its own lands, in the actual state of their cultivation, could afford. The inhabitants of a town, though they frequently possess no lands of their own, yet draw to themselves, by their industry, such a quantity of the rude produce of the lands of other people, as supplies them, not only with the materials of their work, but with the fund of their subsistence. What a town always is with regard to the country in its neighbourhood, one independent state or country may frequently be with regard to other independent states or countries. It is thus that Holland draws a great part of its subsistence from other countries; live cattle from Holstein and Jutland, and corn from almost all the different countries of Europe. A small quantity of manufactured produce, purchases a great quantity of rude produce. A trading and manufacturing country, therefore, naturally purchases, with a small part of its manufactured produce, a great part of the rude produce of other countries; while, on the contrary, a country without trade and manufactures is generally obliged to purchase, at the expense of a great part of its rude produce, a very small part of the manufactured produce of other countries. The one exports what can subsist and accommodate but a very few, and imports the subsistence and accommodation of a great number. The other exports the accommodation and subsistence of a great number, and imports that of a very few only. The inhabitants of the one must always enjoy a much greater quantity of subsistence than what their own lands, in the actual state of their cultivation, could afford. The inhabitants of the other most always enjoy a much smaller quantity.

This system, however, with all its imperfections, is perhaps the nearest approximation to the truth that has yet been published upon the subject of political economy; and is upon that account, well worth the consideration of every man who wishes to examine with attention the principles of that very important science. Though in representing the labour which is employed upon land as the only productive labour, the notions which it inculcates are, perhaps, too narrow and confined; yet in representing the wealth of nations as consisting, not in the unconsumable riches of money, but in the consumable goods annually reproduced by the labour of the society, and in representing perfect liberty as the only effectual expedient for rendering this annual reproduction the greatest possible, its doctrine seems to be in every respect as just as it is generous

and liberal. Its followers are very numerous; and as men are fond of paradoxes, and of appearing to understand what surpasses the comprehensions of ordinary people, the paradox which it maintains, concerning the unproductive nature of manufacturing labour, has not, perhaps, contributed a little to increase the number of its admirers. They have for some years past made a pretty considerable sect, distinguished in the French republic of letters by the name of the Economists. Their works have certainly been of some service to their country; not only by bringing into general discussion, many subjects which had never been well examined before, but by influencing, in some measure, the public administration in favour of agriculture. It has been in consequence of their representations, accordingly, that the agriculture of France has been delivered from several of the oppressions which it before laboured under. The term, during which such a lease can be granted, as will be valid against every future purchaser or proprietor of the land, has been prolonged from nine to twenty-seven years. The ancient provincial restraints upon the transportation of corn from one province of the kingdom to another, have been entirely taken away; and the liberty of exporting it to all foreign countries, has been established as the common law of the kingdom in all ordinary cases. This sect, in their works, which are very numerous, and which treat not only of what is properly called Political Economy, or of the nature and causes of the wealth of nations, but of every other branch of the system of civil government, all follow implicitly, and without any sensible variation, the doctrine of Mr. Quesnai. There is, upon this account, little variety in the greater part of their works. The most distinct and best connected account of this doctrine is to be found in a little book written by Mr. Mercier de la Riviere, some time intendant of Martinico, entitled, The natural and essential Order of Political Societies. The admiration of this whole sect for their master, who was himself a man of the greatest modesty and simplicity, is not inferior to that of any of the ancient philosophers for the founders of their respective systems. ‘There have been since the world began,’ says a very diligent and respectable author, the Marquis de Mirabeau, ‘three great inventions which have principally given stability to political societies, independent of many other inventions which have enriched and adorned them. The first is the invention of writing, which alone gives human nature the power of transmitting, without alteration, its laws, its contracts, its annals, and its discoveries. The second is the invention of money, which binds together all the relations between civilized societies. The third is the economical table, the result of the

other two, which completes them both by perfecting their object; the great discovery of our age, but of which our posterity will reap the benefit.’

As the political economy of the nations of modern Europe has been more favourable to manufactures and foreign trade, the industry of the towns, than to agriculture, the industry of the country; so that of other nations has followed a different plan, and has been more favourable to agriculture than to manufactures and foreign trade.

The policy of China favours agriculture more than all other employments. In China, the condition of a labourer is said to be as much superior to that of an artificer, as in most parts of Europe that of an artificer is to that of a labourer. In China, the great ambition of every man is to get possession of a little bit of land, either in property or in lease; and leases are there said to be granted upon very moderate terms, and to be sufficiently secured to the lessees. The Chinese have little respect for foreign trade. Your beggarly commerce! was the language in which the mandarins of Pekin used to talk to Mr. De Lange, the Russian envoy, concerning it[44*]. Except with Japan, the Chinese carry on, themselves, and in their own bottoms, little or no foreign trade; and it is only into one or two ports of their kingdom that they even admit the ships of foreign nations. Foreign trade, therefore, is, in China, every way confined within a much narrower circle than that to which it would naturally extend itself, if more freedom was allowed to it, either in their own ships, or in those of foreign nations.

Manufactures, as in a small bulk they frequently contain a great value, and can upon that account be transported at less expense from one country to another than most parts of rude produce, are, in almost all countries, the principal support of foreign trade. In countries, besides, less extensive, and less favourably circumstanced for inferior commerce than China, they generally require the support of foreign trade. Without an extensive foreign market, they could not well flourish, either in countries so moderately extensive as to afford but a narrow home market, or in countries where the communication between one province and another was so difficult, as to render it impossible for the goods of any particular place to enjoy the whole of that home market which the country could afford. The perfection of manufacturing industry, it must be remembered, depends altogether upon the division of labour; and the degree to which the division of labour can be introduced into any manufacture, is necessarily regulated, it has already been shewn, by the extent of the market. But the great extent of the empire of China, the vast

multitude of its inhabitants, the variety of climate, and consequently of productions in its different provinces, and the easy communication by means of water-carriage between the greater part of them, render the home market of that country of so great extent, as to be alone sufficient to support very great manufactures, and to admit of very considerable subdivisions of labour. The home market of China is, perhaps, in extent, not much inferior to the market of all the different countries of Europe put together. A more extensive foreign trade, however, which to this great home market added the foreign market of all the rest of the world, especially if any considerable part of this trade was carried on in Chinese ships, could scarce fail to increase very much the manufactures of China, and to improve very much the productive powers of its manufacturing industry. By a more extensive navigation, the Chinese would naturally learn the art of using and constructing, themselves, all the different machines made use of in other countries, as well as the other improvements of art and industry which are practised in all the different parts of the world. Upon their present plan, they have little opportunity of improving themselves by the example of any other nation, except that of the Japanese.

The policy of ancient Egypt, too, and that of the Gentoo government of Indostan, seem to have favoured agriculture more than all other employments.

Both in ancient Egypt and Indostan, the whole body of the people was divided into different casts or tribes each of which was confined, from father to son, to a particular employment, or class of employments. The son of a priest was necessarily a priest; the son of a soldier, a soldier; the son of a labourer, a labourer; the son of a weaver, a weaver; the son of a tailor, a tailor, &c. In both countries, the cast of the priests holds the highest rank, and that of the soldiers the next; and in both countries the cast of the farmers and labourers was superior to the casts of merchants and manufacturers.

The government of both countries was particularly attentive to the interest of agriculture. The works constructed by the ancient sovereigns of Egypt, for the proper distribution of the waters of the Nile, were famous in antiquity, and the ruined remains of some of them are still the admiration of travellers. Those of the same kind which were constructed by the ancient sovereigns of Indostan, for the proper distribution of the waters of the Ganges, as well as of many other rivers, though they have been less celebrated, seem to have been equally great. Both countries accordingly, though subject occasionally to dearths, have been famous

for their great fertility. Though both were extremely populous, yet, in years of moderate plenty, they were both able to export great quantities of grain to their neighbours.

The ancient Egyptians had a superstitious aversion to the sea; and as the Gentoo religion does not permit its followers to light a fire, nor consequently to dress any victuals, upon the water, it, in effect, prohibits them from all distant sea voyages. Both the Egyptians and Indians must have depended almost altogether upon the navigation of other nations for the exportation of their surplus produce; and this dependency, as it must have confined the market, so it must have discouraged the increase of this surplus produce. It must have discouraged, too, the increase of the manufactured produce, more than that of the rude produce. Manufactures require a much more extensive market than the most important parts of the rude produce of the land. A single shoemaker will make more than 300 pairs of shoes in the year; and his own family will not, perhaps, wear out six pairs. Unless, therefore, he has the custom of, at least, 50 such families as his own, he cannot dispose of the whole produce of his own labour. The most numerous class of artificers will seldom, in a large country, make more than one in 50, or one in a 100, of the whole number of families contained in it. But in such large countries, as France and England, the number of people employed in agriculture has, by some authors, been computed at a half, by others at a third, and by no author that I know of, at less than a fifth of the whole inhabitants of the country. But as the produce of the agriculture of both France and England is, the far greater part of it, consumed at home, each person employed in it must, according to these computations, require little more than the custom of one, two, or, at most, of four such families as his own, in order in dispose of the whole produce of his own labour. Agriculture, therefore, can support itself under the discouragement of a confined market much better than manufactures. In both ancient Egypt and Indostan, indeed, the confinement of the foreign market was in some measure compensated by the conveniency of many inland navigations, which opened, in the most advantageous manner, the whole extent of the home market to every part of the produce of every different district of those countries. The great extent of Indostan, too, rendered the home market of that country very great, and sufficient to support a great variety of manufactures. But the small extent of ancient Egypt, which was never equal to England, must at all times, have rendered the home market of that country too narrow for supporting any great variety of manufactures. Bengal accordingly, the province of Indostan which commonly exports

the greatest quantity of rice, has always been more remarkable for the exportation of a great variety of manufactures, than for that of its grain. Ancient Egypt, on the contrary, though it exported some manufactures, fine linen in particular, as well as some other goods, was always most distinguished for its great exportation of grain. It was long the granary of the Roman empire.

The sovereigns of China, of ancient Egypt, and of the different kingdoms into which Indostan has, at different times, been divided, have always derived the whole, or by far the most considerable part, of their revenue, from some sort of land tax or land rent. This land tax, or land rent, like the tithe in Europe, consisted in a certain proportion, a fifth it is said, of the produce of the land, which was either delivered in kind, or paid in money, according to a certain valuation, and which, therefore, varied from year to year, according to all the variations of the produce. It was natural, therefore, that the sovereigns of those countries should be particularly attentive to the interests of agriculture, upon the prosperity or declension of which immediately depended the yearly increase or diminution of their own revenue.

The policy of the ancient republics of Greece, and that of Rome, though it honoured agriculture more than manufactures or foreign trade, yet seems rather to have discouraged the latter employments, than to have given any direct or intentional encouragement to the former. In several of the ancient states of Greece, foreign trade was prohibited altogether; and in several others the employments of artificers and manufacturers were considered as hurtful to the strength and agility of the human body, as rendering it incapable of those habits which their military and gymnastic exercises endeavoured to form in it, and as thereby disqualifying it, more or less, for undergoing the fatigues and encountering the dangers of war. Such occupations were considered as fit only for slaves, and the free citizens of the states were prohibited from exercising them. Even in those states where no such prohibition took place, as in Rome and Athens, the great body of the people were in effect excluded from all the trades which are now commonly exercised by the lower sort of the inhabitants of towns. Such trades were, at Athens and Rome, all occupied by the slaves of the rich, who exercised them for the benefit of their masters, whose wealth, power, and protection, made it almost impossible for a poor freeman to find a market for his work, when it came into competition with that of the slaves of the rich. Slaves, however, are very seldom inventive; and all the most important improvements, either in machinery, or in the arrangement and

distribution of work, which facilitate and abridge labour have been the discoveries of freemen. Should a slave propose any improvement of this kind, his master would be very apt to consider the proposal as the suggestion of laziness, and of a desire to save his own labour at the master's expense. The poor slave, instead of reward would probably meet with much abuse, perhaps with some punishment. In the manufactures carried on by slaves, therefore, more labour must generally have been employed to exercise the same quantity of work, than in those carried on by freemen. The work of the former must, upon that account, generally have been dearer than that of the latter. The Hungarian mines, it is remarked by Mr. Montesquieu, though not richer, have always been wrought with less expense, and therefore with more profit, than the Turkish mines in their neighbourhood. The Turkish mines are wrought by slaves; and the arms of those slaves are the only machines which the Turks have ever thought of employing. The Hungarian mines are wrought by freemen, who employ a great deal of machinery, by which they facilitate and abridge their own labour. From the very little that is known about the price of manufactures in the times of the Greeks and Romans, it would appear that those of the finer sort were excessively dear. Silk sold for its weight in gold. It was not, indeed, in those times an European manufacture; and as it was all brought from the East Indies, the distance of the carriage may in some measure account for the greatness of the price. The price, however, which a lady, it is said, would sometimes pay for a piece of very fine linen, seems to have been equally extravagant; and as linen was always either an European, or at farthest, an Egyptian manufacture, this high price can be accounted for only by the great expense of the labour which must have been employed about it, and the expense of this labour again could arise from nothing but the awkwardness of the machinery which is made use of. The price of fine woollens, too, though not quite so extravagant, seems, however, to have been much above that of the present times. Some cloths, we are told by Pliny[45*], dyed in a particular manner, cost a hundred denarii, or L.3 6s. 8d. the pound weight. Others, dyed in another manner, cost a thousand denarii the pound weight, or L.33 6s. 8d. The Roman pound, it must be remembered, contained only twelve of our avoirdupois ounces. This high price, indeed, seems to have been principally owing to the dye. But had not the cloths themselves been much dearer than any which are made in the present times, so very expensive a dye would not probably have been bestowed upon them. The disproportion would have been too great between the value of the accessory and that of the principal. The price

mentioned by the same author[46*], of some triclinaria, a sort of woollen pillows or cushions made use of to lean upon as they reclined upon their couches at table, passes all credibility; some of them being said to have cost more than L.30,000, others more than L.300,000. This high price, too, is not said to have arisen from the dye. In the dress of the people of fashion of both sexes, there seems to have been much less variety, it is observed by Dr. Arbuthnot, in ancient than in modern times; and the very little variety which we find in that of the ancient statues, confirms his observation. He infers from this, that their dress must, upon the whole, have been cheaper than ours; but the conclusion does not seem to follow. When the expense of fashionable dress is very great, the variety must be very small. But when, by the improvements in the productive powers of manufacturing art and industry, the expense of any one dress comes to be very moderate, the variety will naturally be very great. The rich, not being able to distinguish themselves by the expense of any one dress, will naturally endeavour to do so by the multitude and variety of their dresses.

The greatest and most important branch of the commerce of every nation, it has already been observed, is that which is carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country. The inhabitants of the town draw from the country the rude produce, which constitutes both the materials of their work and the fund of their subsistence; and they pay for this rude produce, by sending back to the country a certain portion of it manufactured and prepared for immediate use. The trade which is carried on between these two different sets of people, consists ultimately in a certain quantity of rude produce exchanged for a certain quantity of manufactured produce. The dearer the latter, therefore, the cheaper the former; and whatever tends in any country to raise the price of manufactured produce, tends to lower that of the rude produce of the land, and thereby to discourage agriculture. The smaller the quantity of manufactured produce, which any given quantity of rude produce, or, what comes to the same thing, which the price of any given quantity of rude produce, is capable of purchasing, the smaller the exchangeable value of that given quantity of rude produce; the smaller the encouragement which either the landlord has to increase its quantity by improving, or the farmer by cultivating the land. Whatever, besides, tends to diminish in any country the number of artificers and manufacturers, tends to diminish the home market, the most important of all markets, for the rude produce of the land, and thereby still further to discourage agriculture.

Those systems, therefore, which preferring agriculture to all other employments, in order to promote it, impose restraints upon manufactures and foreign trade, act contrary to the very end which they propose, and indirectly discourage that very species of industry which they mean to promote. They are so far, perhaps, more inconsistent than even the mercantile system. That system, by encouraging manufactures and foreign trade more than agriculture, turns a certain portion of the capital of the society, from supporting a more advantageous, to support a less advantageous species of industry. But still it really, and in the end, encourages that species of industry which it means to promote. Those agricultural systems, on the contrary, really, and in the end, discourage their own favourite species of industry.

It is thus that every system which endeavours, either, by extraordinary encouragements to draw towards a particular species of industry a greater share of the capital of the society than what would naturally go to it, or, by extraordinary restraints, to force from a particular species of industry some share of the capital which would otherwise be employed in it, is, in reality subversive of the great purpose which it means to promote. It retards, instead of accelerating, the progress of the society towards real wealth and greatness; and diminishes, instead of increasing, the real value of the annual produce of its land and labour.

All systems, either of preference or of restraint, therefore, being thus completely taken away, the obvious and simple system of natural liberty establishes itself of its own accord. Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man, or order of men. The sovereign is completely discharged from a duty, in the attempting to perform which he must always be exposed to innumerable delusions, and for the proper performance of which, no human wisdom or knowledge could ever be sufficient; the duty of superintending the industry of private people, and of directing it towards the employments most suitable to the interest of the society. According to the system of natural liberty, the sovereign has only three duties to attend to; three duties of great importance, indeed, but plain and intelligible to common understandings: first, the duty of protecting the society from violence and invasion of other independent societies; secondly, the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice; and, thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public

works, and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the interest of any individual, or small number of individuals to erect and maintain; because the profit could never repay the expense to any individual, or small number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society.

The proper performance of those several duties of the sovereign necessarily supposes a certain expense; and this expense again necessarily requires a certain revenue to support it. In the following book, therefore, I shall endeavour to explain, first, what are the necessary expenses of the sovereign or commonwealth; and which of those expenses ought to be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society; and which of them, by that of some particular part only, or of some particular members of the society; secondly, what are the different methods in which the whole society may be made to contribute towards defraying the expenses incumbent on the whole society; and what are the principal advantages and inconveniences of each of those methods; and thirdly, what are the reasons and causes which have induced almost all modern governments to mortgage some part of this revenue, or to contract debts; and what have been the effects of those debts upon the real wealth, the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. The following book, therefore, will naturally be divided into three chapters.

INDEX.

The two following accounts are subjoined, in order to illustrate and confirm what is said in the fifth chapter of the fourth book, concerning the Tonnage Bounty to the White-herring Fishery. The reader, I believe, may depend upon the accuracy of both accounts.

An Account of Busses fitted out in Scotland for eleven Years, with the Number of empty Barrels carried out, and the Number of Barrels of Herrings caught; also the Bounty, at a Medium, on each Barrel of Sea-sticks, and on each Barrel when fully packed.

Years.	Number of Busses.

	Empty Barrels carried out.	Barrels of Herrings caught.	Bounty paid on the Busses.
			L. s. d.
1771			
	29		
	5,948		
	2,832		
		2,885	0 0
1772			
	168		
	41,316		
	22,237		
		11,055	7 6
1773			
	190		
	42,333		
	42,055		
		12,510	8 6
1774			
	240		
	59,303		
	56,365		
		26,952	2 6

1775
275
69,144
52,879
19,315 15 0

1776
294
76,329
51,863
21,290 7 6

1777
240
62,679
45,313
17,592 2 6

1778
220
56,390
40,958
16,316 2 6

1779
206
55,194
29,367
15,287 0 0

1780
181
48,315
19,885
13,445 12 6

1781
135
33,992
16,593

9,613 15 6

Total,
2,186
550,943
378,347
L.165,463 14 0

Sea-sticks,
378,347

1-3d deducted,
126,115⅔

——— ———

Barrels fully packed,
252,231⅓

Bounty, at a medium, for each barrel of sea-sticks,
L.0 8 2¼

But a barrel of sea-sticks being only reckoned two thirds of a barrel fully packed, one third is to be deducted, which brings the bounty to
L.0 12 3¾

And if the herrings are exported, there is besides, a premium of
L.0 2 8

——— ——— —

So that the bounty paid by government in money, for each barrel, is
L.0 14 11¾

But if to this, the duty of the salt usually taken credit for as expended in curing each barrel, which, at a medium, is, of foreign, one bushel and

one-fourth of a bushel, at 10s. a-bushel, be added. viz.
0 12 6

——— ——— —

the bounty on each barrel would amount to
L.1 7 5¾

——— ——— —

If the herrings are cured with British salt, it will stand thus, viz.

Bounty, as before
L.0 14 11¾

But if to this bounty, the duty on two bushels of Scotch salt, at 1s. 6d. per bushel, supposed to be the quantity, at a medium, used in curing each barrel, is added, viz.
0 3 0

——— ——— —

the bounty on each barrel will amount to
L.0 17 11¾

——— ——— —

And when buss herrings are entered for home consumption in Scotland, and pay the shilling a-barrel of duty, the bounty stands thus, to wit, as before
L.0 12 3

From which the 1s. a-barrel is to be deducted
0 1 0

——— ——— —

L.0 11 3¾

But to that there is to be added again, the duty of the foreign salt used in curing a barrel of herrings, viz.

0 12 6

——— ——— —

So that the premium allowed for each barrel of herrings entered for home consumption is

L.1 3 9¾

——— ——— —

If the herrings are cured with British salt, it will stand as follows, viz.

Bounty on each barrel brought in by the busses, as above

L.0 12 3¾

From which deduct the 1s. a-barrel, paid at the time they are entered for home consumption

0 1 0

——— ——— —

L.0 11 3¾

But if to the bounty, the duty on two bushels of Scotch salt, at 1s. 6d. per bushel, supposed to be the quantity, at a medium, used in curing each barrel, is added, viz.

0 3 0

——— ——— —

the premium for each barrel entered for home consumption will be L.0 14 3¾

Though the loss of duties upon herrings exported cannot, perhaps, properly be considered as bounty, that upon herrings entered for home consumption certainly may.

An Account of the Quantity of Foreign Salt imported into Scotland, and of Scotch Salt delivered Duty-free from the Works there, for the Fishery, from the 5th of April 1771 to the 5th of April 1782, with the Medium of both for one Year.

PERIOD.	Foreign Salt imported.	Scotch Salt delivered from the Works.
	Bushels	Bushels
From the 5th of April 1771 to the 5th April 1782.	936,974	168,226
Medium for one year	85,179$^{5}/_{11}$	15,293$^{3}/_{11}$

It is to be observed, that the bushel of foreign salt weighs 48lb. that of British salt, 56lb. only.

BOOK V. OF THE REVENUE OF THE SOVEREIGN OR COMMONWEALTH.

CHAP. I. OF THE EXPENSES OF THE SOVEREIGN OR COMMONWEALTH.

PART I.

Of the Expense of Defence.

The first duty of the sovereign, that of protecting the society from the violence and invasion of other independent societies, can be performed only by means of a military force. But the expense both of preparing this military force in time of peace, and of employing it in time of war, is very different in the different states of society, in the different periods of improvement.

Among nations of hunters, the lowest and rudest state of society, such as we find it among the native tribes of North America, every man is a warrior, as well as a hunter. When he goes to war, either to defend his society, or to revenge the injuries which have been done to it by other societies, he maintains himself by his own labour, in the same manner as when he lives at home. His society (for in this state of things there is properly neither sovereign nor commonwealth) is at no sort of expense, either to prepare him for the field, or to maintain him while he is in it.

Among nations of shepherds, a more advanced state of society, such as we find it among the Tartar and Arabs, every man is, in the same manner a warrior. Such nations have commonly no fixed habitation, but live either in tents, or in a sort of covered wagons, which are easily transported from place to place. The whole tribe, or nation, changes its situation according to the different seasons of the year, as well as according to other accidents. When its herds and flocks have consumed the forage of one part of the country, it removes to another, and from that to a third. In the dry season, it comes down to the banks of the rivers; in the wet season, it retires to the upper country. When such a nation goes to war, the warriors will not trust their herds and flocks to the feeble defence of their old men, their women and children; and their old men, their women and children, will not be left behind without defence, and without subsistence. The whole nation, besides, being accustomed to a wandering life, even in time of peace, easily takes the field in time of war. Whether it marches as an army, or moves about as a company of herdsmen, the way of life is nearly the same, though the object proposed

by it be very different. They all go to war together, therefore, and every one does as well as he can. Among the Tartars, even the women have been frequently known to engage in battle. If they conquer, whatever belongs to the hostile tribe is the recompence of the victory; but if they are vanquished, all is lost; and not only their herds and flocks, but their women and children, become the booty of the conqueror. Even the greater part of those who survive the action are obliged to submit to him for the sake of immediate subsistence. The rest are commonly dissipated and dispersed in the desert.

The ordinary life, the ordinary exercise of a Tartar or Arab, prepare him sufficiently for war. Running, wrestling, cudgel-playing, throwing the javelin, drawing the bow, &c. are the common pastimes of those who live in the open air, and are all of them the images of war. When a Tartar or Arab actually goes to war, he is maintained by his own herds and flocks, which he carries with him, in the same manner as in peace. His chief or sovereign (for those nations have all chiefs or sovereigns) is at no sort of expense in preparing him for the field; and when he is in it, the chance of plunder is the only pay which he either expects or requires.

An army of hunters can seldom exceed two or three hundred men. The precarious subsistence which the chace affords, could seldom allow a greater number to keep together for any considerable time. An army of shepherds, on the contrary, may sometimes amount to two or three hundred thousand. As long as nothing stops their progress, as long as they can go on from one district, of which they have consumed the forage, to another, which is yet entire; there seems to be scarce any limit to the number who can march on together. A nation of hunters can never be formidable to the civilized nations in their neighbourhood; a nation of shepherds may. Nothing can be more contemptible than an Indian war in North America; nothing, on the contrary, can be more dreadful than a Tartar invasion has frequently been in Asia. The judgement of Thucydides, that both Europe and Asia could not resist the Scythians united, has been verified by the experience of all ages. The inhabitants of the extensive, but defenceles plains of Scythia or Tartary, have been frequently united under the dominion of the chief of some conquering horde or clan; and the havock and devastation of Asia have always signalized their union. The inhabitants of the inhospitable deserts of Arabia, the other great nation of shepherds, have never been united but once, under Mahomet and his immediate successors. Their union, which was more the effect of religious enthusiasm than of conquest, was signalized in the same manner. If the hunting nations of America should

ever become shepherds, their neighbourhood would be much more dangerous to the European colonies than it is at present.

In a yet more advanced state of society, among those nations of husbandmen who have little foreign commerce, and no other manufactures but those coarse and household ones, which almost every private family prepares for its own use, every man, in the same manner, either is a warrior, or easily becomes such. Those who live by agriculture generally pass the whole day in the open air, exposed to all the inclemencies of the seasons. The hardiness of their ordinary life prepares them for the fatigues of war, to some of which their necessary occupations bear a great analogy. The necessary occupation of a ditcher prepares him to work in the trenches, and to fortify a camp, as well as to inclose a field. The ordinary pastimes of such husbandmen are the same as those of shepherds, and are in the same manner the images of war. But as husbandmen have less leisure than shepherds, they are not so frequently employed in those pastimes. They are soldiers, but soldiers not quite so much masters of their exercise. Such as they are, however, it seldom costs the sovereign or commonwealth any expense to prepare them for the field.

Agriculture, even in its rudest and lowest state, supposes a settlement, some sort of fixed habitation, which cannot be abandoned without great loss. When a nation of mere husbandmen, therefore, goes to war, the whole people cannot take the field together. The old men, the women and children, at least, must remain at home, to take care of the habitation. All the men of the military age, however, may take the field, and in small nations of this kind, have frequently done so. In every nation, the men of the military age are supposed to amount to about a fourth or a fifth part of the whole body of the people. If the campaign, too, should begin after seed-time, and end before harvest, both the husbandman and his principal labourers can be spared from the farm without much loss. He trusts that the work which must be done in the mean time, can be well enough executed by the old men, the women, and the children. He is not unwilling, therefore, to serve without pay during a short campaign; and it frequently costs the sovereign or commonwealth as little to maintain him in the field as to prepare him for it. The citizens of all the different states of ancient Greece seem to have served in this manner till after the second Persian war; and the people of Peloponnesus till after the Peloponnesian war. The Peloponnesians, Thucydides observes, generally left the field in the summer, and returned home to reap the harvest. The Roman people, under their kings, and during the first ages of the republic, served in the

same manner. It was not till the siege of Veii, that they who staid at home began to contribute something towards maintaining those who went to war. In the European monarchies, which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire, both before, and for some time after, the establishment of what is properly called the feudal law, the great lords, with all their immediate dependents, used to serve the crown at their own expense. In the field, in the same manner as at home, they maintained themselves by their own revenue, and not by any stipend or pay which they received from the king upon that particular occasion.

In a more advanced state of society, two different causes contribute to render it altogether impossible that they who take the field should maintain themselves at their own expense. Those two causes are, the progress of manufactures, and the improvement in the art of war.

Though a husbandman should be employed in an expedition, provided it begins after seed-time, and ends before harvest, the interruption of his business will not always occasion any considerable diminution of his revenue. Without the intervention of his labour, Nature does herself the greater part of the work which remains to be done. But the moment that an artificer, a smith, a carpenter, or a weaver, for example, quits his workhouse, the sole source of his revenue is completely dried up. Nature does nothing for him; he does all for himself. When he takes the field, therefore, in defence of the public, as he has no revenue to maintain himself, he must necessarily be maintained by the public. But in a country, of which a great part of the inhabitants are artificers and manufacturers, a great part the people who go to war must be drawn from those classes, and must, therefore, be maintained by the public as long as they are employed in its service.

When the art of war, too, has gradually grown up to be a very intricate and complicated science; when the event of war ceases to be determined, as in the first ages of society, by a single irregular skirmish or battle; but when the contest is generally spun out through several different campaigns, each of which lasts during the greater part of the year; it becomes universally necessary that the public should maintain those who serve the public in war, at least while they are employed in that service. Whatever, in time of peace, might be the ordinary occupation of those who go to war, so very tedious and expensive a service would otherwise be by far too heavy a burden upon them. After the second Persian war, accordingly, the armies of Athens seem to have been generally composed of mercenary troops, consisting, indeed, partly of citizens, but partly, too, of foreigners; and all of them equally hired and paid at the expense of the

state. From the time of the siege of Veii, the armies of Rome received pay for their service during the time which they remained in the field. Under the feudal governments, the military service, both of the great lords, and of their immediate dependents, was, after a certain period, universally exchanged for a payment in money, which was employed to maintain those who served in their stead.

The number of those who can go to war, in proportion to the whole number of the people, is necessarily much smaller in a civilized than in a rude state of society. In a civilized society, as the soldiers are maintained altogether by the labour of those who are not soldiers, the number of the former can never exceed what the latter can maintain, over and above maintaining, in a manner suitable to their respective stations, both themselves and the other officers of government and law, whom they are obliged to maintain. In the little agrarian states of ancient Greece, a fourth or a fifth part of the whole body of the people considered themselves as soldiers, and would sometimes, it is said, take the field. Among the civilized nations of modern Europe, it is commonly computed, that not more than the one hundredth part of the inhabitants of any country can be employed as soldiers, without ruin to the country which pays the expense of their service.

The expense of preparing the army for the field seems not to have become considerable in any nation, till long after that of maintaining it in the field had devolved entirely upon the sovereign or commonwealth. In all the different republics of ancient Greece, to learn his military exercises, was a necessary part of education imposed by the state upon every free citizen. In every city there seems to have been a public field, in which, under the protection of the public magistrate, the young people were taught their different exercises by different masters. In this very simple institution consisted the whole expense which any Grecian state seems ever to have been at, in preparing its citizens for war. In ancient Rome, the exercises of the Campus Martius answered the same purpose with those of the Gymnasium in ancient Greece. Under the feudal governments, the many public ordinances, that the citizens of every district should practise archery, as well as several other military exercises, were intended for promoting the same purpose, but do not seem to have promoted it so well. Either from want of interest in the officers entrusted with the execution of those ordinances, or from some other cause, they appear to have been universally neglected; and in the progress of all those governments, military exercises seem to have gone gradually into disuse among the great body of the people.

In the republic of ancient Greece and Rome, during the whole period of their existence, and under the feudal governments, for a considerable time after their first establishment, the trade of a soldier was not a separate, distinct trade, which constituted the sole or principal occupation of a particular class of citizens; every subject of the state, whatever might be the ordinary trade or occupation by which he gained his livelihood, considered himself, upon all ordinary occasions, as fit likewise to exercise the trade of a soldier, and, upon many extraordinary occasions, as bound to exercise it.

The art of war, however, as it is certainly the noblest of all arts, so, in the progress of improvement, it necessarily becomes one of most complicated among them. The state of the mechanical, as well as some other arts, with which it is necessarily connected, determines the degree of perfection to which it is capable of being carried at any particular time. But in order to carry it to this degree of perfection, it is necessary that it should become the sole or principal occupation of a particular class of citizens; and the division of labour is as necessary for the improvement of this, as of every other art. Into other arts, the division of labour is naturally introduced by the prudence of individuals, who find that they promote their private interest better by confining themselves to a particular trade, than by exercising a great number. But it is the wisdom of the state only, which can render the trade of a soldier a particular trade, separate and distinct from all others. A private citizen, who, in time of profound peace, and without any particular encouragement from the public, should spend the greater part of his time in military exercises, might, no doubt, both improve himself very much in them, and amuse himself very well; but he certainly would not promote his own interest. It is the wisdom of the state only, which can render it for his interest to give up the greater part of his time to this peculiar occupation; and states have not always had this wisdom, even when their circumstances had become such, that the preservation of their existence required that they should have it.

A shepherd has a great deal of leisure; a husbandman, in the rude state of husbandry, has some; an artificer or manufacturer has none at all. The first may, without any loss, employ a great deal of his time in martial exercises; the second may employ some part of it; but the last cannot employ a single hour in them without some loss, and his attention to his own interest naturally leads him to neglect them altogether. Those improvements in husbandry, too, which the progress of arts and manufacturers necessarily introduces, leave the husbandman as little

leisure as the artificer. Military exercises come to be as much neglected by the inhabitants of the country as by those of the town, and the great body of the people becomes altogether unwarlike. That wealth, at the same time, which always follows the improvements of agriculture and manufactures, and which, in reality, is no more than the accumulated produce of those improvements, provokes the invasion of all their neighbours. An industrious, and, upon that account, a wealthy nation, is of all nations the most likely to be attacked; and unless the states takes some new measure for the public defence, the natural habits of the people render them altogether incapable of defending themselves.

In these circumstances, there seem to be but two methods by which the state can make any tolerable provision for the public defence.

If may either, first, by means of a very rigorous police, and in spite of the whole bent of the interest, genius, and inclinations of the people, enforce the practice of military exercises, and oblige either all the citizens of the military age, or a certain number of them, to join in some measure the trade of a soldier to whatever other trade or profession they may happen to carry on.

Or, secondly, by maintaining and employing a certain number of citizens in the constant practice of military exercises, it may render the trade of a soldier a particular trade, separate and distinct from all others.

If the state has recourse to the first of those two expedients, its military force is said to consist in a militia; if to the second, it is said to consist in a standing army. The practice of military exercises is the sole or principal occupation of the soldiers of a standing army, and the maintenance or pay which the state affords them is the principal and ordinary fund of their subsistence. The practice of military exercises is only the occasional occupation of the soldiers of a militia, and they derive the principal and ordinary fund of their subsistence from some other occupation. In a militia, the character of the labourer, artificer, or tradesman, predominates over that of the soldier; in a standing army, that of the soldier predominates over every other character; and in this distinction seems to consist the essential difference between those two different species of military force.

Militias have been of several different kinds. In some countries, the citizens destined for defending the state seem to have been exercised only, without being, if I may say so, regimented; that is, without being divided into separate and distinct bodies of troops, each of which performed its exercises under its own proper and permanent officers. In the republics of ancient Greece and Rome, each citizen, as long as he

remained at home, seems to have practiced his exercises, either separately and independently, or with such of his equals as he liked best; and not to have been attached to any particular body of troops, till he was actually called upon to take the field. In other countries, the militia has not only been exercised, but regimented. In England, in Switzerland, and, I believe, in every other country of modern Europe, where any imperfect military force of this kind has been established, every militiaman is, even in time of peace, attached to a particular body of troops, which performs its exercises under its own proper and permanent officers.

Before the invention of fire-arms, that army was superior in which the soldiers had, each individually, the greatest skill and dexterity in the use of their arms. Strength and agility of body were of the highest consequence, and commonly determined the fate of battles. But this skill and dexterity in the use of their arms could be acquired only, in the same manner as fencing is at present, by practising, not in great bodies, but each man separately, in a particular school, under a particular master, or with his own particular equals and companions. Since the invention of fire-arms, strength and agility of body, or even extraordinary dexterity and skill in the use of arms, though they are far from being of no consequence, are, however, of less consequence. The nature of the weapon, though it by no means puts the awkward upon a level with the skilful, puts him more nearly so than he ever was before. All the dexterity and skill, it is supposed, which are necessary for using it, can be well enough acquired by practising in great bodies.

Regularity, order, and prompt obedience to command, are qualities which, in modern armies, are of more importance towards determining the fate of battles, than the dexterity and skill of the soldiers in the use of their arms. But the noise of fire-arms, the smoke, and the invisible death to which every man feels himself every moment exposed, as soon as he comes within cannon-shot, and frequently a long time before the battle can be well said to be engaged, must render it very difficult to maintain any considerable degree of this regularity, order, and prompt obedience, even in the beginning of a modern battle. In an ancient battle, there was no noise but what arose from the human voice; there was no smoke, there was no invisible cause of wounds or death. Every man, till some mortal weapon actually did approach him, saw clearly that no such weapon was near him. In these circumstances, and among troops who had some confidence in their own skill and dexterity in the use of their arms, it must have been a good deal less difficult to preserve some degree of regularity and order, not only in the beginning, but through the

whole progress of an ancient battle, and till one of the two armies was fairly defeated. But the habits of regularity, order, and prompt obedience to command, can be acquired only by troops which are exercised in great bodies.

A militia, however, in whatever manner it may be either disciplined or exercised, must always be much inferior to a well disciplined and well exercised standing army.

The soldiers who are exercised only once a-week, or once a-month, can never be so expert in the use of their arms, as those who are exercised every day, or every other day; and though this circumstance may not be of so much consequence in modern, as it was in ancient times, yet the acknowledged superiority of the Prussian troops, owing, it is said, very much to their superior expertness in their exercise, may satisfy us that it is, even at this day, of very considerable consequence.

The soldiers, who are bound to obey their officer only once a-week, or once a-month, and who are at all other times at liberty to manage their own affairs their own way, without being, in any respect, accountable to him, can never be under the same awe in his presence, can never have the same disposition to ready obedience, with those whose whole life and conduct are every day directed by him, and who every day even rise and go to bed, or at least retire to their quarters, according to his orders. In what is called discipline, or in the habit of ready obedience, a militia must always be still more inferior to a standing army, than it may sometimes be in what is called the manual exercise, or in the management and use of its arms. But, in modern war, the habit of ready and instant obedience is of much greater consequence than a considerable superiority in the management of arms.

Those militias which, like the Tartar or Arab militia, go to war under the same chieftains whom they are accustomed to obey in peace, are by far the best. In respect for their officers, in the habit of ready obedience, they approach nearest to standing armies. The Highland militia, when it served under its own chieftains, had some advantage of the same kind. As the Highlanders, however, were not wandering, but stationary shepherds, as they had all a fixed habitation, and were not, in peaceable times, accustomed to follow their chieftain from place to place; so, in time of war, they were less willing to follow him to any considerable distance, or to continue for any long time in the field. When they had acquired any booty, they were eager to return home, and his authority was seldom sufficient to detain them. In point of obedience, they were always much inferior to what is reported of the Tartars and Arabs. As the

Highlanders, too, from their stationary life, spend less of their time in the open air, they were always less accustomed to military exercises, and were less expert in the use of their arms than the Tartars and Arabs are said to be.

A militia of any kind, it must be observed, however, which has served for several successive campaigns in the field, becomes in every respect a standing army. The soldiers are every day exercised in the use of their arms, and, being constantly under the command of their officers, are habituated to the same prompt obedience which takes place in standing armies. What they were before they took the field, is of little importance. They necessarily become in every respect a standing army, after they have passed a few campaigns in it. Should the war in America drag out through another campaign, the American militia may become, in every respect, a match for that standing army, of which the valour appeared, in the last war at least, not inferior to that of the hardiest veterans of France and Spain.

This distinction being well understood, the history of all ages, it will be found, bears testimony to the irresistible superiority which a well regulated standing army has over a militia.

One of the first standing armies, of which we have any distinct account in any well authenticated history, is that of Philip of Macedon. His frequent wars with the Thracians, Illyrians, Thessalians, and some of the Greek cities in the neighbourhood of Macedon, gradually formed his troops, which in the beginning were probably militia, to the exact discipline of a standing army. When he was at peace, which he was very seldom, and never for any long time together, he was careful not to disband that army. It vanquished and subdued, after a long and violent struggle, indeed, the gallant and well exercised militias of the principal republics of ancient Greece; and afterwards, with very little struggle, the effeminate and ill exercised militia of the great Persian empire. The fall of the Greek republics, and of the Persian empire was the effect of the irresistible superiority which a standing army has over every other sort of militia. It is the first great revolution in the affairs of mankind of which history has preserved any distinct and circumstantial account.

The fall of Carthage, and the consequent elevation of Rome, is the second. All the varieties in the fortune of those two famous republics may very well be accounted for from the same cause.

From the end of the first to the beginning of the second Carthaginian war, the armies of Carthage were continually in the field, and employed under three great generals, who succeeded one another in the command;

Amilcar, his son-in-law Asdrubal, and his son Annibal: first in chastising their own rebellious slaves, afterwards in subduing the revolted nations of Africa; and lastly, in conquering the great kingdom of Spain. The army which Annibal led from Spain into Italy must necessarily, in those different wars, have been gradually formed to the exact discipline of standing army. The Romans, in the meantime, though they had not been altogether at peace, yet they had not, during this period, been engaged in any war of very great consequence; and their military discipline, it is generally said, was a good deal relaxed. The Roman armies which Annibal encountered at Trebi, Thrasymenus, and Cannæ, were militia opposed to a standing army. This circumstance, it is probable, contributed more than any other to determine the fate of those battles.

The standing army which Annibal left behind him in Spain had the like superiority over the militia which the Romans sent to oppose it; and, in a few years, under the command of his brother, the younger Asdrubal, expelled them almost entirely from that country.

Annibal was ill supplied from home. The Roman militia, being continually in the field, became, in the progress of the war, a well disciplined and well exercised standing army; and the superiority of Annibal grew every day less and less. Asdrubal judged it necessary to lead the whole, or almost the whole, of the standing army which he commanded in Spain, to the assistance of his brother in Italy. In this march, he is said to have been misled by his guides; and in a country which he did not know, was surprised and attacked, by another standing army, in every respect equal or superior to his own, and was entirely defeated.

When Asdrubal had left Spain, the great Scipio found nothing to oppose him but a militia inferior to his own. He conquered and subdued that militia, and, in the course of the war, his own militia necessarily became a well disciplined and well exercised standing army. That standing army was afterwards carried to Africa, where it found nothing but a militia to oppose it. In order to defend Carthage, it became necessary to recal the standing army of Annibal. The disheartened and frequently defeated African militia joined it, and, at the battle of Zama, composed the greater part of the troops of Annibal. The event of that day determined the fate of the two rival republics.

From the end of the second Carthaginian war till the fall of the Roman republic, the armies of Rome were in every respect standing armies. The standing army of Macedon made some resistance to their arms. In the height of their grandeur, it cost them two great wars, and three great

battles, to subdue that little kingdom, of which the conquest would probably have been still more difficult, had it not been for the cowardice of its last king. The militias of all the civilized nations of the ancient word, of Greece, of Syria, and of Egypt, made but a feeble resistance to the standing armies of Rome. The militias of some barbarous nations defended themselves much better. The Scythian or Tartar militia, which Mithridates drew from the countries north of the Euxine and Caspian seas, were the most formidable enemies whom the Romans had to encounter after the second Carthaginian war. The Parthian and German militias, too, were always respectable, and upon several occasions, gained very considerable advantages over the Roman armies. In general, however, and when the Roman armies were well commanded, they appear to have been very much superior; and if the Romans did not pursue the final conquest either of Parthia or Germany, it was probably because they judged that it was not worth while to add those two barbarous countries to an empire which was already too large. The ancient Parthians appear to have been a nation of Scythian or Tartar extraction, and to have always retained a good deal of the manners of their ancestors. The ancient Germans were, like the Scythians or Tartars, a nation of wandering shepherds, who went to war under the same chiefs whom they were accustomed to follow in peace. Their militia was exactly of the same kind with that of the Scythians or Tartars, from whom, too, they were probably descended.

Many different causes contributed to relax the discipline of the Roman armies. Its extreme severity was, perhaps, one of those causes. In the days of their grandeur, when no enemy appeared capable of opposing them, their heavy armour was laid aside as unnecessarily burdensome, their laborious exercises were neglected, as unnecessarily toilsome. Under the Roman emperors, besides, the standing armies of Rome, those particularly which guarded the German and Pannonian frontiers, became dangerous to their masters, against whom they used frequently to set up their own generals. In order to render them less formidable, according to some authors, Dioclesian, according to others, Constantine, first withdrew them from the frontier, where they had always before been encamped in great bodies, generally of two or three legions each, and dispersed them in small bodies through the different provincial towns, from whence they were scarce ever removed, but when it became necessary to repel an invasion. Small bodies of soldiers, quartered in trading and manufacturing towns, and seldom removed from those quarters, became themselves tradesmen, artificers, and manufacturers.

The civil came to predominate over the military character; and the standing armies of Rome gradually degenerated into a corrupt, neglected, and undisciplined militia, incapable of resisting the attack of the German and Scythian militias, which soon afterwards invaded the western empire. It was only by hiring the militia of some of those nations to oppose to that of others, that the emperors were for some time able to defend themselves. The fall of the western empire is the third great revolution in the affairs of mankind, of which ancient history has preserved any distinct or circumstantial account. It was brought about by the irresistible superiority which the militia of a barbarous has over that of a civilized nation; which the militia of a nation of shepherds has over that of a nation of husbandmen, artificers, and manufacturers. The victories which have been gained by militias have generally been, not over standing armies, but over other militias, in exercise and discipline inferior to themselves. Such were the victories which the Greek militia gained over that of the Persian empire; and such, too, were those which, in later times, the Swiss militia gained over that of the Austrians and Burgundians.

The military force of the German and Scythian nations, who established themselves upon the ruins of the western empire, continued for some time to be of the same kind in their new settlements, as it had been in their original country. It was a militia of shepherds and husbandmen, which, in time of war, took the field under the command of the same chieftains whom it was accustomed to obey in peace. It was, therefore, tolerably well exercised, and tolerably well disciplined. As arts and industry advanced, however, the authority of the chieftains gradually decayed, and the great body of the people had less time to spare for military exercises. Both the discipline and the exercise of the feudal militia, therefore, went gradually to ruin, and standing armies were gradually introduced to supply the place of it. When the expedient of a standing army, besides, had once been adopted by one civilized nation, it became necessary that all its neighbors should follow the example. They soon found that their safety depended upon their doing so, and that their own militia was altogether incapable of resisting the attack of such an army.

The soldiers of a standing army, though they may never have seen an enemy, yet have frequently appeared to possess all the courage of veteran troops, and, the very moment that they took the field, to have been fit to face the hardiest and most experienced veterans. In 1756, when the Russian army marched into Poland, the valour of the Russian soldiers did

not appear inferior to that of the Prussians, at that time supposed to be the hardiest and most experienced veterans in Europe. The Russian empire, however, had enjoyed a profound peace for near twenty years before, and could at that time have very few soldiers who had ever seen an enemy. When the Spanish war broke out in 1739, England had enjoyed a profound peace for about eight-and-twenty years. The valour of her soldiers, however, far from being corrupted by that long peace, was never more distinguished than in the attempt upon Carthagena, the first unfortunate exploit of that unfortunate war. In a long peace, the generals, perhaps, may sometimes forget their skill; but where a well regulated standing army has been kept up, the soldiers seem never to forget their valour.

When a civilized nation depends for its defence upon a militia, it is at all times exposed to be conquered by any barbarous nation which happens to be in its neighbourhood. The frequent conquests of all the civilized countries in Asia by the Tartars, sufficiently demonstrates the natural superiority which the militia of a barbarous has over that of a civilized nation. A well regulated standing army is superior to every militia. Such an army, as it can best be maintained by an opulent and civilized nation, so it can alone defend such a nation against the invasion of a poor and barbarous neighbour. It is only by means of a standing army, therefore, that the civilization of any country can be perpetuated, or even preserved, for any considerable time.

As it is only by means of a well regulated standing army, that a civilized country can be defended, so it is only by means of it that a barbarous country can be suddenly and tolerably civilised. A standing army establishes, with an irresistible force, the law of the sovereign through the remotest provinces of the empire, and maintains some degree of regular government in countries which could not otherwise admit of any. Whoever examines with attention, the improvements which Peter the Great introduced into the Russian empire, will find that they almost all resolve themselves into the establishment of a well regulated standing army. It is the instrument which executes and maintains all his other regulations. That degree of order and internal peace, which that empire has ever since enjoyed, is altogether owing to the influence of that army.

Men of republican principles have been jealous of a standing army, as dangerous to liberty. It certainly is so, wherever the interest of the general, and that of the principal officers, are not necessarily connected with the support of the constitution of the state. The standing army of Cæsar destroyed the Roman republic. The standing army of Cromwell

turned the long parliament out of doors. But where the sovereign is himself the general, and the principal nobility and gentry of the country the chief officers of the army; where the military force is placed under the command of those who have the greatest interest in the support of the civil authority, because they have themselves the greatest share of that authority, a standing army can never be dangerous to liberty. On the contrary, it may, in some cases, be favourable to liberty. The security which it gives to the sovereign renders unnecessary that troublesome jealousy, which, in some modern republics, seems to watch over the minutest actions, and to be at all times ready to disturb the peace of every citizen. Where the security of the magistrate, though supported by the principal people of the country, is endangered by every popular discontent; where a small tumult is capable of bringing about in a few hours a great revolution, the whole authority of government must be employed to suppress and punish every murmur and complaint against it. To a sovereign, on the contrary, who feels himself supported, not only by the natural aristocracy of the country, but by a well regulated standing army, the rudest, the most groundless, and the must licentious remonstrances, can give little disturbance. He can safely pardon or neglect them, and his consciousness of his own superiority naturally disposes him to do so. That degree of liberty which approaches to licentiousness, can be tolerated only in countries where the sovereign is secured by a well regulated standing army. It is in such countries only, that the public safety does not require that the sovereign should be trusted with any discretionary power, for suppressing even the impertinent wantonness of this licentious liberty.

The first duty of the sovereign, therefore, that of defending the society from the violence and injustice of other independent societies, grows gradually more and more expensive, as the society advances in civilization. The military force of the society, which originally cost the sovereign no expense, either in time of peace, or in time of war, must, in the progress of improvement, first be maintained by him in time of war, and afterwards even in time of peace.

The great change introduced into the art of war by the invention of fire-arms, has enhanced still further both the expense of exercising and disciplining any particular number of soldiers in time of peace, and that of employing them in time of war. Both their arms and their ammunition are become more expensive. A musket is a more expensive machine than a javelin or a bow and arrows; a cannon or a mortar, than a balista or a catapulta. The powder which is spent in a modern review is lost

irrecoverably, and occasions a very considerable expense. The javelins and arrows which were thrown or shot in an ancient one, could easily be picked up again, and were, besides, of very little value. The cannon and the mortar are not only much dearer, but much heavier machines than the balista or catapulta; and require a greater expense, not only to prepare them for the field, but to carry them to it. As the superiority of the modern artillery, too, over that of the ancients, is very grant; it has become much more difficult, and consequently much more expensive, to fortify a town, so as to resist, even for a few weeks, the attack of that superior artillery. In modern times, many different causes contribute to render the defence of the society more expensive. The unavoidable effects of the natural progress of improvement have, in this respect, been a good deal enhanced by a great revolution in the the art of war, to which a mere accident, the invention of gunpowder, seems to have given occasion.

In modern war, the great expense of fire-arms gives an evident advantage to the nation which can best afford that expense; and consequently, to an opulent and civilized, over a poor and barbarous nation. In ancient times, the opulent and civilized found it difficult to defend themselves against the poor and barbarous nations. In modern times, the poor and barbarous find it difficult to defend themselves against the opulent and civilized. The invention of fire-arms, an invention which at first sight appears to be so pernicious, is certainly favourable, both to the permanency and to the extension of civilisation.

PART II.

Of the Expense of Justice.

The second duty of the sovereign, that of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it, or the duty of establishing an exact administration of justice, requires two very different degrees of expense in the different periods of society.

Among nations of hunters, as there is scarce any property, or at least none that exceeds the value of two or three days labour; so there is seldom any established magistrate, or any regular administration of justice. Men who have no property, can injure one another only in their persons or reputations. But when one man kills, wounds, beats, or defames another, though he to whom the injury is done suffers, he who

does it receives no benefit. It is otherwise with the injuries to property. The benefit of the person who does the injury is often equal to the loss of him who suffers it. Envy, malice, or resentment, are the only passions which can prompt one man to injure another in his person or reputation. But the greater part of men are not very frequently under the influence of those passions; and the very worst men are so only occasionally. As their gratification, too, how agreeable soever it may be to certain characters, is not attended with any real or permanent advantage, it is, in the greater part of men, commonly restrained by prudential considerations. Men may live together in society with some tolerable degree of security, though there is no civil magistrate to protect them from the injustice of those passions. But avarice and ambition in the rich, in the poor the hatred of labour and the love of present ease and enjoyment, are the passions which prompt to invade property; passions much more steady in their operation, and much more universal in their influence. Wherever there is a great property, there is great inequality. For one very rich man, there must be at least five hundred poor, and the affluence of the few supposes the indigence of the many. The affluence of the rich excites the indignation of the poor, who are often both driven by want, and prompted by envy to invade his possessions. It is only under the shelter of the civil magistrate, that the owner of that valuable property, which is acquired by the labour of many years, or perhaps of many successive generations, can sleep a single night in security. He is at all times surrounded by unknown enemies, whom, though he never provoked, he can never appease, and from whose injustice he can be protected only by the powerful arm of the civil magistrate, continually held up to chastise it. The requisition of valuable and extensive property, therefore, necessarily requires the establishment of civil government. Where there is no property, or at least none that exceeds the value of two or three days labour, civil government is not so necessary.

Civil government supposes a certain subordination. But as the necessity of civil government gradually grows up with the acquisition of valuable property, so the principal causes, which naturally introduce subordination, gradually grow up with the growth of that valuable property.

The causes or circumstances which naturally introduce subordination, or which naturally and antecedent to any civil institution, give some men some superiority over the greater part of their brethren, seem to be four in number.

The first of those causes or circumstances, is the superiority of personal qualifications, of strength, beauty, and agility of body; of wisdom and virtue of prudence, justice, fortitude, and moderation of mind. The qualifications of the body, unless supported by those of the mind, can give little authority in any period of society. He is a very strong man, who, by mere strength of body, can force two weak ones to obey him. The qualifications of the mind can alone give very great authority. They are however, invisible qualities; always disputable, and generally disputed. No society, whether barbarous or civilized, has ever found it convenient to settle the rules of precedency of rank and subordination, according to those invisible qualities; but according to something that is more plain and palpable.

The second of those causes or circumstances is the superiority of age. An old man, provided his age is not so far advanced as to give suspicion of dotage, is everywhere more respected than a young man of equal rank, fortune, and abilities. Among nations of hunters, such as the native tribes of North America, age is the sole foundation of rank and precedency. Among them, father is the appellation of a superior; brother, of an equal; and son, of an inferior. In the most opulent and civilized nations, age regulates rank among those who are in every other respect equal; and among whom, therefore, there is nothing else to regulate it. Among brothers and among sisters, the eldest always takes place; and in the succession of the paternal estate, every thing which cannot be divided, but must go entire to one person, such as a title of honour, is in most cases given to the eldest. Age is a plain and palpable quality, which admits of no dispute.

The third of those causes or circumstances, is the superiority of fortune. The authority of riches, however, though great in every age of society, is, perhaps, greatest in the rudest ages of society, which admits of any considerable inequality of fortune. A Tartar chief, the increase of whose flocks and herds is sufficient to maintain a thousand men, cannot well employ that increase in any other way than in maintaining a thousand men. The rude state of his society does not afford him any manufactured produce; any trinkets or baubles of any kind, for which he can exchange that part of his rude produce which is over and above his own consumption. The thousand men whom he thus maintains, depending entirely upon him for their subsistence, must both obey his orders in war, and submit to his jurisdiction in peace. He is necessarily both their general and their judge, and his chieftainship is the necessary effect of the superiority of his fortune. In an opulent and civilized

society, a man may possess a much greater fortune, and yet not be able to command a dozen of people. Though the produce of his estate may be sufficient to maintain, and may, perhaps, actually maintain, more than a thousand people, yet, as those people pay for every thing which they get from him, as he gives scarce any thing to any body but in exchange for an equivalent, there is scarce any body who considers himself as entirely dependent upon him, and his authority extends only over a few menial servants. The authority of fortune, however, is very great, even in an opulent and civilized society. That it is much greater than that either of age or of personal qualities, has been the constant complaint of every period of society which admitted of any considerable inequality of fortune. The first period of society, that of hunters, admits of no such inequality. Universal poverty establishes their universal equality; and the superiority, either of age or of personal qualities, are the feeble, but the sole foundations of authority and subordination. There is, therefore, little or no authority or subordination in this period of society. The second period of society, that of shepherds, admits of very great inequalities of fortune, and there is no period in which the superiority of fortune gives so great authority to those who possess it. There is no period, accordingly, in which authority and subordination are more perfectly established. The authority of an Arabian scherif is very great; that of a Tartar khan altogether despotical.

The fourth of those causes or circumstances, is the superiority of birth. Superiority of birth supposes an ancient superiority of fortune in the family of the person who claims it. All families are equally ancient; and the ancestors of the prince, though they may be better known, cannot well be more numerous than those of the beggar. Antiquity of family means everywhere the antiquity either of wealth, or of that greatness which is commonly either founded upon wealth, or accompanied with it. Upstart greatness is everywhere less respected than ancient greatness. The hatred of usurpers, the love of the family of an ancient monarch, are in a great measure founded open the contempt which men naturally have for the former, and upon their veneration for the latter. As a military officer submits, without reluctance, to the authority of a superior by whom he has always been commanded, but cannot bear that his inferior should be set over his head; so men easily submit to a family to whom they and their ancestors have always submitted; but are fired with indignation when another family, in whom they had never acknowledged any such superiority, assumes a dominion over them.

The distinction of birth, being subsequent to the inequality of fortune, can have no place in nations of hunters, among whom all men, being equal in fortune, must likewise be very nearly equal in birth. The son of a wise and brave man may, indeed, even among them, be somewhat more respected than a man of equal merit, who has the misfortune to be the son of a fool or a coward. The difference, however, will not be very great; and there never was, I believe, a great family in the world, whose illustration was entirely derived from the inheritance of wisdom and virtue.

The distinction of birth not only may, but always does, take place among nations of shepherds. Such nations are always strangers to every sort of luxury, and great wealth can scarce ever be dissipated among them by improvident profusion. There are no nations, accordingly, who abound more in families revered and honoured on account of their descent from a long race of great and illustrious ancestors; because there are no nations among whom wealth is likely to continue longer in the same families.

Birth and fortune are evidently the two circumstances which principally set one man above another. They are the two great sources of personal distinction, and are, therefore, the principal causes which naturally establish authority and subordination among men. Among nations of shepherds, both those causes operate with their full force. The great shepherd or herdsman, respected on account of his great wealth, and of the great number of those who depend upon him for subsistence, and revered on account of the nobleness of his birth, and of the immemorial antiquity of his illustrious family, has a natural authority over all the inferior shepherds or herdsmen of his horde or clan. He can command the united force of a greater number of people than any of them. His military power is greater than that of any of them. In time of war, they are all of them naturally disposed to muster themselves under his banner, rather than under that of any other person; and his birth and fortune thus naturally procure to him some sort of executive power. By commanding, too, the united force of a greater number of people than any of them, he is best able to compel any one of them, who may have injured another, to compensate the wrong. He is the person, therefore, to whom all those who are too weak to defend themselves naturally look up for protection. It is to him that they naturally complain of the injuries which they imagine have been done to them; and his interposition, in such cases, is more easily submitted to, even by the person complained

of, than that of any other person would be. His birth and fortune thus naturally procure him some sort of judicial authority.

It is in the age of shepherds, in the second period of society, that the inequality of fortune first begins to take place, and introduces among men a degree of authority and subordination, which could not possibly exist before. It thereby introduces some degree of that civil government which is indispensably necessary for its own preservation; and it seems to do this naturally, and even independent of the consideration of that necessity. The consideration of that necessity comes, no doubt, afterwards, to contribute very much to maintain and secure that authority and subordination. The rich, in particular, are necessarily interested to support that order of things, which can alone secure them in the possession of their own advantages. Men of inferior wealth combine to defend those of superior wealth in the possession of their property, in order that men of superior wealth may combine to defend them in the possession of theirs. All the inferior shepherds and herdsmen feel, that the security of their own herds and flocks depends upon the security of those of the great shepherd or herdsman; that the maintenance of their lesser authority depends upon that of his greater authority; and that upon their subordination to him depends his power of keeping their inferiors in subordination to them. They constitute a sort of little nobility, who feel themselves interested to defend the property, and to support the authority, of their own little sovereign, in order that he may be able to defend their property, and to support their authority. Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is, in reality, instituted for the defence of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all.

The judicial authority of such a sovereign, however, far from being a cause of expense, was, for a long time, a source of revenue to him. The persons who applied to him for justice were always willing to pay for it, and a present never failed to accompany a petition. After the authority of the sovereign, too, was thoroughly established, the person found guilty, over and above the satisfaction which he was obliged to make to the party, was likewise forced to pay an amercement to the sovereign. He had given trouble, he had disturbed, he had broke the peace of his lord the king, and for those offences an amercement was thought due. In the Tartar governments of Asia, in the governments of Europe which were founded by the German and Scythian nations who overturned the Roman empire, the administration of justice was a considerable source of revenue, both to the sovereign, and to all the lesser chiefs or lords who

exercised under him any particular jurisdiction, either over some particular tribe or clan, or over some particular territory or district. Originally, both the sovereign and the inferior chiefs used in exercise this jurisdiction in their own persons. Afterwards, they universally found it convenient to delegate it to some substitute, bailiff, or judge. This substitute, however, was still obliged to account to his principal or constituent for the profits of the jurisdiction. Whoever reads the instructions[47]* which were given to the judges of the circuit in the time of Henry II. will see clearly that those judges were a sort of itinerant factors, sent round the country for the purpose of levying certain branches of the king's revenue. In those days, the administration of justice not only afforded a certain revenue to the sovereign, but, to procure this revenue, seems to have been one of the principal advantages which he proposed to obtain by the administration of justice.

This scheme of making the administration of justice subservient to the purposes of revenue, could scarce fail to be productive of several very gross abuses. The person who applied for justice with a large present in his hand, was likely to get something more than justice; while he who applied for it with a small one was likely to get something less. Justice, too, might frequently be delayed, in order that this present might be repeated. The amercement, besides, of the person complained of, might frequently suggest a very strong reason for finding him in the wrong, even when he had not really been so. That such abuses were far from being uncommon, the ancient history of every country in Europe bears witness.

When the sovereign or chief exercises his judicial authority in his own person, how much soever he might abuse it, it must have been scarce possible to get any redress; because there could seldom be any body powerful enough to call him to account. When he exercised it by a bailiff, indeed, redress might sometimes be had. If it was for his own benefit only, that the bailiff had been guilty of an act of injustice, the sovereign himself might not always be unwilling to punish him, or to oblige him to repair the wrong. But if it was for the benefit of his sovereign; if it was in order to make court to the person who appointed him, and who might prefer him, that he had committed any act of oppression; redress would, upon most occasions be as impossible as if the sovereign had committed it himself. In all barbarous governments, accordingly, in all those ancient governments of Europe in particular, which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire, the administration of justice appears for a long time to have been extremely

corrupt; far from being quite equal and impartial, even under the best monarchs, and altogether profligate under the worst.

Among nations of shepherds, where the sovereign or chief is only the greatest shepherd or herdsman of the horde or clan, he is maintained in the same manner as any of his vassals or subjects, by the increase of his own herds or flocks. Among those nations of husbandmen, who are but just come out of the shepherd state, and who are not much advanced beyond that state, such as the Greek tribes appear to have been about the time of the Trojan war, and our German and Scythian ancestors, when they first settled upon the ruins of the western empire; the sovereign or chief is, in the same manner, only the greatest landlord of the country, and is maintained in the same manner as any other landlord, by a revenue derived from his own private estate, or from what, in modern Europe, was called the demesne of the crown. His subjects, upon ordinary occasions, contribute nothing to his support, except when, in order to protect them from the oppression of some of their fellow-subjects, they stand in need of his authority. The presents which they make him upon such occasions constitute the whole ordinary revenue, the whole of the emoluments which, except, perhaps, upon some very extraordinary emergencies, he derives from his dominion over them. When Agamemnon, in Homer, offers to Achilles, for his friendship, the sovereignty of seven Greek cities, the sole advantage which he mentions as likely to be derived from it was, that the people would honour him with presents. As long as such presents, as long as the emoluments of justice, or what may be called the fees of court, constituted, in this manner, the whole ordinary revenue which the sovereign derived from his sovereignty, it could not well be expected, it could not even decently be proposed, that he should give them up altogether. It might, and it frequently was proposed, that he should regulate and ascertain then. But after they had been so regulated and ascertained, how to hinder a person who was all-powerful from extending them beyond those regulations, was still very difficult, not to say impossible. During the continuance of this state of things, therefore, the corruption of justice, naturally resulting from the arbitrary and uncertain nature of those presents, scarce admitted of any effectual remedy.

But when, from different causes, chiefly from the continually increasing expense of defending the nation against the invasion of other nations, the private estate of the sovereign had become altogether insufficient for defraying the expense of the sovereignty; and when it had become necessary that the people should, for their own security,

contribute towards this expense by taxes of different kinds; it seems to have been very commonly stipulated, that no present for the administration of justice should, under any pretence, be accepted either by the sovereign, or by his bailiffs and substitutes, the judges. Those presents, it seems to have been supposed, could more easily be abolished altogether, than effectually regulated and ascertained. Fixed salaries were appointed to the judges, which were supposed to compensate to them the loss of whatever might have been their share of the ancient emoluments of justice; as the taxes more than compensated to the sovereign the loss of his. Justice was then said to be administered gratis.

Justice, however, never was in reality administered gratis in any country. Lawyers and attorneys, at least, must always be paid by the parties; and if they were not, they would perform their duty still worse than they actually perform it. The fees annually paid to lawyers and attorneys, amount, in every court, to a much greater sum than the salaries of the judges. The circumstance of those salaries being paid by the crown, can nowhere much diminish the necessary expense of a law-suit. But it was not so much to diminish the expense, as to prevent the corruption of justice, that the judges were prohibited from receiving any present or fee from the parties.

The office of judge is in itself so very honourable, that men are willing to accept of it, though accompanied with very small emoluments. The inferior office of justice of peace, though attended with a good deal of trouble, and in most cases with no emoluments at all, is an object of ambition to the greater part of our country gentlemen. The salaries of all the different judges, high and low, together with the whole expense of the administration and execution of justice, even where it is not managed with very good economy, makes, in any civilized country, but a very inconsiderable part of the whole expense of government.

The whole expense of justice, too, might easily be defrayed by the fees of court; and, without exposing the administration of justice to any real hazard of corruption, the public revenue might thus be entirely discharged from a certain, though perhaps but a small incumbrance. It is difficult to regulate the fees of court effectually, where a person so powerful as the sovereign is to share in them, and to derive any considerable part of his revenue from them. It is very easy, where the judge is the principal person who can reap any benefit from them. The law can very easily oblige the judge to respect the regulation, though it might not always be able to make the sovereign respect it. Where the fees of court are precisely regulated and ascertained; where they are paid

all at once, at a certain period of every process, into the hands of a cashier or receiver, to be by him distributed in certain known proportions among the different judges after the process is decided, and not till it is decided; there seems to be no more danger of corruption than where such fees are prohibited altogether. Those fees, without occasioning any considerable increase in the expense of a law-suit, might be rendered fully sufficient for defraying the whole expense of justice. But not being paid to the judges till the process was determined, they might be some incitement to the diligence of the court in examining and deciding it. In courts which consisted of a considerable number of judges, by proportioning the share of each judge to the number of hours and days which he had employed in examining the process, either in the court, or in a committee, by order of the court, those fees might give some encouragement to the diligence of each particular judge. Public services are never better performed, than when their reward comes only in consequence of their being performed, and is proportioned to the diligence employed in performing them. In the different parliaments of France, the fees of court (called epices and vacations) constitute the far greater part of the emoluments of the judges. After all deductions are made, the neat salary paid by the crown to a counsellor or judge in the parliament of Thoulouse, in rank and dignity the second parliament of the kingdom, amounts only to 150 livres, about L.6. 11s. sterling a-year. About seven years ago, that sum was in the same place the ordinary yearly wages of a common footman. The distribution of these epices, too, is according to the diligence of the judges. A diligent judge gains a comfortable, though moderate revenue, by his office; an idle one gets little more than his salary. Those parliaments are, perhaps, in many respects, not very convenient courts of justice, but they have never been accused; they seem never even to have been suspected of corruption.

The fees of court seem originally to have been the principal support of the different courts of justice in England. Each court endeavoured to draw to itself as much business as it could, and was, upon that account, willing to take cognizance of many suits which were not originally intended to fall under its jurisdiction. The court of king’s bench, instituted for the trial of criminal causes only, took cognizance of civil suits; the plaintiff pretending that the defendant, in not doing him justice, had been guilty of some trespass or misdemeanour. The court of exchequer, instituted for the levying of the king’s revenue, and for enforcing the payment of such debts only as were due to the king, took cognizance of all other contract debts; the plaintiff alleging that he could

not pay the king, because the defendant would not pay him. In consequence of such fictions, it came, in many cases, to depend altogether upon the parties, before what court they would choose to have their cause tried, and each court endeavoured, by superior dispatch and impartiality, to draw to itself as many causes as it could. The present admirable constitution of the courts of justice in England was, perhaps, originally, in a great measure, formed by this emulation, which anciently took place between their respective judges; each judge endeavouring to give, in his own court, the speediest and most effectual remedy which the law would admit, for every sort of injustice. Originally, the courts of law gave damages only for breach of contract. The court of chancery, as a court of conscience, first took upon it to enforce the specific performance of agreements. When the breach of contract consisted in the non-payment of money, the damage sustained could be compensated in no other way than by ordering payment, which was equivalent to a specific performance of the agreement. In such cases, therefore, the remedy of the courts of law was sufficient. It was not so in others. When the tenant sued his lord for having unjustly outed him of his lease, the damages which he recovered were by no means equivalent to the possession of the land. Such causes, therefore, for some time, went all to the court of chancery, to the no small loss of the courts of law. It was to draw back such causes to themselves, that the courts of law are said to have invented the artificial and fictitious writ of ejectment, the most effectual remedy for an unjust outer or dispossession of land.

A stamp-duty upon the law proceedings by each particular court, to be levied by that court, and applied towards the maintenance of the judges, and other officers belonging to it, might in the same manner, afford a revenue sufficient for defraying the expense of the administration of justice, without bringing any burden upon the general revenue of the society. The judges, indeed, might in this case, be under the temptation of multiplying unnecessarily the proceedings upon every cause, in order to increase, as much as possible, the produce of such a stamp-duty. It has been the custom in modern Europe to regulate, upon most occasions, the payment of the attorneys and clerks of court according to the number of pages which they had occasion to write; the court, however, requiring that each page should contain so many lines, and each line so many words. In order to increase their payment, the attorneys and clerks have contrived to multiply words beyond all necessity, to the corruption of the law language of, I believe, every court of justice in Europe. A like

temptation might, perhaps, occasion a like corruption in the form of law proceedings.

But whether the administration of justice be so contrived as to defray its own expense, or whether the judges be maintained by fixed salaries paid to them from some other fund, it does not seem necessary that the person or persons entrusted with the executive power should be charged with the management of that fund, or with the payment of those salaries. That fund might arise from the rent of landed estates, the management of each estate being entrusted to the particular court which was to be maintained by it. That fund might arise even from the interest of a sum of money, the lending out of which might, in the same manner, be entrusted to the court which was to be maintained by it. A part, though indeed but a small part of the salary of the judges of the court of session in Scotland, arises from the interest of a sum of money. The necessary instability of such a fund seems, however, to render it an improper one for the maintenance of an institution which ought to last for ever.

The separation of the judicial from the executive power, seems originally to have arisen from the increasing business of the society, in consequence of its increasing improvement. The administration of justice became so laborious and so complicated a duty, as to require the undivided attention of the person to whom it was entrusted. The person entrusted with the executive power, not having leisure to attend to the decision of private causes himself, a deputy was appointed to decide them in his stead. In the progress of the Roman greatness, the consul was too much occupied with the political affairs of the state, to attend to the administration of justice. A prætor, therefore, was appointed to administer it in his stead. In the progress of the European monarchies, which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire, the sovereigns and the great lords came universally to consider the administration of justice as an office both too laborious and too ignoble for them to execute in their own persons. They universally, therefore, discharged themselves of it, by appointing a deputy, bailiff, or judge.

When the judicial is united to the executive power, it is scarce possible that justice should not frequently be sacrificed to what is vulgarly called politics. The persons entrusted with the great interests of the state may even without any corrupt views, sometimes imagine it necessary to sacrifice to those interests the rights of a private man. But upon the impartial administration of justice depends the liberty of every individual, the sense which he has of his own security. In order to make every individual feel himself perfectly secure in the possession of every

right which belongs to him, it is not only necessary that the judicial should be separated from the executive power, but that it should be rendered as much as possible independent of that power. The judge should not be liable to be removed from his office according to the caprice of that power. The regular payment of his salary should not depend upon the good will, or even upon the good economy of that power.

PART III.

Of the Expense of public Works and public Institutions.

The third and last duty of the sovereign or commonwealth, is that of erecting and maintaining those public institutions and those public works, which though they may be in the highest degree advantageous to a great society, are, however, of such a nature, that the profit could never repay the expense to any individual, or small number of individuals; and which it, therefore, cannot be expected that any individual, or small number of individuals, should erect or maintain. The performance of this duty requires, too, very different degrees of expense in the different periods of society.

After the public institutions and public works necessary for the defence of the society, and for the administration of justice, both of which have already been mentioned, the other works and institutions of this kind are chiefly for facilitating the commerce of the society, and those for promoting the instruction of the people. The institutions for instruction are of two kinds: those for the education of the youth, and those for the instruction of people of all ages. The consideration of the manner in which the expense of those different sorts of public works and institutions may be most properly defrayed will divide this third part of the present chapter into three different articles.

ART. I. — *Of the public Works and Institutions for facilitating the Commerce of the Society.*

And, first, of those which are necessary for facilitating Commerce in general.

That the erections and maintenance of the public works which facilitate the commerce of any country, such as good roads, bridges, navigable

canals, harbours, &c. must require very different degrees of expense in the different periods of society, is evident without any proof. The expense of making and maintaining the public roads of any country must evidently increase with the annual produce of the land and labour of that country, or with the quantity and weight of the goods which it becomes necessary to fetch and carry upon those roads. The strength of a bridge must be suited to the number and weight of the carriages which are likely to pass over it. The depth and the supply of water for a navigable canal must be proportional to the number and tonnage of the lighters which are likely to carry goods upon it; the extent of a harbour, to the number of the shipping which are likely to take shelter in it.

It does not seem necessary that the expense of those public works should be defrayed from that public revenue, as it is commonly called, of which the collection and application are in most countries, assigned to the executive power. The greater part of such public works may easily be so managed, as to afford a particular revenue, sufficient for defraying their own expense, without bringing any burden upon the general revenue of the society.

A highway, a bridge, a navigable canal, for example, may, in most cases, be both made and maintained by a small toll upon the carriages which make use of them; a harbour, by a moderate port-duty upon the tonnage of the shipping which load or unload in it. The coinage, another institution for facilitating commerce, in many countries, not only defrays its own expense, but affords a small revenue or a seignorage to the sovereign. The post-office, another institution for the same purpose, over and above defraying its own expense, affords, in almost all countries, a very considerable revenue to the sovereign.

When the carriages which pass over a highway or a bridge, and the lighters which sail upon a navigable canal, pay toll in proportion to their weight or their tonnage, they pay for the maintenance of these public works exactly in proportion to the wear and tear which they occasion of them. It seems scarce possible to invent a more equitable way of maintaining such works. This tax or toll, too, though it is advanced by the carrier, is finally paid by the consumer, to whom it must always be charged in the price of the goods. As the expense of carriage, however, is very much reduced by means of such public works, the goods, notwithstanding the toll, come cheaper to the consumer than they could otherwise have done, their price not being so much raised by the toll, as it is lowered by the cheapness of the carriage. The person who finally pays this tax, therefore, gains by the application more than he loses by

the payment of it. His payment is exactly in proportion to his gain. It is, in reality, no more than a part of that gain which he is obliged to give up, in order to get the rest. It seems impossible to imagine a more equitable method of raising a tax.

When the toll upon carriages of luxury, upon coaches, post-chaises, &c. is made somewhat higher in proportion to their weight, than upon carriages of necessary use, such as carts, waggons, &c. the indolence and vanity of the rich is made to contribute, in a very easy manner, to the relief of the poor, by rendering cheaper the transportation of heavy goods to all the different parts of the country.

When high-roads, bridges, canals, &c. are in this manner made and supported by the commerce which is carried on by means of them, they can be made only where that commerce requires them, and, consequently, where it is proper to make them, Their expense, too, their grandeur and magnificence, must be suited to what that commerce can afford to pay. They must be made, consequently, as it is proper to make them. A magnificent high-road cannot be made through a desert country, where there is little or no commerce, or merely because it happens to lead to the country villa of the intendant of the province, or to that of some great lord, to whom the intendant finds it convenient to make his court. A great bridge cannot be thrown over a river at a place where nobody passes, or merely to embellish the view from the windows of a neighbouring palace; things which sometimes happen in countries, where works of this kind are carried on by any other revenue than that which they themselves are capable of affording.

In several different parts of Europe, the toll or lock-duty upon a canal is the property of private persons, whose private interest obliges them to keep up the canal. If it is not kept in tolerable order, the navigation necessarily ceases altogether, and, along with it, the whole profit which they can make by the tolls. If those tolls were put under the the management of commissioners, who had themselves no interest in them, they might be less attentive to the maintenance of the works which produced them. The canal of Languedoc cost the king of France and the province upwards of thirteen millions of livres, which (at twenty-eight livres the mark of silver, the value of French money in the end of the last century) amounted to upwards of nine hundred thousand pounds sterling. When that great work was finished, the most likely method, it was found, of keeping it in constant repair, was to make a present of the tolls to Riquet, the engineer who planned and conducted the work. Those tolls constitute, at present, a very large estate to the different branches of the

family of that gentleman, who have, therefore, a great interest to keep the work in constant repair. But had those tolls been put under the management of commissioners, who had no such interest, they might perhaps, have been dissipated in ornamental and unnecessary expenses, while the most essential parts of the works were allowed to go to ruin.

The tolls for the maintenance of a high-road cannot, with any safety, be made the property of private persons. A high-road, though entirely neglected, does not become altogether impassable, though a canal does. The proprietors of the tolls upon a high-road, therefore, might neglect altogether the repair of the road, and yet continue to levy very nearly the same tolls. It is proper, therefore, that the tolls for the maintenance of such a work should be put under the management of commissioners or trustees.

In Great Britain, the abuses which the very trustees have committed in the management of those tolls, have, in many cases, been very justly complained of. At many turnpikes, it has been said, the money levied is more than double of what is necessary for executing, in the completest manner, the work, which is often executed in a very slovenly manner, and sometimes not executed at all. The system of repairing the high-roads by tolls of this kind, it must be observed, is not of very long standing. We should not wonder, therefore, if it has not yet been brought that degree of perfection of which it seems capable. If mean and improper persons are frequently appointed trustees; and if proper courts of inspection and account have not yet been established for controlling their conduct, and for reducing the tolls to what is barely sufficient for executing the work to be done by them; the recency of the institution both accounts and apologizes for those defects, of which, by the wisdom of parliament, the greater part may, in due time, be gradually remedied.

The money levied at the different turnpikes in Great Britain, is supposed to exceed so much what is necessary for repairing the roads, that the savings which, with proper economy, might be made from it, have been considered, even by some ministers, as a very great resource, which might, at some time or another, be applied to the exigencies of the state. Government, it has been said, by taking the management of the turnpikes into its own hands, and by employing the soldiers, who would work for a very small addition to their pay, could keep the roads in good order, at a much less expense than it can be done by trustees, who have no other workmen to employ, but such as derive their whole subsistence from their wages. A great revenue, half a million, perhaps[48*], it has been pretended, might in this manner be gained, without laying any new

burden upon the people; and the turnpike roads might be made to contribute to the general expense of the state, in the same manner as the post-office does at present.

That a considerable revenue might be gained in this manner, I have no doubt, though probably not near so much as the projectors of this plan have supposed. The plan itself, however, seems liable to several very important objections.

First, If the tolls which are levied at the turnpikes should ever be considered as one of the resources for supplying the exigencies of the state, they would certainly be augmented as those exigencies were supposed to require. According to the policy of Great Britain, therefore, they would probably be augmented very fast. The facility with which a great revenue could be drawn from them, would probably encourage administration to recur very frequently to this resource. Though it may, perhaps, be more than doubtful, whether half a million could by any economy be saved out of the present tolls, it can scarcely be doubted, but that a million might be saved out of them, if they were doubled; and perhaps two millions, if they were tripled[49*]. This great revenue, too, might be levied without the appointment of a single new officer to collect and receive it. But the turnpike tolls, being continually augmented in this manner, instead of facilitating the inland commerce of the country, as at present, would soon become a very great incumbrance upon it. The expense of transporting all heavy goods from one part of the country to another, would soon be so much increased, the market for all such goods, consequently, would soon be so much narrowed, that their production would be in a great measure discouraged, and the most important branches of the domestic industry of the country annihilated altogether.

Secondly, A tax upon carriages, in proportion to their weight, though a very equal tax when applied to the sole purpose of repairing the roads, is a very unequal one when applied to any other purpose, or to supply the common exigencies of the state. When it is applied to the sole purpose above mentioned, each carriage is supposed to pay exactly for the wear and tear which that carriage occasions of the roads. But when it is applied to any other purpose, each carriage is supposed to pay for more than that wear and tear, and contributes to the supply of some other exigency of the state. But as the turnpike toll raises the price of goods in proportion to their weight and not to their value, it is chiefly paid by the consumers of coarse and bulky, not by those of precious and light commodities. Whatever exigency of the state, therefore, this tax might be intended to supply, that exigency would be chiefly supplied at the

expense of the poor, not of the rich; at the expense of those who are least able to supply it, not of those who are most able.

Thirdly, If government should at any time neglect the reparation of the high-roads, it would be still more difficult, than it is at present, to compel the proper application of any part of the turnpike tolls. A large revenue might thus be levied upon the people, without any part of it being applied to the only purpose to which a revenue levied in this manner ought ever to be applied. If the meanness and poverty of the trustees of turnpike roads render it sometimes difficult, at present, to oblige them to repair their wrong; their wealth and greatness would render it ten times more so in the case which is here supposed.

In France, the funds destined for the reparation of the high-roads are under the immediate direction of the executive power. Those funds consist, partly in a certain number of days labour, which the country people are in most parts of Europe obliged to give to the reparation of the highways; and partly in such a portion of the general revenue of the state as the king chooses to spare from his other expenses.

By the ancient law of France, as well as by that of most other parts of Europe, the labour of the country people was under the direction of a local or provincial magistracy, which had no immediate dependency upon the king’s council. But, by the present practice, both the labour of the country people, and whatever other fund the king may choose to assign for the reparation of the high-roads in any particular province or generality, are entirely under the management of the intendant; an officer who is appointed and removed by the king’s council who receives his orders from it, and is in constant correspondence with it. In the progress of despotism, the authority of the executive power gradually absorbs that of every other power in the state, and assumes to itself the management of every branch of revenue which is destined for any public purpose. In France, however, the great post-roads, the roads which make the communication between the principal towns of the kingdom, are in general kept in good order; and, in some provinces, are even a good deal superior to the greater part of the turnpike roads of England. But what we call the cross roads, that is, the far greater part of the roads in the country, are entirely neglected, and are in many places absolutely impassable for any heavy carriage. In some places it is even dangerous to travel on horseback, and mules are the only conveyance which can safely be trusted. The proud minister of an ostentatious court, may frequently take pleasure in executing a work of splendour and magnificence, such as a great highway, which is frequently seen by the principal nobility,

whose applauses not only flatter his vanity, but even contribute to support his interest at court. But to execute a great number of little works, in which nothing that can be done can make any great appearance, or excite the smallest degree of admiration in any traveller, and which, in short, have nothing to recommend them but their extreme utility, is a business which appears, in every respect, too mean and paltry to merit the attention of so great a magistrate. Under such an administration, therefore, such works are almost always entirely neglected.

In China, and in several other governments of Asia, the executive power charges itself both with the reparation of the high-roads, and with the maintenance of the navigable canals. In the instructions which are given to the governor of each province, those objects, it is said, are constantly recommended to him, and the judgment which the court forms of his conduct is very much regulated by the attention which he appears to have paid to this part of his instructions. This branch of public police, accordingly, is said to be very much attended to in all those countries, but particularly in China, where the high-roads, and still more the navigable canals, it is pretended, exceed very much every thing of the same kind which is known in Europe. The accounts of those works, however, which have been transmitted to Europe, have generally been drawn up by weak and wondering travellers; frequently by stupid and lying missionaries. If they had been examined by more intelligent eyes, and if the accounts of them had been reported by more faithful witnesses, they would not, perhaps, appear to be so wonderful. The account which Bernier gives of some works of this kind in Indostan, falls very short of what had been reported of them by other travellers, more disposed to the marvellous than he was. It may too, perhaps, be in those countries, as it is in France, where the great roads, the great communications, which are likely to be the subjects of conversation at the court and in the capital, are attended to, and all the rest neglected. In China, besides, in Indostan, and in several other governments of Asia, the revenue of the sovereign arises almost altogether from a land tax or land rent, which rises or falls with the rise and fall of the annual produce of the land. The great interest of the sovereign, therefore, his revenue, is in such countries necessarily and immediately connected with the cultivation of the land, with the greatness of its produce, and with the value of its produce. But in order to render that produce both as great and as valuable as possible, it is necessary to procure to it as extensive a market as possible, and consequently to establish the freest, the easiest, and the least expensive

communication between all the different parts of the country; which can be done only by means of the best roads and the best navigable canals. But the revenue of the sovereign does not, in any part of Europe, arise chiefly from a land tax or land rent. In all the great kingdoms of Europe, perhaps, the greater part of it may ultimately depend upon the produce of the land: but that dependency is neither so immediate nor so evident. In Europe, therefore, the sovereign does not feel himself so directly called upon to promote the increase, both in quantity and value of the produce of the land, or, by maintaining good roads and canals, to provide the most extensive market for that produce. Though it should be true, therefore, what I apprehend is not a little doubtful, that in some parts of Asia this department of the public police is very properly managed by the executive power, there is not the least probability that, during the present state of things, it could be tolerably managed by that power in any part of Europe.

Even those public works, which are of such a nature that they cannot afford any revenue for maintaining themselves, but of which the conveniency is nearly confined to some particular place or district, are always better maintained by a local or provincial revenue, under the management of a local and provincial administration, than by the general revenue of the state, of which the executive power must always have the management. Were the streets of London to be lighted and paved at the expense of the treasury, is there any probability that they would be so well lighted and paved as they are at present, or even at so small an expense? The expense, besides, instead of being raised by a local tax upon the inhabitants of each particular street, parish, or district in London, would, in this case, be defrayed out of the general revenue of the state, and would consequently be raised by a tax upon all the inhabitants of the kingdom, of whom the greater part derive no sort of benefit from the lighting and paving of the streets of London.

The abuses which sometimes creep into the local and provincial administration of a local and provincial revenue, how enormous soever they may appear, are in reality, however, almost always very trifling in comparison of those which commonly take place in the administration and expenditure of the revenue of a great empire. They are, besides, much more easily corrected. Under the local or provincial administration of the justices of the peace in Great Britain, the six days labour which the country people are obliged to give to the reparation of the highways, is not always, perhaps, very judiciously applied, but it is scarce ever exacted with any circumstance of cruelty or oppression. In France, under

the administration of the intendants, the application is not always more judicious, and the exaction is frequently the most cruel and oppressive. Such corvees, as they are called, make one of the principal instruments of tyranny by which these officers chastise any parish or communeaute, which has had the misfortune to fall under their displeasure.

Of the public Works and Institutions which are necessary for facilitating particular Branches of Commerce.

The object of the public works and institutions above mentioned, is to facilitate commerce in general. But in order to facilitate some particular branches of it, particular institutions are necessary, which again require a particular and extraordinary expense.

Some particular branches of commerce which are carried on with barbarous and uncivilized nations, require extraordinary protection. An ordinary store or counting-house could give little security to the goods of the merchants who trade to the western coast of Africa. To defend them from the barbarous natives, it is necessary that the place where they are deposited should be in same measure fortified. The disorders in the government of Indostan have been supposed to render a like precaution necessary, even among that mild and gentle people; and it was under pretence of securing their persons and property from violence, that both the English and French East India companies were allowed to erect the first forts which they possessed in that country. Among other nations, whose vigorous government will suffer no strangers to possess any fortified place within their territory, it may be necessary to maintain some ambassador, minister, or consul, who may both decide, according to their own customs, the differences arising among his own countrymen; and, in their disputes with the natives, may by means of his public character, interfere with more authority and afford them a more powerful protection than they could expect from any private man. The interests of commerce have frequently made it necessary to maintain ministers in foreign countries, where the purposes either of war or alliance would not have required any. The commerce of the Turkey company first occasioned the establishment of an ordinary ambassador at Constantinople. The first English embassies to Russia arose altogether from commercial interests. The constant interference with those interests, necessarily occasioned between the subjects of the different states of Europe, has probably introduced the custom of keeping, in all neighbouring countries, ambassadors or ministers constantly resident,

even in the time of peace. This custom, unknown to ancient times, seems not to be older than the end of the fifteenth, or beginning of the sixteenth century; that is, than the time when commerce first began to extend itself to the greater part of the nations of Europe, and when they first began to attend to its interests.

It seems not unreasonable, that the extraordinary expense which the protection of any particular branch of commerce may occasion, should be defrayed by a moderate tax upon that particular branch; by a moderate fine, for example, to be paid by the traders when they first enter into it; or, what is more equal, by a particular duty of so much per cent. upon the goods which they either import into, or export out of, the particular countries with which it is carried on. The protection of trade, in general, from pirates and freebooters, is said to have given occasion to the first institution of the duties of customs. But, if it was thought reasonable to lay a general tax upon trade, in order to defray the expense of protecting trade in general, it should seem equally reasonable to lay a particular tax upon a particular branch of trade, in order to defray the extraordinary expense of protecting that branch.

The protection of trade, in general, has always been considered as essential to the defence of the commonwealth, and, upon that account, a necessary part of the duty of the executive power. The collection and application of the general duties of customs, therefore, have always been left to that power. But the protection of any particular branch of trade is a part of the general protection of trade; a part, therefore, of the duty of that power; and if nations always acted consistently, the particular duties levied for the purposes of such particular protection, should always have been left equally to its disposal. But in this respect, as well as in many others, nations have not always acted consistently; and in the greater part of the commercial states of Europe, particular companies of merchants have had the address to persuade the legislature to entrust to them the performance of this part of the duty of the sovereign, together with all the powers which are necessarily connected with it.

These companies, though they may, perhaps, have been useful for the first introduction of some branches of commerce, by making, at their own expense, an experiment which the state might not think it prudent to make, have in the long-run proved, universally, either burdensome or useless, and have either mismanaged or confined the trade.

When those companies do not trade upon a joint stock, but are obliged to admit any person, properly qualified, upon paying a certain fine, and agreeing to submit to the regulations of the company, each member

trading upon his own stock, and at his own risk, they are called regulated companies. When they trade upon a joint stock, each member sharing in the common profit or loss, in proportion to his share in this stock, they are called joint-stock companies. Such companies, whether regulated or joint-stock, sometimes have, and sometimes have not, exclusive privileges.

Regulated companies resemble, in every respect, the corporation of trades, so common in the cities and towns of all the different countries of Europe; and are a sort of enlarged monopolies of the same kind. As no inhabitant of a town can exercise an incorporated trade, without first obtaining his freedom in the incorporation, so, in most cases, no subject of the state can lawfully carry on any branch of foreign trade, for which a regulated company is established, without first becoming a member of that company. The monopoly is more or less strict, according as the terms of admission are more or less difficult, and according as the directors of the company have more or less authority, or have it more or less in their power to manage in such a manner as to confine the greater part of the trade to themselves and their particular friends. In the most ancient regulated companies, the privileges of apprenticeship were the same as in other corporations, and entitled the person who had served his time to a member of the company, to become himself a member, either without paying any fine, or upon paying a much smaller one than what was exacted of other people. The usual corporation spirit, wherever the law does not restrain it, prevails in all regulated companies. When they have been allowed to act according to their natural genius, they have always, in order to confine the competition to as small a number of persons as possible, endeavoured to subject the trade to many burdensome regulations. When the law has restrained them from doing this, they have become altogether useless and insignificant.

The regulated companies for foreign commerce which at present subsist in Great Britain, are the ancient merchant-adventurers company, now commonly called the Hamburgh company, the Russia company, the Eastland company, the Turkey company, and the African company.

The terms of admission into the Hamburgh company are now said to be quite easy; and the directors either have it not in their power to subject the trade to any troublesome restraint or regulations, or, at least, have not of late exercised that power. It has not always been so. About the middle of the last century, the fine for admission was fifty, and at one time one hundred pounds, and the conduct of the company was said to be extremely oppressive. In 1643, in 1645, and in 1661, the clothiers and

free traders of the west of England complained of them to parliament, as of monopolists, who confined the trade, and oppressed the manufactures of the country. Though those complaints produced no act of parliament, they had probably intimidated the company so far, as to oblige them to reform their conduct. Since that time, at least, there have been no complaints against them. By the 10th and 11th of William III. c. 6, the fine for admission into the Russia company was reduced to five pounds; and by the 25th of Charles II. c. 7, that for admission into the Eastland company to forty shillings; while, at the same time, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, all the countries on the north side of the Baltic, were exempted from their exclusive charter. The conduct of those companies had probably given occasion to those two acts of parliament. Before that time, Sir Josiah Child had represented both these and the Hamburgh company as extremely oppressive, and imputed to their bad management the low state of the trade, which we at that time carried on to the countries comprehended within their respective charters. But though such companies may not, in the present times, be very oppressive, they are certainly altogether useless. To be merely useless, indeed, is perhaps, the highest eulogy which can ever justly be bestowed upon a regulated company; and all the three companies above mentioned seem, in their present state, to deserve this eulogy.

The fine for admission into the Turkey company was formerly twenty-five pounds for all persons under twenty-six years of age, and fifty pounds for all persons above that age. Nobody but mere merchants could be admitted; a restriction which excluded all shop-keepers and retailers. By a bye-law, no British manufactures could be exported to Turkey but in the general ships of the company; and as those ships sailed always from the port of London, this restriction confined the trade to that expensive port, and the traders in those who lived in London and in its neighbourhood. By another bye-law, no person living within twenty miles of London, and not free of the city could be admitted a member; another restriction which, joined to the foregoing, necessarily excluded all but the freemen of London. As the time for the loading and sailing of those general ships depended altogether upon the directors, they could easily fill them with their own goods, and those of their particular friends, to the exclusion of others, who, they might pretend, had made their proposals too late. In this state of things, therefore, this company was, in every respect, a strict and oppressive monopoly. Those abuses gave occasion to the act of the 26th of George II. c. 18, reducing the fine for admission to twenty pounds for all persons, without any distinction of

ages, or any restriction, either to mere merchants, or to the freemen of London; and granting to all such persons the liberty of exporting, from all the ports of Great Britain, to any port in Turkey, all British goods, of which the exportation was not prohibited, upon paying both the general duties of customs, and the particular duties assessed for defraying the necessary expenses of the company; and submitting, at the same time, to the lawful authority of the British ambassador and consuls resident in Turkey, and to the bye-laws of the company duly enacted. To prevent any oppression by those bye-laws, it was by the same act ordained, that if any seven members of the company conceived themselves aggrieved by any bye-law which should be enacted after the passing of this act, they might appeal to the board of trade and plantations (to the authority of which a committee of the privy council has now succeeded), provided such appeal was brought within twelve months after the bye-law was enacted; and that, if any seven members conceived themselves aggrieved by any bye-law which had been enacted before the passing of this act, they might bring a like appeal, provided it was within twelve months after the day on which this act was to take place. The experience of one year, however, may not always be sufficient to discover to all the members of a great company the pernicious tendency of a particular bye-law; and if several of them should afterwards discover it, neither the board of trade, nor the committee of council, can afford them any redress. The object, besides, of the greater part of the bye-laws of all regulated companies, as well as of all other corporations, is not so much to oppress those who are already members, as to discourage others from becoming so; which may be done, not only by a high fine, but by many other contrivances. The constant view of such companies is always to raise the rate of their own profit as high as they can; to keep the market, both for the goods which they export, and for those which they import, as much understocked as they can; which can be done only by restraining the competition, or by discouraging new adventurers from entering into the trade. A fine, even of twenty pounds, besides, though it may not, perhaps, be sufficient to discourage any man from entering into the Turkey trade, with an intention to continue in it, may be enough to discourage a speculative merchant from hazarding a single adventure in it. In all trades, the regular established traders, even though not incorporated, naturally combine to raise profits, which are noway so likely to be kept, at all times, down to their proper level, as by the occasional competition of speculative adventurers. The Turkey trade, though in some measure laid open by this act of parliament, is still

considered by many people as very far from being altogether free. The Turkey company contribute to maintain an ambassador and two or three consuls, who, like other public ministers, ought to be maintained altogether by the state, and the trade laid open to all his majesty's subjects. The different taxes levied by the company, for this and other corporation purposes, might afford a revenue much more than sufficient to enable a state to maintain such ministers.

Regulated companies, it was observed by Sir Josiah Child, though they had frequently supported public ministers, had never maintained any forts or garrisons in the countries to which they traded; whereas joint-stock companies frequently had. And, in reality, the former seem to be much more unfit for this sort of service than the latter. First, the directors of a regulated company have no particular interest in the prosperity of the general trade of the company, for the sake of which such forts and garrisons are maintained. The decay of that general trade may even frequently contribute to the advantage of their own private trade; as, by diminishing the number of their competitors, it may enable them both to buy cheaper, and to sell dearer. The directors of a joint-stock company, on the contrary, having only their share in the profits which are made upon the common stock committed to their management, have no private trade of their own, of which the interest can be separated from that of the general trade of the company. Their private interest is connected with the prosperity of the general trade of the company, and with the maintenance of the forts and garrisons which are necessary for its defence. They are more likely, therefore, to have that continual and careful attention which that maintenance necessarily requires. Secondly, The directors of a joint-stock company have always the management of a large capital, the joint stock of the company, a part of which they may frequently employ, with propriety, in building, repairing, and maintaining such necessary forts and garrisons. But the directors of a regulated company, having the management of no common capital, have no other fund to employ in this way, but the casual revenue arising from the admission fines, and from the corporation duties imposed upon the trade of the company. Though they had the same interest, therefore, to attend to the maintenance of such forts and garrisons, they can seldom have the same ability to render that attention effectual. The maintenance of a public minister, requiring scarce any attention, and but a moderate and limited expense, is a business much more suitable both to the temper and abilities of a regulated company.

Long after the time of Sir Josiah Child, however, in 1750, a regulated company was established, the present company of merchants trading to Africa; which was expressly charged at first with the maintenance of all the British forts and garrisons that lie between Cape Blanc and the Cape of Good Hope, and afterwards with that of those only which lie between Cape Rouge and the Cape of Good Hope. The act which establishes this company (the 23d of George II. c. 31), seems to have had two distinct objects in view; first, to restrain effectually the oppressive and monopolizing spirit which is natural to the directors of a regulated company; and, secondly, to force them, as much as possible, to give an attention, which is not natural to them, towards the maintenance of forts and garrisons.

For the first of these purposes, the fine for admission is limited to forty shillings. The company is prohibited from trading in their corporate capacity, or upon a joint stock; from borrowing money upon common seal, or from laying any restraints upon the trade, which may be carried on freely from all places, and by all persons being British subjects, and paying the fine. The government is in a committee of nine persons, who meet at London, but who are chosen annually by the freemen of the company at London, Bristol, and Liverpool; three from each place. No committee-man can be continued in office for more than three years together. Any committee-man might be removed by the board of trade and plantations, now by a committee of council, after being heard in his own defence. The committee are forbid to export negroes from Africa, or to import any African goods into Great Britain. But as they are charged with the maintenance of forts and garrisons, they may, for that purpose export from Great Britain to Africa goods and stores of different kinds. Out of the moneys which they shall receive from the company, they are allowed a sum, not exceeding eight hundred pounds, for the salaries of their clerks and agents at London, Bristol, and Liverpool, the house-rent of their offices at London, and all other expenses of management, commission, and agency, in England. What remains of this sum, after defraying these different expenses, they may divide among themselves, as compensation for their trouble, in what manner they think proper. By this constitution, it might have been expected, that the spirit of monopoly would have been effectually restrained, and the first of these purposes sufficiently answered. It would seem, however, that it had not. Though by the 4th of George III. c. 20, the fort of Senegal, with all its dependencies, had been invested in the company of merchants trading to Africa, yet, in the year following (by the 5th of George III. c. 44), not

only Senegal and its dependencies, but the whole coast, from the port of Sallee, in South Barbary, to Cape Rouge, was exempted from the jurisdiction of that company, was vested in the crown, and the trade to it declared free to all his majesty's subjects. The company had been suspected of restraining the trade and of establishing some sort of improper monopoly. It is not, however, very easy to conceive how, under the regulations of the 23d George II. they could do so. In the printed debates of the house of commons, not always the most authentic records of truth, I observe, however, that they have been accused of this. The members of the committee of nine being all merchants, and the governors and factors in their different forts and settlements being all dependent upon them, it is not unlikely that the latter might have given peculiar attention to the consignments and commissions of the former, which would establish a real monopoly.

For the second of these purposes, the maintenance of the forts and garrisons, an annual sum has been allotted to them by parliament, generally about L.13,000. For the proper application of this sum, the committee is obliged to account annually to the cursitor baron of exchequer; which account is afterwards to be laid before parliament. But parliament, which gives so little attention to the application of millions, is not likely to give much to that of L.13,000 a-year; and the cursitor baron of exchequer, from his profession and education, is not likely to be profoundly skilled in the proper expense of forts and garrisons. The captains of his majesty's navy, indeed, or any other commissioned officers, appointed by the board of admiralty, may inquire into the condition of the forts and garrisons, and report their observations to that board. But that board seems to have no direct jurisdiction over the committee, nor any authority to correct those whose conduct it may thus inquire into; and the captains of his majesty's navy, besides, are not supposed to be always deeply learned in the science of fortification. Removal from an office, which can be enjoyed only for the term of three years, and of which the lawful emoluments, even during that term, are so very small, seems to be the utmost punishment to which any committee-man is liable, for any fault, except direct malversation, or embezzlement, either of the public money, or of that of the company; and the fear of the punishment can never be a motive of sufficient weight to force a continual and careful attention to a business to which he has no other interest to attend. The committee are accused of having sent out bricks and stones from England for the reparation of Cape Coast Castle, on the coast of Guinea; a business for which parliament had several times

granted an extraordinary sum of money. These bricks and stones, too, which had thus been sent upon so long a voyage, were said to have been of so bad a quality, that it was necessary to rebuild, from the foundation, the walls which had been repaired with them. The forts and garrisons which lie north of Cape Rouge, are not only maintained at the expense of the state, but are under the immediate government of the executive power; and why those which lie south of that cape, and which, too, are, in part at least, maintained at the expense of the state, should be under a different government, it seems not very easy even to imagine a good reason. The protection of the Mediterranean trade was the original purpose or pretence of the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca; and the maintenance and government of those garrisons have always been, very properly, committed, not to the Turkey company, but to the executive power. In the extent of its dominion consists, in a great measure, the pride and dignity of that power; and it is not very likely to fail in attention to what is necessary for the defence of that dominion. The garrisons at Gibraltar and Minorca, accordingly, have never been neglected. Though Minorca has been twice taken, and is now probably lost for ever, that disaster has never been imputed to any neglect in the executive power. I would not, however, be understood to insinuate, that either of those expensive garrisons was ever, even in the smallest degree, necessary for the purpose for which they were originally dismembered from the Spanish monarchy. That dismemberment, perhaps, never served any other real purpose than to alienate from England her natural ally the king of Spain, and to unite the two principal branches of the house of Bourbon in a much stricter and more permanent alliance than the ties of blood could ever have united them.

Joint-stock companies, established either by royal charter, or by act of parliament, are different in several respects, not only from regulated companies, but from private copartneries.

First, In a private copartnery, no partner without the consent of the company, can transfer his share to another person, or introduce a new member into the company. Each member, however, may, upon proper warning, withdraw from the copartnery, and demand payment from them of his share of the common stock. In a joint-stock company, on the contrary, no member can demand payment of his share from the company; but each member can, without their consent, transfer his share to another person, and thereby introduce a new member. The value of a share in a joint stock is always the price which it will bring in the

market; and this may be either greater or less in any proportion, than the sum which its owner stands credited for in the stock of the company.

Secondly, In a private copartnery, each partner is bound for the debts contracted by the company, to the whole extent of his fortune. In a joint-stock company, on the contrary, each partner is bound only to the extent of his share.

The trade of a joint-stock company is always managed by a court of directors. This court, indeed, is frequently subject, in many respects, to the control of a general court of proprietors. But the greater part of these proprietors seldom pretend to understand any thing of the business of the company; and when the spirit of faction happens not to prevail among them, give themselves no trouble about it, but receive contentedly such half-yearly or yearly dividend as the directors think proper to make to them. This total exemption from trouble and from risk, beyond a limited sum, encourages many people to become adventurers in joint-stock companies, who would, upon no account, hazard their fortunes in any private copartnery. Such companies, therefore, commonly draw to themselves much greater stocks, than any private copartnery can boast of. The trading stock of the South Sea company at one time amounted to upwards of thirty-three millions eight hundred thousand pounds. The divided capital of the Bank of England amounts, at present, to ten millions seven hundred and eighty thousand pounds. The directors of such companies, however, being the managers rather of other people’s money than of their own, it cannot well be expected that they should watch over it with the same anxious vigilance with which the partners in a private copartnery frequently watch over their own. Like the stewards of a rich man, they are apt to consider attention to small matters as not for their master’s honour, and very easily give themselves a dispensation from having it. Negligence and profusion, therefore, must always prevail, more or less, in the management of the affairs of such a company. It is upon this account, that joint-stock companies for foreign trade have seldom been able to maintain the competition against private adventurers. They have, accordingly, very seldom succeeded without an exclusive privilege; and frequently have not succeeded with one. Without an exclusive privilege, they have commonly mismanaged the trade. With an exclusive privilege, they have both mismanaged and confined it.

The Royal African company, the predecessors of the present African company, had an exclusive privilege by charter; but as that charter had not been confirmed by act of parliament, the trade, in consequence of the declaration of rights, was, soon after the Revolution, laid open to all his

majesty’s subjects. The Hudson’s Bay company are, as to their legal rights, in the same situation as the Royal African company. Their exclusive charter has not been confirmed by act of parliament. The South Sea company, as long as they continued to be a trading company, had an exclusive privilege confirmed by act of parliament; as have likewise the present united company of merchants trading to the East Indies.

The Royal African company soon found that they could not maintain the competition against private adventurers, whom, notwithstanding the declaration of rights, they continued for some time to call interlopers, and to persecute as such. In 1698, however, the private adventurers were subjected to a duty of ten per cent. upon almost all the different branches of their trade, to be employed by the company in the maintenance of their forts and garrisons. But, notwithstanding this heavy tax, the company were still unable to maintain the competition. Their stock and credit gradually declined. In 1712, their debts had become so great, that a particular act of parliament was thought necessary, both for their security and for that of their creditors. It was enacted, that the resolution of two-thirds of these creditors in number and value should bind the rest, both with regard to the time which should be allowed to the company for the payment of their debts, and with regard to any other agreement which it might be thought proper to make with them concerning those debts. In 1730, their affairs were in so great disorder, that they were altogether incapable of maintaining their forts and garrisons, the sole purpose and pretext of their institution. From that year till their final dissolution, the parliament judged it necessary to allow the annual sum of ten thousand pounds for that purpose. In 1732, after having been for many years losers by the trade of carrying negroes to the West Indies, they at last resolved to give it up altogether; to sell to the private traders to America the negroes which they purchased upon the coast; and to employ their servants in a trade to the inland parts of Africa for gold dust, elephants teeth, dyeing drugs, &c. But their success in this more confined trade was not greater than in their former extensive one. Their affairs continued to go gradually to decline, till at last, being in every respect a bankrupt company, they were dissolved by act of parliament, and their forts and garrisons vested in the present regulated company of merchants trading to Africa. Before the erection of the Royal African company, there had been three other joint-stock companies successively established, one after another, for the African trade. They were all equally unsuccessful. They all, however, had exclusive charters, which,

though not confirmed by act of parliament, were in those days supposed to convey a real exclusive privilege.

The Hudson's Bay company, before their misfortunes in the late war, had been much more fortunate than the Royal African company. Their necessary expense is much smaller. The whole number of people whom they maintain in their different settlements and habitations, which they have honoured with the name of forts, is said not to exceed a hundred and twenty persons. This number, however, is sufficient to prepare beforehand the cargo of furs and other goods necessary for loading their ships, which, on account of the ice, can seldom remain above six or eight weeks in those seas. This advantage of having a cargo ready prepared, could not, for several years, be acquired by private adventurers; and without it there seems to be no possibility of trading to Hudson's Bay. The moderate capital of the company, which, it is said, does not exceed one hundred and ten thousand pounds, may, besides, be sufficient to enable them to engross the whole, or almost the whole trade and surplus produce, of the miserable though extensive country comprehended within their charter. No private adventurers, accordingly, have ever attempted to trade to that country in competition with them. This company, therefore, have always enjoyed an exclusive trade, in fact, though they may have no right to it in law. Over and above all this, the moderate capital of this company is said to be divided among a very small number of proprietors. But a joint-stock company, consisting of a small number of proprietors, with a moderate capital, approaches very nearly to the nature of a private copartnery, and may be capable of nearly the same degree of vigilance and attention. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if, in consequence of these different advantages, the Hudson's Bay company had, before the late war, been able to carry on their trade with a considerable degree of success. It does not seem probable, however, that their profits ever approached to what the late Mr Dobbs imagined them. A much more sober and judicious writer, Mr Anderson, author of the Historical and Chronological Deduction of Commerce, very justly observes, that upon examining the accounts which Mr Dobbs himself has given for several years together, of their exports and imports, and upon making proper allowances for their extraordinary risk and expense, it does not appear that their profits deserve to be envied, or that they can much, if at all, exceed the ordinary profits of trade.

The South Sea company never had any forts or garrisons to maintain, and therefore were entirely exempted from one great expense, to which other joint-stock companies for foreign trade are subject; but they had an

immense capital divided among an immense number of proprietors. It was naturally to be expected, therefore, that folly, negligence, and profusion, should prevail in the whole management of their affairs. The knavery and extravagance of their stock-jobbing projects are sufficiently known, and the explication of them would be foreign to the present subject. Their mercantile projects were not much better conducted. The first trade which they engaged in, was that of supplying the Spanish West Indies with negroes, of which (in consequence of what was called the Assiento Contract granted them by the treaty of Utrecht) they had the exclusive privilege. But as it was not expected that much profit could be made by this trade, both the Portuguese and French companies, who had enjoyed it upon the same terms before them, having been ruined by it, they were allowed, as compensation, to send annually a ship of a certain burden, to trade directly to the Spanish West Indies. Of the ten voyages which this annual ship was allowed to make, they are said to have gained considerably by one, that of the Royal Caroline, in 1731; and to have been losers, more or less, by almost all the rest. Their ill success was imputed, by their factors and agents, to the extortion and oppression of the Spanish government; but was, perhaps, principally owing to the profusion and depredations of those very factors and agents; some of whom are said to have acquired great fortunes, even in one year. In 1734, the company petitioned the king, that they might be allowed to dispose of the trade and tonnage of their annual ship, on account of the little profit which they made by it, and to accept of such equivalent as they could obtain from the king of Spain.

In 1724, this company had undertaken the whale fishery. Of this, indeed, they had no monopoly; but as long as they carried it on, no other British subjects appear to have engaged in it. Of the eight voyages which their ships made to Greenland, they were gainers by one, and losers by all the rest. After their eighth and last voyage, when they had sold their ships, stores, and utensils, they found that their whole loss upon this branch, capital and interest included, amounted to upwards of two hundred and thirty-seven thousand pounds.

In 1722, this company petitioned the parliament to be allowed to divide their immense capital of more than thirty-three millions eight hundred thousand pounds, the whole of which been lent to government, into two equal parts; the one half, or upwards of sixteen millions nine hundred thousand pounds, to be put upon the same footing with other government annuities, and not to be subject to the debts contracted, or losses incurred, by the directors of the company, in the prosecution of

their mercantile projects; the other half to remain as before, a trading stock, and to be subject to those debts and losses. The petition was too reasonable not to be granted. In 1733, they again petitioned the parliament, that three-fourths of their trading stock might be turned into annuity stock, and only one-fourth remain as trading stock, or exposed to the hazards arising from the bad management of their directors. Both their annuity and trading stocks had, by this time, been reduced more than two millions each, by several different payments from government; so that this fourth amounted only to L.3,662,784 : 8 : 6. In 1748, all the demands of the company upon the king of Spain, in consequence of the assiento contract, were, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, given up for what was supposed an equivalent. An end was put to their trade with the Spanish West Indies; the remainder of their trading stock was turned into an annuity stock; and the company ceased, in every respect, to be a trading company.

It ought to be observed, that in the trade which the South Sea company carried on by means of their annual ship, the only trade by which it ever was expected that they could make any considerable profit, they were not without competitors, either in the foreign or in the home market. At Carthagena, Porto Bello, and La Vera Cruz, they had to encounter the competition of the Spanish merchants, who brought from Cadiz to those markets European goods, of the same kind with the outward cargo of their ship; and in England they had to encounter that of the English merchants, who imported from Cadiz goods of the Spanish West Indies, of the same kind with the inward cargo. The goods, both of the Spanish and English merchants, indeed, were, perhaps, subject to higher duties. But the loss occasioned by the negligence, profusion, and malversation of the servants of the company, had probably been a tax much heavier than all those duties. That a joint-stock company should be able to carry on successfully any branch of foreign trade, when private adventurers can come into any sort of open and fair competition with them, seems contrary to all experience.

The old English East India company was established in 1600, by a charter from Queen Elizabeth. In the first twelve voyages which they fitted out for India, they appear to have traded as a regulated company, with separate stocks, though only in the general ships of the company. In 1612, they united into a joint stock. Their charter was exclusive, and, though not confirmed by act of parliament, was in those days supposed to convey a real exclusive privilege. For many years, therefore, they were not much disturbed by interlopers. Their capital, which never

exceeded seven hundred and fourty-four thousand pounds, and of which fifty pounds was a share, was not so exorbitant, nor their dealings so extensive, as to afford either a pretext for gross negligence and profusion, or a cover to gross malversation. Notwithstanding some extraordinary losses, occasioned partly by the malice of the Dutch East India company, and partly by other accidents, they carried on for many years a successful trade. But in process of time, when the principles of liberty were better understood, it became every day more and more doubtful, how far a royal charter, not confirmed by act of parliament, could convey an exclusive privilege. Upon this question the decisions of the courts of justice were not uniform, but varied with the authority of government, and the humours of the times. Interlopers multiplied upon them; and towards the end of the reign of Charles II., through the whole of that of James II., and during a part of that of William III., reduced them to great distress. In 1698, a proposal was made to parliament, of advancing two millions to government, at eight per cent. provided the subscribers were erected into a new East India company, with exclusive privileges. The old East India company offered seven hundred thousand pounds, nearly the amount of their capital, at four per cent. upon the same conditions. But such was at that time the state of public credit, that it was more convenient for government to borrow two millions at eight per cent. than seven hundred thousand pounds at four. The proposal of the new subscribers was accepted, and a new East India company established in consequence. The old East India company, however, had a right to continue their trade till 1701. They had, at the same time, in the name of their treasurer, subscribed very artfully three hundred and fifteen thousand pounds into the stock of the new. By a negligence in the expression of the act of parliament, which vested the East India trade in the subscribers to this loan of two millions, it did not appear evident that they were all obliged to unite into a joint stock. A few private traders, whose subscriptions amounted only to seven thousand two hundred pounds, insisted upon the privilege of trading separately upon their own stocks, and at their own risks. The old East India company had a right to a separate trade upon their own stock till 1701; and they had likewise, both before and after that period, a right, like that of other private traders, to a separate trade upon the three hundred and fifteen thousand pounds, which they had subscribed into the stock of the new company. The competition of the two companies with the private traders, and with one another, is said to have well nigh ruined both. Upon a subsequent occasion, in 1730, when a proposal was made to parliament for putting

the trade under the management of a regulated company, and thereby laying it in some measure open, the East India company, in opposition to this proposal, represented, in very strong terms, what had been, at this time, the miserable effects, as they thought them, of this competition. In India, they said, it raised the price of goods so high, that they were not worth the buying; and in England, by overstocking the market, it sunk their price so low, that no profit could be made by them. That by a more plentiful supply, to the great advantage and conveniency of the public, it must have reduced very much the price of India goods in the English market, cannot well be doubted; but that it should have raised very much their price in the Indian market, seems not very probable, as all the extraordinary demand which that competition could occasion must have been but as a drop of water in the immense ocean of Indian commerce. The increase of demand, besides, though in the beginning it may sometimes raise the price of goods, never fails to lower it in the long-run. It encourages production, and thereby increases the competition of the producers, who, in order to undersell one another, have recourse to new divisions of labour and new improvements of art, which might never otherwise have been thought of. The miserable effects of which the company complained, were the cheapness of consumption, and the encouragement given to production; precisely the two effects which it is the great business of political economy to promote. The competition, however, of which they gave this doleful account, had not been allowed to be of long continuance. In 1702, the two companies were, in some measure, united by an indenture tripartite, to which the queen was the third party; and in 1708, they were by act of parliament, perfectly consolidated into one company, by their present name of the United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies. Into this act it was thought worth while to insert a clause, allowing the separate traders to continue their trade till Michaelmas 1711; but at the same time empowering the directors, upon three years notice, to redeem their little capital of seven thousand two hundred pounds, and thereby to convert the whole stock of the company into a joint stock. By the same act, the capital of the company, in consequence of a new loan to government, was augmented from two millions to three millions two hundred thousand pounds. In 1743, the company advanced another million to government. But this million being raised, not by a call upon the proprietors, but by selling annuities and contracting bond-debts, it did not augment the stock upon which the proprietors could claim a dividend. It augmented, however, their trading stock, it being equally

liable with the other three millions two hundred thousand pounds, to the losses sustained, and debts contracted by the company in prosecution of their mercantile projects. From 1708, or at least from 1711, this company, being delivered from all competitors, and fully established in the monopoly of the English commerce to the East Indies, carried on a successful trade, and from their profits, made annually a moderate dividend to their proprietors. During the French war, which began in 1741, the ambition of Mr. Dupleix, the French governor of Pondicherry, involved them in the wars of the Carnatic, and in the politics of the Indian princes. After many signal successes, and equally signal losses, they at last lost Madras, at that time their principal settlement in India. It was restored to them by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle; and, about this time the spirit of war and conquest seems to have taken possession of their servants in India, and never since to have left them. During the French war, which began in 1755, their arms partook of the general good fortune of those of Great Britain. They defended Madras, took Pondicherry, recovered Calcutta, and acquired the revenues of a rich and extensive territory, amounting, it was then said, to upwards of three millions a-year. They remained for several years in quiet possession of this revenue; but in 1767, administration laid claim to their territorial acquisitions, and the revenue arising from them, as of right belonging to the crown; and the company, in compensation for this claim, agreed to pay to government four hundred thousand pounds a-year. They had, before this, gradually augmented their dividend from about six to ten per cent.; that is, upon their capital of three millions two hundred thousand pounds, they had increased it by a hundred and twenty-eight thousand pounds, or had raised it from one hundred and ninety-two thousand to three hundred and twenty thousand pounds a-year. They were attempting about this time to raise it still further, to twelve and a-half per cent., which would have made their annual payments to their proprietors equal to what they had agreed to pay annually to government, or to four hundred thousand pounds a-year. But during the two years in which their agreement with government was to take place, they were restrained from any further increase of dividend by two successive acts of parliament, of which the object was to enable them to make a speedier progress in the payment of their debts, which were at this time estimated at upwards of six or seven millions sterling. In 1769, they renewed their agreement with government for five years more, and stipulated, that during the course of that period, they should be allowed gradually to increase their dividend to twelve and a-half per cent; never increasing it, however,

more than one per cent. in one year. This increase of dividend, therefore, when it had risen to its utmost height, could augment their annual payments, to their proprietors and government together, but by six hundred and eight thousand pounds, beyond what they had been before their late territorial acquisitions. What the gross revenue of those territorial acquisitions was supposed to amount to, has already been mentioned; and by an account brought by the Cruttenden East Indiaman in 1769, the neat revenue, clear of all deductions and military charges, was stated at two millions forty-eight thousand seven hundred and forty-seven pounds. They were said, at the same time, to possess another revenue, arising partly from lands, but chiefly from the customs established at their different settlements, amounting to four hundred and thirty-nine thousand pounds. The profits of their trade, too, according to the evidence of their chairman before the house of commons, amounted, at this time, to at least four hundred thousand pounds a-year; according to that of their accountant, to at least five hundred thousand; according to the lowest account, at least equal to the highest dividend that was to be paid to their proprietors. So great a revenue might certainly have afforded augmentation of six hundred and eight thousand pounds in their annual payments; and, at the same time, have left a large sinking fund, sufficient for the speedy reduction of their debt. In 1773, however, their debts, instead of being reduced, were augmented by an arrear to the treasury in the payment of the four hundred thousand pounds; by another to the custom-house for duties unpaid; by a large debt to the bank, for money borrowed; and by a fourth, for bills drawn upon them from India, and wantonly accepted, to the amount of upwards of twelve hundred thousand pounds. The distress which these accumulated claims brought upon them, obliged them not only to reduce all at once their dividend to six per cent. but to throw themselves upon the mercy of government, and to supplicate, first, a release from the further payment of the stipulated four hundred thousand pounds a-year; and, secondly, a loan of fourteen hundred thousand, to save them from immediate bankruptcy. The great increase of their fortune had, it seems, only served to furnish their servants with a pretext for greater profusion, and a cover for greater malversation, than in proportion even to that increase of fortune. The conduct of their servants in India, and the general state of their affairs both in India and in Europe, became the subject of a parliamentary inquiry: in consequence of which, several very important alterations were made in the constitution of their government, both at home and abroad. In India, their principal settlements of Madras, Bombay, and

Calcutta, which had before been altogether independent of one another, were subjected to a governor-general, assisted by a council of four assessors, parliament assuming to itself the first nomination of this governor and council, who were to reside at Calcutta; that city having now become, what Madras was before, the most important of the English settlements in India. The court of the Mayor of Calcutta, originally instituted for the trial of mercantile causes, which arose in the city and neighbourhood, had gradually extended its jurisdiction with the extension of the empire. It was now reduced and confined to the original purpose of its institution. Instead of it, a new supreme court of judicature was established, consisting of a chief justice and three judges, to be appointed by the crown. In Europe, the qualification necessary to entitle a proprietor to vote at their general courts was raised, from five hundred pounds, the original price of a share in the stock of the company, to a thousand pounds. In order to vote upon this qualification, too, it was declared necessary, that he should have possessed it, if acquired by his own purchase, and not by inheritance, for at least one year, instead of six months, the term requisite before. The court of twenty-four directors had before been chosen annually; but it was now enacted, that each director should, for the future, be chosen for four years; six of them, however, to go out of office by rotation every year, and not be capable of being re-chosen at the election of the six new directors for the ensuing year. In consequence of these alterations, the courts, both of the proprietors and directors, it was expected, would be likely to act with more dignity and steadiness than they had usually done before. But it seems impossible, by any alterations, to render those courts, in any respect, fit to govern, or even to share in the government of a great empire; because the greater part of their members must always have too little interest in the prosperity of that empire, to give any serious attention to what may promote it. Frequently a man of great, sometimes even a man of small fortune, is willing to purchase a thousand pounds share in India stock, merely for the influence which he expects to acquire by a vote in the court of proprietors. It gives him a share, though not in the plunder, yet in the appointment of the plunderers of India; the court of directors, though they make that appointment, being necessarily more or less under the influence of the proprietors, who not only elect those directors, but sometimes over-rule the appointments of their servants in India. Provided he can enjoy this influence for a few years, and thereby provide for a certain number of his friends, he frequently cares little about the dividend, or even about the value of the stock upon which his vote in

founded. About the prosperity of the great empire, in the government of which that vote gives him a share, he seldom cares at all. No other sovereigns ever were, or, from the nature of things, ever could be, so perfectly indifferent about the happiness or misery of their subjects, the improvement or waste of their dominions, the glory or disgrace of their administration, as, from irresistible moral causes, the greater part of the proprietors of such a mercantile company are, and necessarily must be. This indifference, too, was more likely to be increased than diminished by some of the new regulations which were made in consequence of the parliamentary inquiry. By a resolution of the house of commons, for example, it was declared, that when the L.1,400,000 lent to the company by government, should be paid, and their bond-debts be reduced to L.1,500,000, they might then, and not till then, divide eight per cent. upon their capital; and that whatever remained of their revenues and neat profits at home should be divided into four parts; three of them to be paid into the exchequer for the use of the public, and the fourth to be reserved as a fund, either for the further reduction of their bond-debts, or for the discharge of other contingent exigencies which the company might labour under. But if the company were bad stewards and bad sovereigns, when the whole of their neat revenue and profits belonged to themselves, and were at their own disposal, they were surely not likely to be better when three-fourths of them were to belong to other people, and the other fourth, though to be laid out for the benefit of the company, yet to be so under the inspection and with the approbation of other people.

It might be more agreeable to the company, that their own servants and dependants should have either the pleasure of wasting, or the profit of embezzling, whatever surplus might remain, after paying the proposed dividend of eight per cent. than that it should come into the hands of a set of people with whom those resolutions could scarce fail to set them in some measure at variance. The interest of those servants and dependants might so far predominate in the court of proprietors, as sometimes to dispose it to support the authors of depredations which had been committed in direct violation of its own authority. With the majority of proprietors, the support even of the authority of their own court might sometimes be a matter of less consequence than the support of those who had set that authority at defiance.

The regulations of 1773, accordingly, did not put an end to the disorder of the company’s government in India. Notwithstanding that, during a momentary fit of good conduct, they had at one time collected into the treasury of Calcutta more than L.3,000,000 sterling;

notwithstanding that they had afterwards extended either their dominion or their depredations over a vast accession of some of the richest and most fertile countries in India, all was wasted and destroyed. They found themselves altogether unprepared to stop or resist the incursion of Hyder Ali; and in consequence of those disorders, the company is now (1784) in greater distress than ever; and, in order to prevent immediate bankruptcy, is once more reduced to supplicate the assistance of government. Different plans have been proposed by the different parties in parliament for the better management of its affairs; and all those plans seem to agree in supposing, what was indeed always abundantly evident, that it is altogether unfit to govern its territorial possessions. Even the company itself seems to be convinced of its own incapacity so far, and seems, upon that account willing to give them up to government.

With the right of possessing forts and garrisons in distant and barbarous countries, is necessarily connected the right of making peace and war in those countries. The joint-stock companies, which have had the one right, have constantly exercised the other, and have frequently had it expressly conferred upon them. How unjustly, how capriciously, how cruelly, they have commonly exercised it, is too well known from recent experience.

When a company of merchants undertake, at their own risk and expense, to establish a new trade with some remote and barbarous nation, it may not be unreasonable to incorporate them into a joint-stock company, and to grant them, in case of their success, a monopoly of the trade for a certain number of years. It is the easiest and most natural way in which the state can recompense them for hazarding a dangerous and expensive experiment, of which the public is afterwards to reap the benefit. A temporary monopoly of this kind may be vindicated, upon the same principles upon which a like monopoly of a new machine is granted to its inventor, and that of a new book to its author. But upon the expiration of the term, the monopoly ought certainly to determine; the forts and garrisons, if it was found necessary to establish any, to be taken into the hands of government, their value to be paid to the company, and the trade to be laid open to all the subjects of the state. By a perpetual monopoly, all the other subjects of the state are taxed very absurdly in two different ways: first, by the high price of goods, which, in the case of a free trade, they could buy much cheaper; and, secondly, by their total exclusion from a branch of business which it might be both convenient and profitable for many of them to carry on. It is for the most worthless of all purposes, too, that they are taxed in this manner. It is merely to

enable the company to support the negligence, profusion, and malversation of their own servants, whose disorderly conduct seldom allows the dividend of the company to exceed the ordinary rate of profit in trades which are altogether free, and very frequently makes it fall even a good deal short of that rate. Without a monopoly, however, a joint-stock company, it would appear from experience, cannot long carry on any branch of foreign trade. To buy in one market, in order to sell with profit in another, when there are many competitors in both; to watch over, not only the occasional variations in the demand, but the much greater and more frequent variations in the competition, or in the supply which that demand is likely to get from other people; and to suit with dexterity and judgment both the quantity and quality of each assortment of goods to all these circumstances, is a species of warfare, of which the operations are continually changing, and which can scarce ever be conducted successfully, without such an unremitting exertion of vigilance and attention as cannot long be expected from the directors of a joint-stock company. The East India company, upon the redemption of their funds, and the expiration of their exclusive privilege, have a right, by act of parliament, to continue a corporation with a joint stock, and to trade in their corporate capacity to the East Indies, in common with the rest of their fellow subjects. But in this situation, the superior vigilance and attention of a private adventurer would, in all probability, soon make them weary of the trade.

An eminent French author, of great knowledge in matters of political economy, the Abbé Morellet, gives a list of fifty-five joint-stock companies for foreign trade, which have been established in different parts of Europe since the year 1600, and which, according to him, have all failed from mismanagement, notwithstanding they had exclusive privileges. He has been misinformed with regard to the history of two or three of them, which were not joint-stock companies and have not failed. But, in compensation, there have been several joint-stock companies which have failed, and which he has omitted.

The only trades which it seems possible for a joint-stock company to carry on successfully, without an exclusive privilege, are those, of which all the operations are capable of bring reduced to what is called a routine, or to such a uniformity of method as admits of little or no variation. Of this kind is, first, the banking trade; secondly, the trade of insurance from fire and from sea risk, and capture in time of war; thirdly, the trade of making and maintaining a navigable cut or canal; and, fourthly, the similar trade of bringing water for the supply of a great city.

Though the principles of the banking trade may appear somewhat abstruse, the practice is capable of being reduced to strict rules. To depart upon any occasion from those rules, in consequence of some flattering speculation of extraordinary gain, is almost always extremely dangerous and frequently fatal to the banking company which attempts it. But the constitution of joint-stock companies renders them in general, more tenacious of established rules than any private copartnery. Such companies, therefore, seem extremely well fitted for this trade. The principal banking companies in Europe, accordingly, are joint-stock companies, many of which manage their trade very successfully without any exclusive privilege. The bank of England has no other exclusive privilege, except that no other banking company in England shall consist of more than six persons. The two banks of Edinburgh are joint-stock companies, without any exclusive privilege.

The value of the risk, either from fire, or from loss by sea, or by capture, though it cannot, perhaps, be calculated very exactly, admits, however, of such a gross estimation, as renders it, in some degree, reducible to strict rule and method. The trade of insurance, therefore, may be carried on successfully by a joint-stock company, without any exclusive privilege. Neither the London Assurance, nor the Royal Exchange Assurance companies, have any such privilege.

When a navigable cut or canal has been once made, the management of it becomes quite simple and easy, and it is reducible to strict rule and method. Even the making of it is so, as it may be contracted for with undertakers, at so much a mile, and so much a lock. The same thing may be said of a canal, an aqueduct, or a great pipe for bringing water to supply a great city. Such undertakings, therefore, may be, and accordingly frequently are, very successfully managed by joint-stock companies, without any exclusive privilege.

To establish a joint-stock company, however, for any undertaking, merely because such a company might be capable of managing it successfully; or, to exempt a particular set of dealers from some of the general laws which take place with regard to all their neighbours, merely because they might be capable of thriving, if they had such an exemption, would certainly not be reasonable. To render such an establishment perfectly reasonable, with the circumstance of being reducible to strict rule and method, two other circumstances ought to concur. First, it ought to appear with the clearest evidence, that the undertaking is of greater and more general utility than the greater part of common trades; and, secondly, that it requires a greater capital than can

easily be collected into a private copartnery. If a moderate capital were sufficient, the great utility of the undertaking would not be a sufficient reason for establishing a joint-stock company; because, in this case, the demand for what it was to produce, would readily and easily be supplied by private adventurers. In the four trades above mentioned, both those circumstances concur.

The great and general utility of the banking trade, when prudently managed, has been fully explained in the second book of this Inquiry. But a public bank, which is to support public credit, and, upon particular emergencies, to advance to government the whole produce of a tax, to the amount, perhaps, of several millions, a year or two before it comes in, requires a greater capital than can easily be collected into any private copartnery.

The trade of insurance gives great security to the fortunes of private people, and, by dividing among a great many that loss which would ruin an individual, makes it fall light and easy upon the whole society. In order to give this security, however, it is necessary that the insurers should have a very large capital. Before the establishment of the two joint-stock companies for insurance in London, a list, it is said, was laid before the attorney-general, of one hundred and fifty private insurers, who had failed in the course of a few years.

That navigable cuts and canals, and the works which are sometimes necessary for supplying a great city with water, are of great and general utility, while, at the same time, they frequently require a greater expense than suits the fortunes of private people, is sufficiently obvious.

Except the four trades above mentioned, I have not been able to recollect any other, in which all the three circumstances requisite for rendering reasonable the establishment of a joint-stock company concur. The English copper company of London, the lead-smelting company, the glass-grinding company, have not even the pretext of any great or singular utility in the object which they pursue; nor does the pursuit of that object seem to require any expense unsuitable to the fortunes of many private men. Whether the trade which those companies carry on, is reducible to such strict rule and method as to render it fit for the management of a joint-stock company, or whether they have any reason to boast of their extraordinary profits, I do not pretend to know. The mine-adventurers company has been long ago bankrupt. A share in the stock of the British Linen company of Edinburgh sells, at present, very much below par, though less so than it did some years ago. The joint-stock companies, which are established for the public-spirited purpose of

promoting some particular manufacture, over and above managing their own affairs ill, to the diminution of the general stock of the society, can, in other respects, scarce ever fail to do more harm than good. Notwithstanding the most upright intentions, the unavoidable partiality of their directors to particular branches of the manufacture, of which the undertakers mislead and impose upon them, is a real discouragement to the rest, and necessarily breaks, more or less, that natural proportion which would otherwise establish itself between judicious industry and profit, and which, to the general industry of the country, is of all encouragements the greatest and the most effectual.

ART. II. — *Of the Expense of the Institution for the Education of Youth.*

The institutions for the education of the youth may, in the same manner, furnish a revenue sufficient for defraying their own expense. The fee or honorary, which the scholar pays to the master, naturally constitutes a revenue of this kind.

Even where the reward of the master does not arise altogether from this natural revenue, it still is not necessary that it should be derived from that general revenue of the society, of which the collection and application are, in most countries, assigned to the executive power. Through the greater part of Europe, accordingly, the endowment of schools and colleges makes either no charge upon that general revenue, or but a very small one. It everywhere arises chiefly from some local or provincial revenue, from the rent of some landed estate, or from the interest of some sum of money, allotted and put under the management of trustees for this particular purpose, sometimes by the sovereign himself, and sometimes by some private donor.

Have those public endowments contributed in general, to promote the end of their institution? Have they contributed to encourage the diligence, and to improve the abilities, of the teachers? Have they directed the course of education towards objects more useful, both to the individual and to the public, than those to which it would naturally have gone of its own accord? It should not seem very difficult to give at least a probable answer to each of those questions.

In every profession, the exertion of the greater part of those who exercise it, is always in proportion to the necessity they are under of making that exertion. This necessity is greatest with those to whom the emoluments of their profession are the only source from which they expect their fortune, or even their ordinary revenue and subsistence. In

order to acquire this fortune, or even to get this subsistence, they must, in the course of a year, execute a certain quantity of work of a known value; and, where the competition is free, the rivalship of competitors, who are all endeavouring to justle one another out of employment, obliges every man to endeavour to execute his work with a certain degree of exactness. The greatness of the objects which are to be acquired by success in some particular professions may, no doubt, sometimes animate the exertion of a few men of extraordinary spirit and ambition. Great objects, however, are evidently not necessary, in order to occasion the greatest exertions. Rivalship and emulation render excellency, even in mean professions, an object of ambition, and frequently occasion the very greatest exertions. Great objects, on the contrary, alone and unsupported by the necessity of application, have seldom been sufficient to occasion any considerable exertion. In England, success in the profession of the law leads to some very great objects of ambition; and yet how few men, born to easy fortunes, have ever in this country been eminent in that profession?

The endowments of schools and colleges have necessarily diminished, more or less, the necessity of application in the teachers. Their subsistence, so far as it arises from their salaries, is evidently derived from a fund, altogether independent of their success and reputation in their particular professions.

In some universities, the salary makes but a part, and frequently but a small part, of the emoluments of the teacher, of which the greater part arises from the honoraries or fees of his pupils. The necessity of application, though always more or less diminished, is not, in this case, entirely taken away. Reputation in his profession is still of some importance to him, and he still has some dependency upon the affection, gratitude, and favourable report of those who have attended upon his instructions; and these favourable sentiments he is likely to gain in no way so well as by deserving them, that is, by the abilities and diligence with which he discharges every part of his duty.

In other universities, the teacher is prohibited from receiving any honorary or fee from his pupils, and his salary constitutes the whole of the revenue which he derives from his office. His interest is, in this case, set as directly in opposition to his duty as it is possible to set it. It is the interest of every man to live as much at his ease as he can; and if his emoluments are to be precisely the same, whether he does or does not perform some very laborious duty, it is certainly his interest, at least as interest is vulgarly understood, either to neglect it altogether, or, if he is subject to some authority which will not suffer him to do this, to perform

it in as careless and slovenly a manner as that authority will permit. If he is naturally active and a lover of labour, it is his interest to employ that activity in any way from which he can derive some advantage, rather than in the performance of his duty, from which he can derive none.

If the authority to which he is subject resides in the body corporate, the college, or university, of which he himself is a member, and in which the greater part of the other members are, like himself, persons who either are, or ought to be teachers, they are likely to make a common cause, to be all very indulgent to one another, and every man to consent that his neighbour may neglect his duty, provided he himself is allowed to neglect his own. In the university of Oxford, the greater part of the public professors have, for these many years, given up altogether even the pretence of teaching.

If the authority to which he is subject resides, not so much in the body corporate, of which he is a member, as in some other extraneous persons, in the bishop of the diocese, for example, in the governor of the province, or, perhaps, in some minister of state, it is not, indeed, in this case, very likely that he will be suffered to neglect his duty altogether. All that such superiors, however, can force him to do, is to attend upon his pupils a certain number of hours, that is, to give a certain number of lectures in the week, or in the year. What those lectures shall be, must still depend upon the diligence of the teacher; and that diligence is likely to be proportioned to the motives which he has for exerting it. An extraneous jurisdiction of this kind, besides, is liable to be exercised both ignorantly and capriciously. In its nature, it is arbitrary and discretionary; and the persons who exercise it, neither attending upon the lectures of the teacher themselves, nor perhaps understanding the sciences which it is his business to teach, are seldom capable of exercising it with judgment. From the insolence of office, too, they are frequently indifferent how they exercise it, and are very apt to censure or deprive him of his office wantonly and without any just cause. The person subject to such jurisdiction is necessarily degraded by it, and, instead of being one of the most respectable, is rendered one of the meanest and most contemptible persons in the society. It is by powerful protection only, that he can effectually guard himself against the bad usage to which he is at all times exposed; and this protection he is most likely to gain, not by ability or diligence in his profession, but by obsequiousness to the will of his superiors, and by being ready, at all times, to sacrifice to that will the rights, the interest, and the honour of the body corporate, of which he is a member. Whoever has attended for any considerable time to the

administration of a French university, must have had occasion to remark the effects which naturally result from an arbitrary and extraneous jurisdiction of this kind.

Whatever forces a certain number of students to any college or university, independent of the merit or reputation of the teachers, tends more or less to diminish the necessity of that merit or reputation.

The privileges of graduates in arts, in law, physic, and divinity, when they can be obtained only by residing a certain number of years in certain universities, necessarily force a certain number of students to such universities, independent of the merit or reputation of the teachers. The privileges of graduates are a sort of statutes of apprenticeship, which have contributed to the improvement of education, just as the other statutes of apprenticeship have to that of arts and manufactures.

The charitable foundations of scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, &c. necessarily attach a certain number of students to certain colleges, independent altogether of the merit of those particular colleges. Were the students upon such charitable foundations left free to choose what college they liked best, such liberty might perhaps contribute to excite some emulation among different colleges. A regulation, on the contrary, which prohibited even the independent members of every particular college from leaving it, and going to any other, without leave first asked and obtained of that which they meant to abandon, would tend very much to extinguish that emulation.

If in each college, the tutor or teacher, who was to instruct each student in all arts and sciences, should not be voluntarily chosen by the student, but appointed by the head of the college; and if, in case of neglect, inability, or bad usage, the student should not be allowed to change him for another, without leave first asked and obtained; such a regulation would not only tend very much to extinguish all emulation among the different tutors of the same college, but to diminish very much, in all of them, the necessity of diligence and of attention to their respective pupils. Such teachers, though very well paid by their students, might be as much disposed to neglect them, as those who are not paid by them at all or who have no other recompense but their salary.

If the teacher happens to be a man of sense, it must be an unpleasant thing to him to be conscious, while he is lecturing to his students, that he is either speaking or reading nonsense, or what is very little better than nonsense. It must, too, be unpleasant to him to observe, that the greater part of his students desert his lectures; or perhaps, attend upon them with plain enough marks of neglect, contempt, and derision. If he is obliged,

therefore, to give a certain number of lectures, these motives alone, without any other interest, might dispose him to take some pains to give tolerably good ones. Several different expedients, however, may be fallen upon, which will effectually blunt the edge of all those incitements to diligence. The teacher, instead of explaining to his pupils himself the science in which he proposes to instruct them, may read some book upon it; and if this book is written in a foreign and dead language, by interpreting it to them into their own, or, what would give him still less trouble, by making them interpret it to him, and by now and then making an occasional remark upon it, he may flatter himself that he is giving a lecture. The slightest degree of knowledge and application will enable him to do this, without exposing himself to contempt or derision, by saying any thing that is really foolish, absurd, or ridiculous. The discipline of the college, at the same time, may enable him to force all his pupils to the most regular attendance upon his sham lecture, and to maintain the most decent and respectful behaviour during the whole time of the performance.

The discipline of colleges and universities is in general contrived, not for the benefit of the students, but for the interest, or, more properly speaking, for the ease of the masters. Its object is, in all cases, to maintain the authority of the master, and, whether he neglects or performs his duty, to oblige the students in all cases to behave to him as if he performed it with the greatest diligence and ability. It seems to presume perfect wisdom and virtue in the one order, and the greatest weakness and folly in the other. Where the masters, however, really perform their duty, there are no examples, I believe, that the greater part of the students ever neglect theirs. No discipline is ever requisite to force attendance upon lectures which are really worth the attending, as is well known wherever any such lectures are given. Force and restraint may, no doubt, be in some degree requisite, in order to oblige children, or very young boys, to attend to those parts of education, which it is thought necessary for them to acquire during that early period of life; but after twelve or thirteen years of age, provided the master does his duty, force or restraint can scarce ever be necessary to carry on any part of education. Such is the generosity of the greater part of young men, that so far from being disposed to neglect or despise the instructions of their master, provided he shews some serious intention of being of use to them, they are generally inclined to pardon a great deal of incorrectness in the performance of his duty, and sometimes even to conceal from the public a good deal of gross negligence.

Those parts of education, it is to be observed, for the teaching of which there are no public institutions, are generally the best taught. When a young man goes to a fencing or a dancing school, he does not, indeed, always learn to fence or to dance very well; but he seldom fails of learning to fence or to dance. The good effects of the riding school are not commonly so evident. The expense of a riding school is so great, that in most places it is a public institution. The three most essential parts of literary education, to read, write, and account, it still continues to be more common to acquire in private than in public schools; and it very seldom happens, that anybody fails of acquiring them to the degree in which it is necessary to acquire them.

In England, the public schools are much less corrupted than the universities. In the schools, the youth are taught, or at least may be taught, Greek and Latin; that is, every thing which the masters pretend to teach, or which it is expected they should teach. In the universities, the youth neither are taught, nor always can find any proper means of being taught the sciences, which it is the business of those incorporated bodies to teach. The reward of the schoolmaster, in most cases, depends principally, in some cases almost entirely, upon the fees or honoraries of his scholars. Schools have no exclusive privileges. In order to obtain the honours of graduation, it is not necessary that a person should bring a certificate of his having studied a certain number of years at a public school. If, upon examination, he appears to understand what is taught there, no questions are asked about the place where he learnt it.

The parts of education which are commonly taught in universities, it may perhaps be said, are not very well taught. But had it not been for those institutions, they would not have been commonly taught at all; and both the individual and the public would have suffered a good deal from the want of those important parts of education.

The present universities of Europe were originally, the greater part of them, ecclesiastical corporations, instituted for the education of churchmen. They were founded by the authority of the pope; and were so entirely under his immediate protection, that their members, whether masters or students, had all of them what was then called the benefit of clergy, that is, were exempted from the civil jurisdiction of the countries in which their respective universities were situated, and were amenable only to the ecclesiastical tribunals. What was taught in the greater part of those universities was suitable to the end of their institution, either theology, or something that was merely preparatory to theology.

When Christianity was first established by law, a corrupted Latin had become the common language of all the western parts of Europe. The service of the church, accordingly, and the translation of the Bible which were read in churches, were both in that corrupted Latin; that is, in the common language of the country. After the irruption of the barbarous nations who overturned the Roman empire, Latin gradually ceased to be the language of any part of Europe. But the reverence of the people naturally preserves the established forms and ceremonies of religion long after the circumstances which first introduced and rendered them reasonable, are no more. Though Latin, therefore, was no longer understood anywhere by the great body of the people, the whole service of the church still continued to be performed in that language. Two different languages were thus established in Europe, in the same manner as in ancient Egypt: a language of the priests, and a language of the people; a sacred and a profane, a learned and an unlearned language. But it was necessary that the priests should understand something of that sacred and learned language in which they were to officiate; and the study of the Latin language therefore made, from the beginning, an essential part of university education.

It was not so with that either of the Greek or of the Hebrew language. The infallible decrees of the church had pronounced the Latin translation of the Bible, commonly called the Latin Vulgate, to have been equally dictated by divine inspiration, and therefore of equal authority with the Greek and Hebrew originals. The knowledge of those two languages, therefore, not being indispensably requisite to a churchman, the study of them did not for a long time make a necessary part of the common course of university education. There are some Spanish universities, I am assured, in which the study of the Greek language has never yet made any part of that course. The first reformers found the Greek text of the New Testament, and even the Hebrew text of the Old, more favourable to their opinions than the vulgate translation, which, as might naturally be supposed, had been gradually accommodated to support the doctrines of the Catholic Church. They set themselves, therefore, to expose the many errors of that translation, which the Roman catholic clergy were thus put under the necessity of defending or explaining. But this could not well be done without some knowledge of the original languages, of which the study was therefore gradually introduced into the greater part of universities; both of those which embraced, and of those which rejected, the doctrines of the reformation. The Greek language was connected with every part of that classical learning, which, though at first principally

cultivated by catholics and Italians, happened to come into fashion much about the same time that the doctrines of the reformation were set on foot. In the greater part of universities, therefore, that language was taught previous to the study of philosophy, and as soon as the student had made some progress in the Latin. The Hebrew language having no connection with classical learning, and, except the Holy Scriptures, being the language of not a single book in any esteem the study of it did not commonly commence till after that of philosophy, and when the student had entered upon the study of theology.

Originally, the first rudiments, both of the Greek and Latin languages, were taught in universities; and in some universities they still continue to be so. In others, it is expected that the student should have previously acquired, at least, the rudiments of one or both of those languages, of which the study continues to make everywhere a very considerable part of university education.

The ancient Greek philosophy was divided into three great branches; physics, or natural philosophy; ethics, or moral philosophy; and logic. This general division seems perfectly agreeable to the nature of things.

The great phenomenon of nature, the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, eclipses, comets; thunder and lightning, and other extraordinary meteors; the generation, the life, growth, and dissolution of plants and animals; are objects which, as they necessarily excite the wonder, so they naturally call forth the curiosity of mankind to inquire into their causes. Superstition first attempted to satisfy this curiosity, by referring all those wonderful appearances to the immediate agency of the gods. Philosophy afterwards endeavoured to account for them from more familiar causes, or from such as mankind were better acquainted with, than the agency of the gods. As those great phenomena are the first objects of human curiosity, so the science which pretends to explain them must naturally have been the first branch of philosophy that was cultivated. The first philosophers, accordingly, of whom history has preserved any account, appears to have been natural philosophers.

In every age and country of the world, men must have attended to the characters, designs, and actions of one another; and many reputable rules and maxims for the conduct of human life must have been laid down and approved of by common consent. As soon as writing came into fashion, wise men, or those who fancied themselves such, would naturally endeavour to increase the number of those established and respected maxims, and to express their own sense of what was either proper or improper conduct, sometimes in the more artificial form of apologues,

like what are called the fables of Æsop; and sometimes in the more simple one of apophthegms or wise sayings, like the proverbs of Solomon, the verses of Theognis and Phocyllides, and some part of the works of Hesiod. They might continue in this manner, for a long time, merely to multiply the number of those maxims of prudence and morality, without even attempting to arrange them in any very distinct or methodical order, much less to connect them together by one or more general principles, from which they were all deducible, like effects from their natural causes. The beauty of a systematical arrangement of different observations, connected by a few common principles, was first seen in the rude essays of those ancient times towards a system of natural philosophy. Something of the same kind was afterwards attempted in morals. The maxims of common life were arranged in some methodical order, and connected together by a few common principles, in the same manner as they had attempted to arrange and connect the phenomena of nature. The science which pretends to investigate and explain those connecting principles, is what is properly called Moral Philosophy.

Different authors gave different systems, both of natural and moral philosophy. But the arguments by which they supported those different systems, far from being always demonstrations, were frequently at best but very slender probabilities, and sometimes mere sophisms, which had no other foundation but the inaccuracy and ambiguity of common language. Speculative systems, have, in all ages of the world, been adopted for reasons too frivolous to have determined the judgment of any man of common sense, in a matter of the smallest pecuniary interest. Gross sophistry has scarce ever had any influence upon the opinions of mankind, except in matters of philosophy and speculation; and in these it has frequently had the greatest. The patrons of each system of natural and moral philosophy, naturally endeavoured to expose the weakness of the arguments adduced to support the systems which were opposite to their own. In examining those arguments, they were necessarily led to consider the difference between a probable and a demonstrative argument, between a fallacious and a conclusive one; and logic, or the science of the general principles of good and bad reasoning, necessarily arose out of the observations which a scrutiny of this kind gave occasion to; though, in its origin, posterior both to physics and to ethics, it was commonly taught, not indeed in all, but in the greater part of the ancient schools of philosophy, previously to either of those sciences. The student, it seems to have been thought, ought to understand well the

difference between good and bad reasoning, before he was led to reason upon subjects of so great importance.

This ancient division of philosophy into three parts was, in the greater part of the universities of Europe, changed for another into five.

In the ancient philosophy, whatever was taught concerning the nature either of the human mind or of the Deity, made a part of the system of physics. Those beings, in whatever their essence might be supposed to consist, were parts of the great system of the universe, and parts, too, productive of the most important effects. Whatever human reason could either conclude or conjecture concerning them, made, as it were, two chapters, though no doubt two very important ones, of the science which pretended to give an account of the origin and revolutions of the great system of the universe. But in the universities of Europe, where philosophy was taught only as subservient to theology, it was natural to dwell longer upon these two chapters than upon any other of the science. They were gradually more and more extended, and were divided into many inferior chapters; till at last the doctrine of spirits, of which so little can be known, came to take up as much room in the system of philosophy as the doctrine of bodies, of which so much can be known. The doctrines concerning those two subjects were considered as making two distinct sciences. What are called metaphysics, or pneumatics, were set in opposition to physics, and were cultivated not only as the more sublime, but, for the purposes of a particular profession, as the more useful science of the two. The proper subject of experiment and observation, a subject in which a careful attention is capable of making so many useful discoveries, was almost entirely neglected. The subject in which, after a very few simple and almost obvious truths, the most careful attention can discover nothing but obscurity and uncertainty, and can consequently produce nothing but subtleties and sophisms, was greatly cultivated.

When these two sciences had thus been set in opposition to one another, the comparison between them naturally gave birth to a third, to what was called ontology, or the science which treated of the qualities and attributes which were common to both the subjects of the other two sciences. But if subtleties and sophisms composed the greater part of the metaphysics or pneumatics of the schools, they composed the whole of this cobweb science of ontology, which was likewise sometimes called metaphysics.

Wherein consisted the happiness and perfection of a man, considered not only as an individual, but as the member of a family, of a state, and

of the great society of mankind, was the object which the ancient moral philosophy proposed to investigate. In that philosophy, the duties of human life were treated of as subservient to the happiness and perfection of human life. But when moral, as well as natural philosophy, came to be taught only as subservient to theology, the duties of human life were treated of as chiefly subservient to the happiness of a life to come. In the ancient philosophy, the perfection of virtue was represented as necessarily productive, to the person who possessed it, of the most perfect happiness in this life. In the modern philosophy, it was frequently represented as generally, or rather as almost always, inconsistent with any degree of happiness in this life; and heaven was to be earned only by penance and mortification, by the austerities and abasement of a monk, not by the liberal, generous, and spirited conduct of a man. Casuistry, and an ascetic morality, made up, in most cases, the greater part of the moral philosophy of the schools. By far the most important of all the different branches of philosophy became in this manner by far the most corrupted.

Such, therefore, was the common course of philosophical education in the greater part of the universities in Europe. Logic was taught first; ontology came in the second place; pneumatology, comprehending the doctrine concerning the nature of the human soul and of the Deity, in the third; in the fourth followed a debased system of moral philosophy, which was considered as immediately connected with the doctrines of pneumatology, with the immortality of the human soul, and with the rewards and punishments which, from the justice of the Deity, were to be expected in a life to come: a short and superficial system of physics usually concluded the course.

The alterations which the universities of Europe thus introduced into the ancient course of philosophy were all meant for the education of ecclesiastics, and to render it a more proper introduction to the study of theology. But the additional quantity of subtlety and sophistry, the casuistry and ascetic morality which those alterations introduced into it, certainly did not render it more for the education of gentlemen or men of the world, or more likely either to improve the understanding or to mend the heart.

This course of philosophy is what still continues to be taught in the greater part of the universities of Europe, with more or less diligence, according as the constitution of each particular university happens to render diligence more or less necessary to the teachers. In some of the richest and best endowed universities, the tutors content themselves with

teaching a few unconnected shreds and parcels of this corrupted course; and even these they commonly teach very negligently and superficially.

The improvements which, in modern times, have been made in several different branches of philosophy, have not, the greater part of them, been made in universities, though some, no doubt, have. The greater part of universities have not even been very forward to adopt those improvements after they were made; and several of those learned societies have chosen to remain, for a long time, the sanctuaries in which exploded systems and obsolete prejudices found shelter and protection, after they had been hunted out of every other corner of the world. In general, the richest and best endowed universities have been slowest in adopting those improvements, and the most averse to permit any considerable change in the established plan of education. Those improvements were more easily introduced into some of the poorer universities, in which the teachers, depending upon their reputation for the greater part of their subsistence, were obliged to pay more attention to the current opinions of the world.

But though the public schools and universities of Europe were originally intended only for the education of a particular profession, that of churchmen; and though they were not always very diligent in instructing their pupils, even in the sciences which were supposed necessary for that profession; yet they gradually drew to themselves the education of almost all other people, particularly of almost all gentlemen and men of fortune. No better method, it seems, could be fallen upon, of spending, with any advantage, the long interval between infancy and that period of life at which men begin to apply in good earnest to the real business of the world, the business which is to employ them during the remainder of their days. The greater part of what is taught in schools and universities, however, does not seem to be the most proper preparation for that business.

In England, it becomes every day more and more the custom to send young people to travel in foreign countries immediately upon their leaving school, and without sending them to any university. Our young people, it is said, generally return home much improved by their travels. A young man, who goes abroad at seventeen or eighteen, and returns home at one-and-twenty, returns three or four years older than he was when he went abroad; and at that age it is very difficult not to improve a good deal in three or four years. In the course of his travels, he generally acquires some knowledge of one or two foreign languages; a knowledge, however, which is seldom sufficient to enable him either to speak or

write them with propriety. In other respects, he commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more dissipated, and more incapable of any serious application, either to study or to business, than he could well have become in so short a time had he lived at home. By travelling so very young, by spending in the must frivolous dissipation the most precious years of his life, at a distance from the inspection and controul of his parents and relations, every useful habit, which the earlier parts of his education might have had some tendency to form in him, instead of being riveted and confirmed, is almost necessarily either weakened or effaced. Nothing but the discredit into which the universities are allowing themselves to fall, could ever have brought into repute so very absurd a practice as that of travelling at this early period of life. By sending his son abroad, a father delivers himself, at least for some time, from so disagreeable an object as that of a son unemployed, neglected, and going to ruin before his eyes.

Such have been the effects of some of the modern institutions for education.

Different plans and different institutions for education seem to have taken place in other ages and nations.

In the republics of ancient Greece, every free citizen was instructed, under the direction of the public magistrate, in gymnastic exercises and in music. By gymnastic exercises, it was intended to harden his body, to sharpen his courage, and to prepare him for the fatigues and dangers of war; and as the Greek militia was, by all accounts, one of the best that ever was in the world, this part of their public education must have answered completely the purpose for which it was intended. By the other part, music, it was proposed, at least by the philosophers and historians, who have given us an account of those institutions, to humanize the mind, to soften the temper, and to dispose it for performing all the social and moral duties of public and private life.

In ancient Rome, the exercises of the Campus Martius answered the same purpose as those of the Gymnasium in ancient Greece, and they seem to have answered it equally well. But among the Romans there was nothing which corresponded to the musical education of the Greeks. The morals of the Romans, however, both in private and public life, seem to have been, not only equal, but, upon the whole, a good deal superior to those of the Greeks. That they were superior in private life, we have the express testimony of Polybius, and of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, two authors well acquainted with both nations; and the whole tenor of the Greek and Roman history bears witness to the superiority of the public

morals of the Romans. The good temper and moderation of contending factions seem to be the most essential circumstances in the public morals of a free people. But the factions of the Greeks were almost always violent and sanguinary; whereas, till the time of the Gracchi, no blood had ever been shed in any Roman faction; and from the time of the Gracchi, the Roman republic may be considered as in reality dissolved. Notwithstanding, therefore, the very respectable authority of Plato, Aristotle, and Polybius, and notwithstanding the very ingenious reasons by which Mr. Montesquieu endeavours to support that authority, it seems probable that the musical education of the Greeks had no great effect in mending their morals, since, without any such education, those of the Romans were, upon the whole, superior. The respect of those ancient sages for the institutions of their ancestors had probably disposed them to find much political wisdom in what was, perhaps, merely an ancient custom, continued, without interruption, from the earliest period of those societies, to the times in which they had arrived at a considerable degree of refinement. Music and dancing are the great amusements of almost all barbarous nations, and the great accomplishments which are supposed to fit any man for entertaining his society. It is so at this day among the negroes on the coast of Africa. It was so among the ancient Celtes, among the ancient Scandinavians, and, as we may learn from Homer, among the ancient Greeks, in the times preceding the Trojan war. When the Greek tribes had formed themselves into little republics, it was natural that the study of those accomplishments should for a long time make a part of the public and common education of the people.

The masters who instructed the young people, either in music or in military exercises, do not seem to have been paid, or even appointed by the state, either in Rome or even at Athens, the Greek republic of whose laws and customs we are the best informed. The state required that every free citizen should fit himself for defending it in war, and should upon that account, learn his military exercises. But it left him to learn them of such masters as he could find; and it seems to have advanced nothing for this purpose, but a public field or place of exercise, in which he should practise and perform them.

In the early ages, both of the Greek and Roman republics, the other parts of education seem to have consisted in learning to read, write, and account, according to the arithmetic of the times. These accomplishments the richer citizens seem frequently to have acquired at home, by the assistance of some domestic pedagogue, who was, generally, either a slave or a freedman; and the poorer citizens in the schools of such

masters as made a trade of teaching for hire. Such parts of education, however, were abandoned altogether to the care of the parents or guardians of each individual. It does not appear that the state ever assumed any inspection or direction of them. By a law of Solon, indeed, the children were acquitted from maintaining those parents who had neglected to instruct them in some profitable trade or business.

In the progress of refinement, when philosophy and rhetoric came into fashion, the better sort of people used to send their children to the schools of philosophers and rhetoricians, in order to be instructed in these fashionable sciences. But those schools were not supported by the public. They were, for a long time, barely tolerated by it. The demand for philosophy and rhetoric was, for a long time, so small, that the first professed teachers of either could not find constant employment in any one city, but were obliged to travel about from place to place. In this manner lived Zeno of Elea, Protagoras, Gorgias, Hippias, and many others. As the demand increased, the schools, both of philosophy and rhetoric, became stationary, first in Athens, and afterwards in several other cities. The state, however, seems never to have encouraged them further, than by assigning to some of them a particular place to teach in, which was sometimes done, too, by private donors. The state seems to have assigned the Academy to Plato, the Lyceum to Aristotle, and the Portico to Zeno of Citta, the founder of the Stoics. But Epicurus bequeathed his gardens to his own school. Till about the time of Marcus Antoninus, however, no teacher appears to have had any salary from the public, or to have had any other emoluments, but what arose from the honoraries or fees of his scholars. The bounty which that philosophical emperor, as we learn from Lucian, bestowed upon one of the teachers of philosophy, probably lasted no longer than his own life. There was nothing equivalent to the privileges of graduation; and to have attended any of those schools was not necessary, in order to be permitted to practise any particular trade or profession. If the opinion of their own utility could not draw scholars to them, the law neither forced anybody to go to them, nor rewarded anybody for having gone to them. The teachers had no jurisdiction over their pupils, nor any other authority besides that natural authority which superior virtue and abilities never fail to procure from young people towards those who are entrusted with any part of their education.

At Rome, the study of the civil law made a part of the education, not of the greater part of the citizens, but of some particular families. The young people, however, who wished to acquire knowledge in the law,

had no public school to go to, and had no other method of studying it, than by frequenting the company of such of their relations and friends as were supposed to understand it. It is, perhaps, worth while to remark, that though the laws of the twelve tables were many of them copied from those of some ancient Greek republics, yet law never seems to have grown up to be a science in any republic of ancient Greece. In Rome it became a science very early, and gave a considerable degree of illustration to those citizens who had the reputation of understanding it. In the republics of ancient Greece, particularly in Athens, the ordinary courts of justice consisted of numerous, and therefore disorderly, bodies of people, who frequently decided almost at random, or as clamour, faction, and party-spirit, happened to determine. The ignominy of an unjust decision, when it was to be divided among five hundred, a thousand, or fifteen hundred people (for some of their courts were so very numerous), could not fall very heavy upon any individual. At Rome, on the contrary, the principal courts of justice consisted either of a single judge, or of a small number of judges, whose characters, especially as they deliberated always in public, could not fail to be very much affected by any rash or unjust decision. In doubtful cases such courts, from their anxiety to avoid blame, would naturally endeavour to shelter themselves under the example or precedent of the judges who had sat before them, either in the same or in some other court. This attention to practice and precedent, necessarily formed the Roman law into that regular and orderly system in which it has been delivered down to us; and the like attention has had the like effects upon the laws of every other country where such attention has taken place. The superiority of character in the Romans over that of the Greeks, so much remarked by Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, was probably more owing to the better constitution of their courts of justice, than to any of the circumstances to which those authors ascribe it. The Romans are said to have been particularly distinguished for their superior respect to an oath. But the people who were accustomed to make oath only before some diligent and well informed court of justice, would naturally be much more attentive to what they swore, than they who were accustomed to do the same thing before mobbish and disorderly assemblies.

The abilities, both civil and military, of the Greeks and Romans, will readily be allowed to have been at least equal to those of any modern nation. Our prejudice is perhaps rather to overrate them. But except in what related to military exercises, the state seems to have been at no pains to form those great abilities; for I cannot be induced to believe that

the musical education of the Greeks could be of much consequence in forming them. Masters, however, had been found, it seems, for instructing the better sort of people among those nations, in every art and science in which the circumstances of their society rendered it necessary or convenient for them to be instructed. The demand for such instruction produced, what it always produces, the talent for giving it; and the emulation which an unrestrained competition never fails to excite, appears to have brought that talent to a very high degree of perfection. In the attention which the ancient philosophers excited, in the empire which they acquired over the opinions and principles of their auditors, in the faculty which they possessed of giving a certain tone and character to the conduct and conversation of those auditors, they appear to have been much superior to any modern teachers. In modern times, the diligence of public teachers is more or less corrupted by the circumstances which render them more or less independent of their success and reputation in their particular professions. Their salaries, too, put the private teacher, who would pretend to come into competition with them, in the same state with a merchant who attempts to trade without a bounty, in competition with those who trade with a considerable one. If he sells his goods at nearly the same price, he cannot have the same profit; and poverty and beggary at least, if not bankruptcy and ruin, will infallibly be his lot. If he attempts to sell them much dearer, he is likely to have so few customers, that his circumstances will not be much mended. The privileges of graduation, besides, are in many countries necessary, or at least extremely convenient, to most men of learned professions, that is, to the far greater part of those who have occasion for a learned education. But those privileges can be obtained only by attending the lectures of the public teachers. The most careful attendance upon the ablest instructions of any private teacher cannot always give any title to demand them. It is from these different causes that the private teacher of any of the sciences, which are commonly taught in universities, is, in modern times, generally considered as in the very lowest order of men of letters. A man of real abilities can scarce find out a more humiliating or a more unprofitable employment to turn them to. The endowments of schools and colleges have in this manner not only corrupted the diligence of public teachers, but have rendered it almost impossible to have any good private ones.

Were there no public institutions for education, no system, no science, would be taught, for which there was not some demand, or which the circumstances of the times did not render it either necessary or

convenient, or at least fashionable to learn. A private teacher could never find his account in teaching either an exploded and antiquated system of a science acknowledged to be useful, or a science universally believed to be a mere useless and pedantic heap of sophistry and nonsense. Such systems, such sciences, can subsist nowhere but in those incorporated societies for education, whose prosperity and revenue are in a great measure independent of their industry. Were there no public institutions for education, a gentleman, after going through, with application and abilities, the most complete course of education which the circumstances of the times were supposed to afford, could not come into the world completely ignorant of every thing which is the common subject of conversation among gentlemen and men of the world.

There are no public institutions for the education of women, and there is accordingly nothing useless, absurd, or fantastical, in the common course of their education. They are taught what their parents or guardians judge it necessary or useful for them to learn, and they are taught nothing else. Every part of their education tends evidently to some useful purpose; either to improve the natural attractions of their person, or to form their mind to reserve, to modesty, to chastity, and to economy; to render them both likely to become the mistresses of a family, and to behave properly when they have become such. In every part of her life, a woman feels some conveniency or advantage from every part of her education. It seldom happens that a man, in any part of his life, derives any conveniency or advantage from some of the most laborious and troublesome parts of his education.

Ought the public, therefore, to give no attention, it may be asked, to the education of the people? Or, if it ought to give any, what are the different parts of education which it ought to attend to in the different orders of the people? and in what manner ought it to attend to them?

In some cases, the state of society necessarily places the greater part of individuals in such situations as naturally form in them, without any attention of government, almost all the abilities and virtues which that state requires, or perhaps can admit of. In other cases, the state of the society does not place the greater part of individuals in such situations; and some attention of government is necessary, in order to prevent the almost entire corruption and degeneracy of the great body of the people.

In the progress of the division of labour, the employment of the far greater part of those who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very simple operations; frequently to one or two. But the understandings of the greater part of men are

necessarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects, too, are perhaps always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding, or to exercise his invention, in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become. The torpor of his mind renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. Of the great and extensive interests of his country he is altogether incapable of judging; and unless very particular pains have been taken to render him otherwise, he is equally incapable of defending his country in war. The uniformity of his stationary life naturally corrupts the courage of his mind, and makes him regard, with abhorrence, the irregular, uncertain, and adventurous life of a soldier. It corrupts even the activity of his body, and renders him incapable of exerting his strength with vigour and perseverance in any other employment, than that to which he has been bred. His dexterity at his own particular trade seems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expense of his intellectual, social, and martial virtues. But in every improved and civilized society, this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless government takes some pains to prevent it.

It is otherwise in the barbarous societies, as they are commonly called, of hunters, of shepherds, and even of husbandmen in that rude state of husbandry which precedes the improvement of manufactures, and the extension of foreign commerce. In such societies, the varied occupations of every man oblige every man to exert his capacity, and to invent expedients for removing difficulties which are continually occurring. Invention is kept alive, and the mind is not suffered to fall into that drowsy stupidity, which, in a civilized society, seems to benumb the understanding of almost all the inferior ranks of people. In those barbarous societies, as they are called, every man, it has already been observed, is a warrior. Every man, too, is in some measure a statesman, and can form a tolerable judgment concerning the interest of the society, and the conduct of those who govern it. How far their chiefs are good judges in peace, or good leaders in war, is obvious to the observation of almost every single man among them. In such a society, indeed, no man can well acquire that improved and refined understanding which a few

men sometimes possess in a more civilized state. Though in a rude society there is a good deal of variety in the occupations of every individual, there is not a great deal in those of the whole society. Every man does, or is capable of doing, almost every thing which any other man does, or is capable of doing. Every man has a considerable degree of knowledge, ingenuity, and invention; but scarce any man has a great degree. The degree, however, which is commonly possessed, is generally sufficient for conducting the whole simple business of the society. In a civilized state, on the contrary, though there is little variety in the occupations of the greater part of individuals, there is an almost infinite variety in those of the whole society. These varied occupations present an almost infinite variety of objects to the contemplation of those few, who, being attached to no particular occupation themselves, have leisure and inclination to examine the occupations of other people. The contemplation of so great a variety of objects necessarily exercises their minds in endless comparisons end combinations, and renders their understandings, in an extraordinary degree, both acute and comprehensive. Unless those few, however, happen to be placed in some very particular situations, their great abilities, though honourable to themselves, may contribute very little to the good government or happiness of their society. Notwithstanding the great abilities of those few, all the nobler parts of the human character may be, in a great measure, obliterated end extinguished in the great body of the people.

The education of the common people requires, perhaps, in a civilized and commercial society, the attention of the public, more than that of people of some rank and fortune. People of some rank and fortune are generally eighteen or nineteen years of age, before they enter upon that particular business, profession, or trade, by which they propose to distinguish themselves in the world. They have, before that, full time to acquire, or at least to fit themselves for afterwards acquiring, every accomplishment which can recommend them to the public esteem, or render them worthy of it. Their parents or guardians are generally sufficiently anxious that they should be so accomplished, and are, in most cases, willing enough to lay out the expense which is necessary for that purpose. If they are not always properly educated, it is seldom from the want of expense laid out upon their education, but from the improper application of that expense. It is seldom from the want of masters, but from the negligence and incapacity of the masters who are to be had, and from the difficulty, or rather from the impossibility, which there is, in the present state of things, of finding any better. The employments, too, in

which people of some rank or fortune spend the greater part of their lives, are not, like those of the common people, simple and uniform. They are almost all of them extremely complicated, and such as exercise the head more than the hands. The understandings of those who are engaged in such employments, can seldom grow torpid for want of exercise. The employments of people of some rank and fortune, besides, are seldom such as harass them from morning to night. They generally have a good deal of leisure, during which they may perfect themselves in every branch, either of useful or ornamental knowledge, of which they may have laid the foundation, or for which they may have acquired some taste in the earlier part of life.

It is otherwise with the common people. They have little time to spare for education. Their parents can scarce afford to maintain them, even in infancy. As soon as they are able to work, they must apply to some trade, by which they can earn their subsistence. That trade, too, is generally so simple and uniform, as to give little exercise to the understanding; while, at the same time, their labour is both so constant and so severe, that it leaves them little leisure and less inclination to apply to, or even to think of any thing else.

But though the common people cannot, in any civilized society, be so well instructed as people of some rank and fortune; the most essential parts of education, however, to read, write, and account, can be acquired at so early a period of life, that the greater part, even of those who are to be bred to the lowest occupations, have time to acquire them before they can be employed in those occupations. For a very small expense, the public can facilitate, can encourage, and can even impose upon almost the whole body of the people, the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education.

The public can facilitate this acquisition, by establishing in every parish or district a little school, where children may be taught for a reward so moderate, that even a common labourer may afford it; the master being partly, but not wholly, paid by the public; because, if he was wholly, or even principally, paid by it, he would soon learn to neglect his business. In Scotland, the establishment of such parish schools has taught almost the whole common people to read, and a very great proportion of them to write and account. In England, the establishment of charity schools has had an effect of the same kind, though not so universally, because the establishment is not so universal. If, in those little schools, the books by which the children are taught to read, were a little more instructive than they commonly are; and if,

instead of a little smattering in Latin, which the children of the common people are sometimes taught there, and which can scarce ever be of any use to them, they were instructed in the elementary parts of geometry and mechanics; the literary education of this rank of people would, perhaps, be as complete as can be. There is scarce a common trade, which does not afford some opportunities of applying to it the principles of geometry and mechanics, and which would not, therefore, gradually exercise and improve the common people in those principles, the necessary introduction to the most sublime, as well as to the most useful sciences.

The public can encourage the acquisition of those most essential parts of education, by giving small premiums, and little badges of distinction, to the children of the common people who excel in them.

The public can impose upon almost the whole body of the people the necessity of acquiring the most essential parts of education, by obliging every man to undergo an examination or probation in them, before he can obtain the freedom in any corporation, or be allowed to set up any trade, either in a village or town corporate.

It was in this manner, by facilitating the acquisition of their military and gymnastic exercises, by encouraging it, and even by imposing upon the whole body of the people the necessity of learning those exercises, that the Greek and Roman republics maintained the martial spirit of their respective citizens. They facilitated the acquisition of those exercises, by appointing a certain place for learning and practising them, and by granting to certain masters the privilege of teaching in that place. Those masters do not appear to have had either salaries or exclusive privileges of any kind. Their reward consisted altogether in what they got from their scholars; and a citizen, who had learnt his exercises in the public gymnasia, had no sort of legal advantage over one who had learnt them privately, provided the latter had learned them equally well. Those republics encouraged the acquisition of those exercises, by bestowing little premiums and badges of distinction upon those who excelled in them. To have gained a prize in the Olympic, Isthmian, or Nemæan games, gave illustration, not only to the person who gained it, but to his whole family and kindred. The obligation which every citizen was under, to serve a certain number of years, if called upon, in the armies of the republic, sufficient imposed the necessity of learning those exercises, without which he could not be fit for that service.

That in the progress of improvement, the practice of military exercises, unless government takes proper pains to support it, goes gradually to decay, and, together with it, the martial spirit of the great

body of the people, the example of modern Europe sufficiently demonstrates. But the security of every society must always depend, more or less, upon the martial spirit of the great body of the people. In the present times, indeed, that martial spirit alone, and unsupported by a well-disciplined standing army, would not, perhaps, be sufficient for the defence and security of any society. But where every citizen had the spirit of a soldier, a smaller standing army would surely be requisite. That spirit, besides, would necessarily diminish very much the dangers to liberty, whether real or imaginary, which are commonly apprehended from a standing army. As it would very much facilitate the operations of that army against a foreign invader; so it would obstruct them as much, if unfortunately they should ever be directed against the constitution of the state.

The ancient institutions of Greece and Rome seem to have been much more effectual for maintaining the martial spirit of the great body of the people, than the establishment of what are called the militias of modern times. They were much more simple. When they were once established, they executed themselves, and it required little or no attention from government to maintain them in the most perfect vigour. Whereas to maintain, even in tolerable execution, the complex regulations of any modern militia, requires the continual and painful attention of government, without which they are constantly falling into total neglect and disuse. The influence, besides, of the ancient institutions, was much more universal. By means of them, the whole body of the people was completely instructed in the use of arms; whereas it is but a very small part of them who can ever be so instructed by the regulations of any modern militia, except, perhaps, that of Switzerland. But a coward, a man incapable either of defending or of revenging himself, evidently wants one of the most essential parts of the character of a man. He is as much mutilated and deformed in his mind as another is in his body, who is either deprived of some of its most essential members, or has lost the use of them. He is evidently the more wretched and miserable of the two; because happiness and misery, which reside altogether in the mind, must necessarily depend more upon the healthful or unhealthful, the mutilated or entire state of the mind, than upon that of the body. Even though the martial spirit of the people were of no use towards the defence of the society, yet, to prevent that sort of mental mutilation, deformity, and wretchedness, which cowardice necessarily involves in it, from spreading themselves through the great body of the people, would still deserve the most serious attention of government; in the same manner as

it would deserve its most serious attention to prevent a leprosy, or any other loathsome and offensive disease, though neither mortal nor dangerous, from spreading itself among them; though, perhaps, no other public good might result from such attention, besides the prevention of so great a public evil.

The same thing may be said of the gross ignorance and stupidity which, in a civilized society, seem so frequently to benumb the understandings of all the inferior ranks of people. A man without the proper use of the intellectual faculties of a man, is, if possible, more contemptible than even a coward, and seems to be mutilated and deformed in a still more essential part of the character of human nature. Though the state was to derive no advantage from the instruction of the inferior ranks of people, it would still deserve its attention that they should not be altogether uninstructed. The state, however, derives no inconsiderable advantage from their instruction. The more they are instructed, the less liable they are to the delusions of enthusiasm and superstition, which, among ignorant nations frequently occasion the most dreadful disorders. An instructed and intelligent people, besides, are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one. They feel themselves, each individually, more respectable, and more likely to obtain the respect of their lawful superiors, and they are, therefore, more disposed to respect those superiors. They are more disposed to examine, and more capable of seeing through, the interested complaints of faction and sedition; and they are, upon that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of government. In free countries, where the safety of government depends very much upon the favourable judgment which the people may form of its conduct, it must surely be of the highest importance, that they should not be disposed to judge rashly or capriciously concerning it.

ART. III. — *Of the Expense of the Institutions for the Instruction of People of all Ages.*

The institutions for the instruction of people of all ages, are chiefly those for religious instruction. This is a species of instruction, which the object is not so much to render the people good citizens in this world, as to prepare them for another and a better world in the life to come. The teachers of the doctrine which contains this instruction, in the same manner as other teachers, may either depend altogether for their subsistence upon the voluntary contributions of their hearers; or they

may derive it from some other fund, to which the law of their country may entitle them; such as a landed estate, a tythe or land tax, an established salary or stipend. Their exertion, their zeal and industry, are likely to be much greater in the former situation than in the latter. In this respect, the teachers of a new religion have always had a considerable advantage in attacking these ancient and established systems, of which the clergy, reposing themselves upon their benefices, had neglected to keep up the fervour of faith and devotion in the great body of the people; and having given themselves up to indolence, were become altogether incapable of making any vigorous exertion in defence even of their own establishment. The clergy of an established and well endowed religion frequently become men of learning and elegance, who possess all the virtues of gentlemen, or which can recommend them to the esteem of gentlemen; but they are apt gradually to lose the qualities, both good and bad, which gave them authority and influence with the inferior ranks of people, and which had perhaps been the original causes of the success and establishment of their religion. Such a clergy, when attacked by a set of popular and bold, though perhaps stupid and ignorant enthusiasts, feel themselves as perfectly defenceless as the indolent, effeminate, and full fed nations of the southern parts of Asia, when they were invaded by the active, hardy, and hungry Tartars of the north. Such a clergy, upon such an emergency, have commonly no other resource than to call upon the civil magistrate to persecute, destroy, or drive out their adversaries, as disturbers of the public peace. It was thus that the Roman catholic clergy called upon the civil magistrate to persecute the protestants, and the church of England to persecute the dissenters; and that in general every religious sect, when it has once enjoyed, for a century or two, the security of a legal establishment, has found itself incapable of making any vigorous defence against any new sect which chose to attack its doctrine or discipline. Upon such occasions, the advantage, in point of learning and good writing, may sometimes be on the side of the established church. But the arts of popularity, all the arts of gaining proselytes, are constantly on the side of its adversaries. In England, those arts have been long neglected by the well endowed clergy of the established church, and are at present chiefly cultivated by the dissenters and by the methodists. The independent provisions, however, which in many places have been made for dissenting teachers, by means of voluntary subscriptions, of trust rights, and other evasions of the law, seem very much to have abated the zeal and activity of those teachers. They have many of them become very learned, ingenious, and

respectable men; but they have in general ceased to be very popular preachers. The methodists, without half the learning of the dissenters, are much more in vogue.

In the church of Rome the industry and zeal of the inferior clergy are kept more alive by the powerful motive of self-interest, than perhaps in any established protestant church. The parochial clergy derive many of them, a very considerable part of their subsistence from the voluntary oblations of the people; a source of revenue, which confession gives them many opportunities of improving. The mendicant orders derive their whole subsistence from such oblations. It is with them as with the hussars and light infantry of some armies; no plunder, no pay. The parochial clergy are like those teachers whose reward depends partly upon their salary, and partly upon the fees or honoraries which they get from their pupils; and these must always depend, more or less, upon their industry and reputation. The mendicant orders are like those teachers whose subsistence depends altogether upon their industry. They are obliged, therefore, to use every art which can animate the devotion of the common people. The establishment of the two great mendicant orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis, it is observed by Machiavel, revived, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the languishing faith and devotion of the catholic church. In Roman catholic countries, the spirit of devotion is supported altogether by the monks, and by the poorer parochial clergy. The great dignitaries of the church, with all the accomplishments of gentlemen and men of the world, and sometimes with those of men of learning, are careful to maintain the necessary discipline over their inferiors, but seldom give themselves any trouble about the instruction of the people.

“Most of the arts and professions in a state,” says by far the most illustrious philosopher and historian of the present age, “are of such a nature, that, while they promote the interests of the society, they are also useful or agreeable to some individuals; and, in that case, the constant rule of the magistrate, except, perhaps, on the first introduction of any art, is, to leave the profession to itself, and trust its encouragement to the individuals who reap the benefit of it. The artisans, finding their profits to rise by the favour of their customers, increase, as much as possible, their skill and industry; and as matters are not disturbed by any injudicious tampering, the commodity is always sure to be at all times nearly proportioned to the demand.”

“But there are also some callings which, though useful and even necessary in a state, bring no advantage or pleasure to any individual;

and the supreme power is obliged to alter its conduct with regard to the retainers of those professions. It must give them public encouragement in order to their subsistence; and it must provide against that negligence to which they will naturally be subject, either by annexing particular honours to profession, by establishing a long subordination of ranks, and a strict dependence, or by some other expedient. The persons employed in the finances, fleets, and magistracy, are instances of this order of men.

"It may naturally be thought, at first sight, that the ecclesiastics belong to the first class, and that their encouragement, as well as that of lawyers and physicians, may safely be entrusted to the liberality of individuals, who are attached to their doctrines, and who find benefit or consolation from their spiritual ministry and assistance. Their industry and vigilance will, no doubt, be whetted by such an additional motive; and their skill in the profession, as well as their address in governing the minds of the people, must receive daily increase, from their increasing practice, study, and attention.

"But if we consider the matter more closely, we shall find that this interested diligence of the clergy is what every wise legislator will study to prevent; because, in every religion except the true, it is highly pernicious, and it has even a natural tendency to pervert the truth, by infusing into it a strong mixture of superstition, folly, and delusion. Each ghostly practitioner, in order to render himself more precious and sacred in the eyes of his retainers, will inspire them with the most violent abhorrence of all other sects, and continually endeavour, by some novelty, to excite the languid devotion of his audience. No regard will be paid to truth, morals, or decency, in the doctrines inculcated. Every tenet will be adopted that best suits the disorderly affections of the human frame. Customers will be drawn in each conventicle by new industry and address, in practising on the passions and credulity of the populace. And, in the end, the civil magistrate will find that he has dearly paid for his intended frugality, in saving a fixed establishment for the priests; and that, in reality, the most decent and advantageous composition, which he can make with the spiritual guides, is to bribe their indolence, by assigning stated salaries to their profession, and rendering it superfluous for them to be farther active, than merely to prevent their flock from straying in quest of new pastors. And in this manner ecclesiastical establishments, though commonly they arose at first from religious views, prove in the end advantageous to the political interests of society."

But whatever may have been the good or bad effects of the independent provision of the clergy, it has, perhaps, been very seldom

bestowed upon them from any view to those effects. Times of violent religious controversy have generally been times of equally violent political faction. Upon such occasions, each political party has either found it, or imagined it, for his interest, to league itself with some one or other of the contending religious sects. But this could be done only by adopting, or, at least, by favouring the tenets of that particular sect. The sect which had the good fortune to be leagued with the conquering party necessarily shared in the victory of its ally, by whose favour and protection it was soon enabled, in some degree, to silence and subdue all its adversaries. Those adversaries had generally leagued themselves with the enemies of the conquering party, and were, therefore the enemies of that party. The clergy of this particular sect having thus become complete masters of the field, and their influence and authority with the great body of the people being in its highest vigour, they were powerful enough to overawe the chiefs and leaders of their own party, and to oblige the civil magistrate to respect their opinions and inclinations. Their first demand was generally that he should silence and subdue all their adversaries; and their second, that he should bestow an independent provision on themselves. As they had generally contributed a good deal to the victory, it seemed not unreasonable that they should have some share in the spoil. They were weary, besides, of humouring the people, and of depending upon their caprice for a subsistence. In making this demand, therefore, they consulted their own ease and comfort, without troubling themselves about the effect which it might have, in future times, upon the influence and authority of their order. The civil magistrate, who could comply with their demand only by giving them something which he would have chosen much rather to take, or to keep to himself, was seldom very forward to grant it. Necessity, however, always forced him to submit at last, though frequently not till after many delays, evasions, and affected excuses.

But if politics had never called in the aid of religion, had the conquering party never adopted the tenets of one sect more than those of another, when it had gained the victory, it would probably have dealt equally and impartially with all the different sects, and have allowed every man to choose his own priest, and his own religion, as he thought proper. There would, and, in this case, no doubt, have been, a great multitude of religious sects. Almost every different congregation might probably have had a little sect by itself, or have entertained some peculiar tenets of its own. Each teacher, would, no doubt, have felt himself under the necessity of making the utmost exertion, and of using

every art, both to preserve and to increase the number of his disciples. But as every other teacher would have felt himself under the same necessity, the success of no one teacher, or sect of teachers, could have been very great. The interested and active zeal of religious teachers can be dangerous and troublesome only where there is either but one sect tolerated in the society, or where the whole of a large society is divided into two or three great sects; the teachers of each acting by concert, and under a regular discipline and subordination. But that zeal must be altogether innocent, where the society is divided into two or three hundred, or, perhaps, into as many thousand small sects, of which no one could be considerable enough to disturb the public tranquillity. The teachers of each sect, seeing themselves surrounded on all sides with more adversaries than friends, would be obliged to learn that candour and moderation which are so seldom to be found among the teachers of those great sects, whose tenets, being supported by the civil magistrate, are held in veneration by almost all the inhabitants of extensive kingdoms and empires, and who, therefore, see nothing round them but followers, disciples, and humble admirers. The teachers of each little sect, finding themselves almost alone, would be obliged to respect those of almost every other sect; and the concessions which they would mutually find in both convenient and agreeable to make one to another, might in time, probably reduce the doctrine of the greater part of them to that pure and rational religion, free from every mixture of absurdity, imposture, or fanaticism, such as wise men have, in all ages of the world, wished to see established; but such as positive law has, perhaps, never yet established, and probably never will establish in any country; because, with regard to religion, positive law always has been, and probably always will be, more or less influenced by popular superstition and enthusiasm. This plan of ecclesiastical government, or, more properly, of no ecclesiastical government, was what the sect called Independents (a sect, no doubt, of very wild enthusiasts), proposed to establish in England towards the end of the civil war. If it had been established, though of a very unphilosophical origin, it would probably, by this time, have been productive of the most philosophical good temper and moderation with regard to every sort of religious principle. It has been established in Pennsylvania, where, though the quakers happen to be the most numerous, the law, in reality, favours no one sect more than another; and it is there said to have been productive of this philosophical good temper and moderation.

But though this equality of treatment should not be productive of this good temper and moderation in all, or even in the greater part of the religious sects of a particular country; yet, provided those sects were sufficiently numerous, and each of them consequently too small to disturb the public tranquillity, the excessive zeal of each for its particular tenets could not well be productive of any very hurtful effects, but, on the contrary, of several good ones; and if the government was perfectly decided, both to let them all alone, and to oblige them all to let alone one another, there is little danger that they would not of their own accord, subdivide themselves fast enough, so as soon to become sufficiently numerous.

In every civilized society, in every society where the distinction of ranks has once been completely established, there have been always two different schemes or systems of morality current at the same time; of which the one may be called the strict or austere; the other the liberal, or, if you will, the loose system. The former is generally admired and revered by the common people; the latter is commonly more esteemed and adopted by what are called the people of fashion. The degree of disapprobation with which we ought to mark the vices of levity, the vices which are apt to arise from great prosperity, and from the excess of gaiety and good humour, seems to constitute the principal distinction between those two opposite schemes or systems. In the liberal or loose system, luxury, wanton, and even disorderly mirth, the pursuit of pleasure to some degree of intemperance, the breach of chastity, at least in one of the two sexes, &c. provided they are not accompanied with gross indecency, and do not lead to falsehood and injustice, are generally treated with a good deal of indulgence, and are easily either excused or pardoned altogether. In the austere system, on the contrary, those excesses are regarded with the utmost abhorrence and detestation. The vices of levity are always ruinous to the common people, and a single week’s thoughtlessness and dissipation is often sufficient to undo a poor workman for ever, and to drive him, through despair, upon committing the most enormous crimes. The wiser and better sort of the common people, therefore, have always the utmost abhorrence and detestation of such excesses, which their experience tells them are so immediately fatal to people of their condition. The disorder and extravagance of several years, on the contrary, will not always ruin a man of fashion; and people of that rank are very apt to consider the power of indulging in some degree of excess, as one of the advantages of their fortune; and the liberty of doing so without censure or reproach, as one of the privileges

which belong to their station. In people of their own station, therefore, they regard such excesses with but a small degree of disapprobation, and censure them either very slightly or not at all.

Almost all religious sects have begun among the common people, from whom they have generally drawn their earliest, as well as their most numerous proselytes. The austere system of morality has, accordingly, been adopted by those sects almost constantly, or with very few exceptions; for there have been some. It was the system by which they could best recommend themselves to that order of people, to whom they first proposed their plan of reformation upon what had been before established. Many of them, perhaps the greater part of them, have even endeavoured to gain credit by refining upon this austere system, and by carrying it to some degree of folly and extravagance; and this excessive rigour has frequently recommended them, more than any thing else, to the respect and veneration of the common people.

A man of rank and fortune is, by his station, the distinguished member of a great society, who attend to every part of his conduct, and who thereby oblige him to attend to every part of it himself. His authority and consideration depend very much upon the respect which this society bears to him. He dares not do any thing which would disgrace or discredit him in it; and he is obliged to a very strict observation of that species of morals, whether liberal or austere, which the general consent of this society prescribes to persons of his rank and fortune. A man of low condition, on the contrary, is far from being a distinguished member of any great society. While he remains in a country village, his conduct may be attended to, and he may be obliged to attend to it himself. In this situation, and in this situation only, he may have what is called a character to lose. But as soon as he comes into a great city, he is sunk in obscurity and darkness. His conduct is observed and attended to by nobody; and he is, therefore, very likely to neglect it himself, and to abandon himself to every sort of low profligacy and vice. He never emerges so effectually from this obscurity, his conduct never excites so much the attention of any respectable society, as by his becoming the member of a small religious sect. He from that moment acquires a degree of consideration which he never had before. All his brother sectaries are, for the credit of the sect, interested to observe his conduct; and, if he gives occasion to any scandal, if he deviates very much from those austere morals which they almost always require of one another, to punish him by what is always a very severe punishment, even where no evil effects attend it, expulsion or excommunication from the

sect. In little religious sects, accordingly, the morals of the common people have been almost always remarkably regular and orderly; generally much more so than in the established church. The morals of those little sects, indeed, have frequently been rather disagreeably rigorous and unsocial.

There are two very easy and effectual remedies, however, by whose joint operation the state might, without violence, correct whatever was unsocial or disagreeably rigorous in the morals of all the little sects into which the country was divided.

The first of those remedies is the study of science and philosophy, which the state might render almost universal among all people of middling or more than middling rank and fortune; not by giving salaries to teachers in order to make them negligent and idle, but by instituting some sort of probation, even in the higher and more difficult sciences, to be undergone by every person before he was permitted to exercise any liberal profession, or before he could be received as a candidate for any honourable office, of trust or profit. If the state imposed upon this order of men the necessity of learning, it would have no occasion to give itself any trouble about providing them with proper teachers. They would soon find better teachers for themselves, than any whom the state could provide for them. Science is the great antidote to the poison of enthusiasm and superstition; and where all the superior ranks of people were secured from it, the inferior ranks could not be much exposed to it.

The second of those remedies is the frequency and gaiety of public diversions. The state, by encouraging, that is, by giving entire liberty to all those who, from their own interest, would attempt, without scandal or indecency, to amuse and divert the people by painting, poetry, music, dancing; by all sorts of dramatic representations and exhibitions; would easily dissipate, in the greater part of them, that melancholy and gloomy humour which is almost always the nurse of popular superstition and enthusiasm. Public diversions have always been the objects of dread and hatred to all the fanatical promoters of those popular frenzies. The gaiety and good humour which those diversions inspire, were altogether inconsistent with that temper of mind which was fittest for their purpose, or which they could best work upon. Dramatic representations, besides, frequently exposing their artifices to public ridicule, and sometimes even to public execration, were, upon that account, more than all other diversions, the objects of their peculiar abhorrence.

In a country where the law favoured the teachers of no one religion more than those of another, it would not be necessary that any of them

should have any particular or immediate dependency upon the sovereign or executive power; or that he should have any thing to do either in appointing or in dismissing them from their offices. In such a situation, he would have no occasion to give himself any concern about them, further than to keep the peace among them, in the same manner as among the rest of his subjects, that is, to hinder them from persecuting, abusing, or oppressing one another. But it is quite otherwise in countries where there is an established or governing religion. The sovereign can in this case never be secure, unless he has the means of influencing in a considerable degree the greater part of the teachers of that religion.

The clergy of every established church constitute a great incorporation. They can act in concert, and pursue their interest upon one plan, and with one spirit as much as if they were under the direction of one man; and they are frequently, too, under such direction. Their interest as an incorporated body is never the same with that of the sovereign, and is sometimes directly opposite to it. Their great interest is to maintain their authority with the people, and this authority depends upon the supposed certainty and importance of the whole doctrine which they inculcate, and upon the supposed necessity of adopting every part of it with the most implicit faith, in order to avoid eternal misery. Should the sovereign have the imprudence to appear either to deride, or doubt himself of the most trifling part of their doctrine, or from humanity, attempt to protect those who did either the one or the other, the punctilious honour of a clergy, who have no sort of dependency upon him, is immediately provoked to proscribe him as a profane person, and to employ all the terrors of religion, in order to oblige the people to transfer their allegiance to some more orthodox and obedient prince. Should he oppose any of their pretensions or usurpations, the danger is equally great. The princes who have dared in this manner to rebel against the church, over and above this crime of rebellion, have generally been charged, too, with the additional crime of heresy, notwithstanding their solemn protestations of their faith, and humble submission to every tenet which she thought proper to prescribe to them. But the authority of religion is superior to every other authority. The fears which it suggests conquer all other fears. When the authorized teachers of religion propagate through the great body of the people, doctrines subversive of the authority of the sovereign, it is by violence only, or by the force of a standing army, that he can maintain his authority. Even a standing army cannot in this case give him any lasting security; because if the soldiers are not foreigners, which can seldom be the case, but drawn from the

great body of the people, which must almost always be the case, they are likely to be soon corrupted by those very doctrines. The revolutions which the turbulence of the Greek clergy was continually occasioning at Constantinople, as long as the eastern empire subsisted; the convulsions which, during the course of several centuries, the turbulence of the Roman clergy was continually occasioning in every part of Europe, sufficiently demonstrate how precarious and insecure must always be the situation of the sovereign, who has no proper means of influencing the clergy of the established and governing religion of his country.

Articles of faith, as well as all other spiritual matters, it is evident enough, are not within the proper department of a temporal sovereign, who, though he may be very well qualified for protecting, is seldom supposed to be so for instructing the people. With regard to such matters, therefore, his authority can seldom be sufficient to counterbalance the united authority of the clergy of the established church. The public tranquillity, however, and his own security, may frequently depend upon the doctrines which they may think proper to propagate concerning such matters. As he can seldom directly oppose their decision, therefore, with proper weight and authority, it is necessary that he should be able to influence it; and he can influence it only by the fears and expectations which he may excite in the greater part of the individuals of the order. Those fears and expectations may consist in the fear of deprivation or other punishment, and in the expectation of further preferment.

In all Christian churches, the benefices of the clergy are a sort of freeholds, which they enjoy, not during pleasure, but during life or good behaviour. If they held them by a more precarious tenure, and were liable to be turned out upon every slight disobligation either of the sovereign or of his ministers, it would perhaps be impossible for them to maintain their authority with the people, who would then consider them as mercenary dependents upon the court, in the sincerity of whose instructions they could no longer have any confidence. But should the sovereign attempt irregularly, and by violence, to deprive any number of clergymen of their freeholds, on account, perhaps, of their having propagated, with more than ordinary zeal, some factious or seditious doctrine, he would only render, by such persecution, both them and their doctrine ten times more popular, and therefore ten times more troublesome and dangerous, than they had been before. Fear is in almost all cases a wretched instrument of government, and ought in particular never to be employed against any order of men who have the smallest pretensions to independency. To attempt to terrify them, serves only to

irritate their bad humour, and to confirm them in an opposition, which more gentle usage, perhaps, might easily induce them either to soften, or to lay aside altogether. The violence which the French government usually employed in order to oblige all their parliaments, or sovereign courts of justice, to enregister any unpopular edict, very seldom succeeded. The means commonly employed, however, the imprisonment of all the refractory members, one would think, were forcible enough. The princes of the house of Stuart sometimes employed the like means in order to influence some of the members of the parliament of England, and they generally found them equally intractable. The parliament of England is now managed in another manner; and a very small experiment, which the duke of Choiseul made, about twelve years ago, upon the parliament of Paris, demonstrated sufficiently that all the parliaments of France might have been managed still more easily in the same manner. That experiment was not pursued. For though management and persuasion are always the easiest and safest instruments of government as force and violence are the worst and the most dangerous; yet such, it seems, is the natural insolence of man, that he almost always disdains to use the good instrument, except when he cannot or dare not use the bad one. The French government could and durst use force, and therefore disdained to use management and persuasion. But there is no order of men, it appears I believe, from the experience of all ages, upon whom it is so dangerous or rather so perfectly ruinous, to employ force and violence, as upon the respected clergy of an established church. The rights, the privileges, the personal liberty of every individual ecclesiastic, who is upon good terms with his own order, are, even in the most despotic governments, more respected than those of any other person of nearly equal rank and fortune. It is so in every gradation of despotism, from that of the gentle and mild government of Paris, to that of the violent and furious government of Constantinople. But though this order of men can scarce ever be forced, they may be managed as easily as any other; and the security of the sovereign, as well as the public tranquillity, seems to depend very much upon the means which he has of managing them; and those means seem to consist altogether in the preferment which he has to bestow upon them.

In the ancient constitution of the Christian church, the bishop of each diocese was elected by the joint votes of the clergy and of the people of the episcopal city. The people did not long retain their right of election; and while they did retain it, they almost always acted under the influence of the clergy, who, in such spiritual matters, appeared to be their natural

guides. The clergy, however, soon grew weary of the trouble of managing them, and found it easier to elect their own bishops themselves. The abbot, in the same manner, was elected by the monks of the monastery, at least in the greater part of abbacies. All the inferior ecclesiastical benefices comprehended within the diocese were collated by the bishop, who bestowed them upon such ecclesiastics as he thought proper. All church preferments were in this manner in the disposal of the church. The sovereign, though he might have some indirect influence in those elections, and though it was sometimes usual to ask both his consent to elect, and his approbation of the election, yet had no direct or sufficient means of managing the clergy. The ambition of every clergyman naturally led him to pay court, not so much to his sovereign as to his own order, from which only he could expect preferment.

Through the greater part of Europe, the pope gradually drew to himself, first the collation of almost all bishoprics and abbacies, or of what were called consistorial benefices, and afterwards, by various machinations and pretences, of the greater part of inferior benefices comprehended within each diocese, little more being left to the bishop than what was barely necessary to give him a decent authority with his own clergy. By this arrangement the condition of the sovereign was still worse than it bad been before. The clergy of all the different countries of Europe were thus formed into a sort of spiritual army, dispersed in different quarters, indeed, but of which all the movements and operations could now be directed by one head, and conducted upon one uniform plan. The clergy of each particular country might be considered as a particular detachment of that army, of which the operations could easily be supported and seconded by all the other detachments quartered in the different countries round about. Each detachment was not only independent of the sovereign of the country in which it was quartered, and by which it was maintained, but dependent upon a foreign sovereign, who could at any time turn its arms against the sovereign of that particular country, and support them by the arms of all the other detachments.

Those arms were the most formidable that can well be imagined. In the ancient state of Europe, before the establishment of arts and manufactures, the wealth of the clergy gave them the same sort of influence over the common people which that of the great barons gave them over their respective vassals, tenants, and retainers. In the great landed estates, which the mistaken piety both of princes and private persons had bestowed upon the church, jurisdictions were established, of

the same kind with those of the great barons, and for the same reason. In those great landed estates, the clergy, or their bailiffs, could easily keep the peace, without the support or assistance either of the king or of any other person; and neither the king nor any other person could keep the peace there without the support and assistance of the clergy. The jurisdictions of the clergy, therefore, in their particular baronies or manors, were equally independent, and equally exclusive of the authority of the king's courts, as those of the great temporal lords. The tenants of the clergy were, like those of the great barons, almost all tenants at will, entirely dependent upon their immediate lords, and, therefore, liable to be called out at pleasure, in order to fight in any quarrel in which the clergy might think proper to engage them. Over and above the rents of those estates, the clergy possessed in the tithes a very large portion of the rents of all the other estates in every kingdom of Europe. The revenues arising from both those species of rents were, the greater part of them, paid in kind, in corn, wine, cattle, poultry, &c. The quantity exceeded greatly what the clergy could themselves consume; and there were neither arts nor manufactures, for the produce of which they could exchange the surplus. The clergy could derive advantage from this immense surplus in no other way than by employing it, as the great barons employed the like surplus of their revenues, in the most profuse hospitality, and in the most extensive charity. Both the hospitality and the charity of the ancient clergy, accordingly, are said to have been very great. They not only maintained almost the whole poor of every kingdom, but many knights and gentlemen had frequently no other means of subsistence than by travelling about from monastery to monastery, under pretence of devotion, but in reality to enjoy the hospitality of the clergy. The retainers of some particular prelates were often as numerous as those of the greatest lay-lords; and the retainers of all the clergy taken together were, perhaps, more numerous than those of all the lay-lords. There was always much more union among the clergy than among the lay-lords. The former were under a regular discipline and subordination to the papal authority. The latter were under no regular discipline or subordination, but almost always equally jealous of one another, and of the king. Though the tenants and retainers of the clergy, therefore, had both together been less numerous than those of the great lay-lords, and their tenants were probably much less numerous, yet their union would have rendered them more formidable. The hospitality and charity of the clergy, too, not only gave them the command of a great temporal force, but increased very much the weight of their spiritual

weapons. Those virtues procured them the highest respect and veneration among all the inferior ranks of people, of whom many were constantly, and almost all occasionally, fed by them. Every thing belonging or related to so popular an order, its possessions, its privileges, its doctrines, necessarily appeared sacred in the eyes of the common people; and every violation of them, whether real or pretended, the highest act of sacrilegious wickedness and profaneness. In this state of things, if the sovereign frequently found it difficult to resist the confederacy of a few of the great nobility, we cannot wonder that he should find it still more so to resist the united force of the clergy of his own dominions, supported by that of the clergy of all the neighbouring dominions. In such circumstances, the wonder is, not that he was sometimes obliged to yield, but that he ever was able to resist.

The privileges of the clergy in those ancient times (which to us, who live in the present times, appear the most absurd), their total exemption from the secular jurisdiction, for example, or what in England was called the benefit of clergy, were the natural, or rather the necessary, consequences of this state of things. How dangerous must it have been for the sovereign to attempt to punish a clergyman for any crime whatever, if his order were disposed to protect him, and to represent either the proof as insufficient for convicting so holy a man, or the punishment as too severe to be inflicted upon one whose person had been rendered sacred by religion? The sovereign could, in such circumstances, do no better than leave him to be tried by the ecclesiastical courts, who, for the honour of their own order, were interested to restrain, as much as possible, every member of it from committing enormous crimes, or even from giving occasion to such gross scandal as might disgust the minds of the people.

In the state in which things were, through the greater part of Europe, during the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, and for some time both before and after that period, the constitution of the church of Rome may be considered as the must formidable combination that ever was formed against the authority and security of civil government, as well as against the liberty, reason, and happiness of mankind, which can flourish only where civil government is able to protect them. In that constitution, the grossest delusions of superstition were supported in such a manner by the private interests of so great a number of people, as put them out of all danger from any assault of human reason; because, though human reason might, perhaps, have been able to unveil, even to the eyes of the common people, some of the delusions of superstition, it

could never have dissolved the ties of private interest. Had this constitution been attacked by no other enemies but the feeble efforts of human reason, it must have endured for ever. But that immense and well-built fabric, which all the wisdom and virtue of man could never have shaken, much less have overturned, was, by the natural course of things, first weakened, and afterwards in part destroyed; and is now likely, in the course of a few centuries more, perhaps, to crumble into ruins altogether.

The gradual improvements of arts, manufactures, and commerce, the same causes which destroyed the power of the grant barons, destroyed, in the same manner, through the greater part of Europe, the whole temporal power of the clergy. In the produce of arts, manufactures, and commerce, the clergy, like the great barons, found something for which they could exchange their rude produce, and thereby discovered the means of spending their whole revenues upon their own persons, without giving any considerable share of them to other people. Their charity became gradually less extensive, their hospitality less liberal, or less profuse. Their retainers became consequently less numerous, and, by degrees, dwindled away altogether. The clergy, too, like the great barons, wished to get a better rent from their landed estates, in order to spend it, in the same manner, upon the gratification of their own private vanity and folly. But this increase of rent could be got only by granting leases to their tenants, who thereby became, in a great measure, independent of them. The ties of interest, which bound the inferior ranks of people to the clergy, were in this manner gradually broken and dissolved. They were even broken and dissolved sooner than those which bound the same ranks of people to the great barons; because the benefices of the church being, the greater part of them, much smaller than the estates of the great barons, the possessor of each benefice was much sooner able to spend the whole of its revenue upon his own person. During the greater part of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the power of the great barons was, through the greater part of Europe, in full vigour. But the temporal power of the clergy, the absolute command which they had once had over the great body of the people was very much decayed. The power of the church was, by that time, very nearly reduced, through the greater part of Europe, to what arose from their spiritual authority; and even that spiritual authority was much weakened, when it ceased to be supported by the charity and hospitality of the clergy. The inferior ranks of people no longer looked upon that order as they had done before; as the comforters of their distress, and the relievers of their indigence. On the contrary, they were provoked and disgusted by the vanity, luxury, and

expense of the richer clergy, who appeared to spend upon their own pleasures what had always before been regarded as the patrimony of the poor.

In this situation of things, the sovereigns in the different states of Europe endeavoured to recover the influence which they had once had in the disposal of the great benefices of the church; by procuring to the deans and chapters of each diocese the restoration of their ancient right of electing the bishop; and to the monks of each abbacy that of electing the abbot. The reestablishing this ancient order was the object of several statutes enacted in England during the course of the fourteenth century, particularly of what is called the statute of provisors; and of the pragmatic sanction, established in France in the fifteenth century. In order to render the election valid, it was necessary that the sovereign should both consent to it before hand, and afterwards approve of the person elected; and though the election was still supposed to be free, he had, however all the indirect means which his situation necessarily afforded him, of influencing the clergy in his own dominions. Other regulations, of a similar tendency, were established in other parts of Europe. But the power of the pope, in the collation of the great benefices of the church, seems, before the reformation, to have been nowhere so effectually and so universally restrained as in France and England. The concordat afterwards, in the sixteenth century, gave to the kings of France the absolute right of presenting to all the great, or what are called the consistorial, benefices of the Gallican church.

Since the establishment of the pragmatic sanction and of the concordat, the clergy of France have, in general shewn less respect to the decrees of the papal court, than the clergy of any other catholic country. In all the disputes which their sovereign has had with the pope, they have almost constantly taken part with the former. This independency of the clergy of France upon the court of Rome seems to be principally founded upon the pragmatic sanction and the concordat. In the earlier periods of the monarchy, the clergy of France appear to have been as much devoted to the pope as those of any other country. When Robert, the second prince of the Capetian race, was most unjustly excommunicated by the court of Rome, his own servants, it is said, threw the victuals which came from his table to the dogs, and refused to taste any thing themselves which had been polluted by the contact of a person in his situation. They were taught to do so, it may very safely be presumed, by the clergy of his own dominions.

The claim of collating to the great benefices of the church, a claim in defence of which the court of Rome had frequently shaken, and sometimes overturned, the thrones of some of the greatest sovereigns in Christendom, was in this manner either restrained or modified, or given up altogether, in many different parts of Europe, even before the time of the reformation. As the clergy had now less influence over the people, so the state had more influence over the clergy. The clergy, therefore, had both less power, and less inclination, to disturb the state.

The authority of the church of Rome was in this state of declension, when the disputes which gave birth to the reformation began in Germany, and soon spread themselves through every part of Europe. The new doctrines were everywhere received with a high degree of popular favour. They were propagated with all that enthusiastic zeal which commonly animates the spirit of party, when it attacks established authority. The teachers of those doctrines, though perhaps, in other respects, not more learned than many of the divines who defended the established church, seem in general to have been better acquainted with ecclesiastical history, and with the origin and progress of that system of opinions upon which the authority of the church was established; and they had thereby the advantage in almost every dispute. The austerity of their manners gave them authority with the common people, who contrasted the strict regularity of their conduct with the disorderly lives of the greater part of their own clergy. They possessed, too, in a much higher degree than their adversaries, all the arts of popularity and of gaining proselytes; arts which the lofty and dignified sons of the church had long neglected, as being to them in a great measure useless. The reason of the new doctrines recommended them to some, their novelty to many; the hatred and contempt of the established clergy to a still greater number: but the zealous, passionate, and fanatical, though frequently coarse and rustic eloquence, with which they were almost everywhere inculcated, recommended them to by far the greatest number.

The success of the new doctrines was almost everywhere so great, that the princes, who at that time happened to be on bad terms with the court of Rome, were, by means of them, easily enabled, in their own dominions, to overturn the church, which having lost the respect and veneration of the inferior ranks of people, could make scarce any resistance. The court of Rome had disobliged some of the smaller princes in the northern parts of Germany, whom it had probably considered as too insignificant to be worth the managing. They universally, therefore, established the reformation in their own dominions. The tyranny of

Christiern II., and of Troll archbishop of Upsal, enabled Gustavus Vasa to expel them both from Sweden. The pope favoured the tyrant and the archbishop, and Gustavus Vasa found no difficulty in establishing the reformation in Sweden. Christiern II. was afterwards deposed from the throne of Denmark, where his conduct had rendered him as odious as in Sweden. The pope, however, was still disposed to favour him; and Frederic of Holstein, who had mounted the throne in his stead, revenged himself, by following the example of Gustavus Vasa. The magistrates of Berne and Zurich, who had no particular quarrel with the pope, established with great ease the reformation in their respective cantons, where just before some of the clergy had, by an imposture somewhat grosser than ordinary, rendered the whole order both odious and contemptible.

In this critical situation of its affairs the papal court was at sufficient pains to cultivate the friendship of the powerful sovereigns of France and Spain, of whom the latter was at that time emperor of Germany. With their assistance, it was enabled, though not without great difficulty, and much bloodshed, either to suppress altogether, or obstruct very much, the progress of the reformation in their dominions. It was well enough inclined, too, to be complaisant to the king of England. But from the circumstances of the times, it could not be so without giving offense to a still greater sovereign, Charles V., king of Spain and emperor of Germany. Henry VIII., accordingly, though he did not embrace himself the greater part of the doctrines of the reformation was yet enabled, by their general prevalence, to suppress all the monasteries, and to abolish the authority of the church of Rome in his dominions. That he should go so far, though he went no further, gave some satisfaction to the patrons of the reformation, who, having got possession of the government in the reign of his son and successor, completed, without any difficulty, the work which Henry VIII. had begun.

In some countries, as in Scotland, where the government was weak, unpopular, and not very firmly established, the reformation was strong enough to overturn, not only the church, but the state likewise, for attempting to support the church.

Among the followers of the reformation, dispersed in all the different countries of Europe, there was no general tribunal, which, like that of the court of Rome, or an œcumenical council, could settle all disputes among them, and, with irresistible authority, prescribe to all of them the precise limits of orthodoxy. When the followers of the reformation in one country, therefore, happened to differ from their brethren in another, as

they had no common judge to appeal to, the dispute could never be decided; and many such disputes arose among them. Those concerning the government of the church, and the right of conferring ecclesiastical benefices, were perhaps the most interesting to the peace and welfare of civil society. They gave birth, accordingly, to the two principal parties or sects among the followers of the reformation, the Lutheran and Calvinistic sects, the only sects among them, of which the doctrine and discipline have ever yet been established by law in any part of Europe.

The followers of Luther, together with what is called the church of England, preserved more or less of the episcopal government, established subordination among the clergy, gave the sovereign the disposal of all the bishoprics, and other consistorial benefices within his dominions, and thereby rendered him the real head of the church; and without depriving the bishop of the right of collating to the smaller benefices within his diocese, they, even to those benefices, not only admitted, but favoured the right of presentation, both in the sovereign and in all other lay patrons. This system of church government was, from the beginning, favourable to peace and good order, and to submission to the civil sovereign. It has never, accordingly, been the occasion of any tumult or civil commotion in any country in which it has once been established. The church of England, in particular, has always valued herself, with great reason, upon the unexceptionable loyalty of her principles. Under such a government, the clergy naturally endeavour to recommend themselves to the sovereign, to the court, and to the nobility and gentry of the country, by whose influence they chiefly expect to obtain preferment. They pay court to those patrons, sometimes, no doubt, by the vilest flattery and assentation; but frequently, too, by cultivating all those arts which best deserve, and which are therefore most likely to gain them, the esteem of people of rank and fortune; by their knowledge in all the different branches of useful and ornamental learning, by the decent liberality of their manners, by the social good humour of their conversation, and by their avowed contempt of those absurd and hypocritical austerities which fanatics inculcate and pretend to practise, in order to draw upon themselves the veneration, and upon the greater part of men of rank and fortune, who avow that they do not practise them, the abhorrence of the common people. Such a clergy, however, while they pay their court in this manner to the higher ranks of life, are very apt to neglect altogether the means of maintaining their influence and authority with the lower. They are listened to, esteemed, and respected by their superiors; but before their inferiors they are frequently

incapable of defending, effectually, and to the conviction of such hearers, their own sober and moderate doctrines, against the most ignorant enthusiast who chooses to attack them.

The followers of Zuinglius, or more properly those of Calvin, on the contrary, bestowed upon the people of each parish, whenever the church became vacant, the right of electing their own pastor; and established, at the same time, the most perfect equality among the clergy. The former part of this institution, as long as it remained in vigour, seems to have been productive of nothing but disorder and confusion, and to have tended equally to corrupt the morals both of the clergy and of the people. The latter part seems never to have had any effects but what were perfectly agreeable.

As long as the people of each parish preserved the right of electing their own pastors, they acted almost always under the influence of the clergy, and generally of the most factious and fanatical of the order. The clergy, in order to preserve their influence in those popular elections, became, or affected to become, many of them, fanatics themselves, encouraged fanaticism among the people, and gave the preference almost always to the most fanatical candidate. So small a matter as the appointment of a parish priest, occasioned almost always a violent contest, not only in one parish, but in all the neighbouring parishes who seldom failed to take part in the quarrel. When the parish happened to be situated in a great city, it divided all the inhabitants into two parties; and when that city happened, either to constitute itself a little republic, or to be the head and capital of a little republic, as in the case with many of the considerable cities in Switzerland and Holland, every paltry dispute of this kind, over and above exasperating the animosity of all their other factions, threatened to leave behind it, both a new schism in the church, and a new faction in the state. In those small republics, therefore, the magistrate very soon found it necessary, for the sake of preserving the public peace, to assume to himself the right of presenting to all vacant benefices. In Scotland, the most extensive country in which this presbyterian form of church government has ever been established, the rights of patronage were in effect abolished by the act which established presbytery in the beginning of the reign of William III. That act, at least, put in the power of certain classes of people in each parish to purchase, for a very small price, the right of electing their own pastor. The constitution which this act established, was allowed to subsist for about two-and-twenty years, but was abolished by the 10th of queen Anne, ch. 12, on account of the confusions and disorders which this more popular

mode of election had almost everywhere occasioned. In so extensive a country as Scotland, however, a tumult in a remote parish was not so likely to give disturbance to government as in a smaller state. The 10th of queen Anne restored the rights of patronage. But though, in Scotland, the law gives the benefice, without any exception to the person presented by the patron; yet the church requires sometimes (for she has not in this respect been very uniform in her decisions) a certain concurrence of the people, before she will confer upon the presentee what is called the cure of souls, or the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the parish. She sometimes, at least, from an affected concern for the peace of the parish, delays the settlement till this concurrence can be procured. The private tampering of some of the neighbouring clergy, sometimes to procure, but more frequently to prevent this concurrence, and the popular arts which they cultivate, in order to enable them upon such occasions to tamper more effectually, are perhaps the causes which principally keep up whatever remains of the old fanatical spirit, either in the clergy or in the people of Scotland.

The equality which the presbyterian form of church government establishes among the clergy, consists, first, in the equality of authority or ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and, secondly, in the equality of benefice. In all presbyterian churches, the equality of authority is perfect; that of benefice is not so. The difference, however, between one benefice and another, is seldom so considerable, as commonly to tempt the possessor even of the small one to pay court to his patron, by the vile arts of flattery and assentation, in order to get a better. In all the presbyterian churches, where the rights of patronage are thoroughly established, it is by nobler and better arts, that the established clergy in general endeavour to gain the favour of their superiors; by their learning, by the irreproachable regularity of their life, and by the faithful and diligent discharge of their duty. Their patrons even frequently complain of the independency of their spirit, which they are apt to construe into ingratitude for past favours, but which, at worst, perhaps, is seldom any more than that indifference which naturally arises from the consciousness that no further favours of the kind are ever to be expected. There is scarce, perhaps, to be found anywhere in Europe, a more learned, decent, independent, and respectable set of men, than the greater part of the presbyterian clergy of Holland, Geneva, Switzerland, and Scotland.

Where the church benefices are all nearly equal, none of them can be very great; and this mediocrity of benefice, though it may be, no doubt,

carried too far, has, however, some very agreeable effects. Nothing but exemplary morals can give dignity to a man of small fortune. The vices of levity and vanity necessarily render him ridiculous, and are, besides, almost as ruinous to him as they are to the common people. In his own conduct, therefore, he is obliged to follow that system of morals which the common people respect the most. He gains their esteem and affection, by that plan of life which his own interest and situation would lead him to follow. The common people look upon him with that kindness with which we naturally regard one who approaches somewhat to our own condition, but who, we think, ought to be in a higher. Their kindness naturally provokes his kindness. He becomes careful to instruct them, and attentive to assist and relieve them. He does not even despise the prejudices of people who are disposed to be so favourable to him, and never treats them with those contemptuous and arrogant airs, which we so often meet with in the proud dignitaries of opulent and well endowed churches. The presbyterian clergy, accordingly, have more influence over the minds of the common people, than perhaps the clergy of any other established church. It is, accordingly, in presbyterian countries only, that we ever find the common people converted, without persecution completely, and almost to a man, to the established church.

In countries where church benefices are, the greater part of them, very moderate, a chair in a university is generally a better establishment than a church benefice. The universities have, in this case, the picking and chusing of their members from all the churchmen of the country, who, in every country, constitute by far the most numerous class of men of letters. Where church benefices, on the contrary, are many of them very considerable, the church naturally draws from the universities the greater part of their eminent men of letters; who generally find some patron, who does himself honour by procuring them church preferment. In the former situation, we are likely to find the universities filled with the most eminent men of letters that are to be found in the country. In the latter, we are likely to find few eminent men among them, and those few among the youngest members of the society, who are likely, too, to be drained away from it, before they can have acquired experience and knowledge enough to be of much use to it. It is observed by Mr. de Voltaire, that father Porée, a jesuit of no great eminence in the republic of letters, was the only professor they had ever had in France, whose works were worth the reading. In a country which has produced so many eminent men of letters, it must appear somewhat singular, that scarce one of them should have been a professor in a university. The famous

Cassendi was, in the beginning of his life, a professor in the university of Aix. Upon the first dawning of his genius, it was represented to him, that by going into the church he could easily find a much more quiet and comfortable subsistence, as well as a better situation for pursuing his studies; and he immediately followed the advice. The observation of Mr. de Voltaire may be applied, I believe, not only to France, but to all other Roman Catholic countries. We very rarely find in any of them an eminent man of letters, who is a professor in a university, except, perhaps, in the professions of law and physic; professions from which the church is not so likely to draw them. After the church of Rome, that of England is by far the richest and best endowed church in Christendom. In England, accordingly, the church is continually draining the universities of all their best and ablest members; and an old college tutor who is known and distinguished in Europe as an eminent man of letters, is as rarely to be found there as in any Roman catholic country. In Geneva, on the contrary, in the protestant cantons of Switzerland, in the protestant countries of Germany, in Holland, in Scotland, in Sweden, and Denmark, the most eminent men of letters whom those countries have produced, have, not all indeed, but the far greater part of them, been professors in universities. In those countries, the universities are continually draining the church of all its most eminent men of letters.

It may, perhaps, be worth while to remark, that, if we except the poets, a few orators, and a few historians, the far greater part of the other eminent men of letters, both of Greece and Rome, appear to have been either public or private teachers; generally either of philosophy or of rhetoric. This remark will be found to hold true, from the days of Lysias and Isocrates, of Plato and Aristotle, down to those of Plutarch and Epictetus, Suetonius, and Quintilian. To impose upon any man the necessity of teaching, year after year, in any particular branch of science seems in reality to be the most effectual method for rendering him completely master of it himself. By being obliged to go every year over the same ground, if he is good for any thing, he necessarily becomes, in a few years, well acquainted with every part of it: and if, upon any particular point, he should form too hasty an opinion one year, when he comes, in the course of his lectures to reconsider the same subject the year thereafter, he is very likely to correct it. As to be a teacher of science is certainly the natural employment of a mere man of letters; so is it likewise, perhaps, the education which is most likely to render him a man of solid learning and knowledge. The mediocrity of church benefices naturally tends to draw the greater part of men of letters in the

country where it takes place, to the employment in which they can be the most useful to the public, and at the same time to give them the best education, perhaps, they are capable of receiving. It tends to render their learning both as solid as possible, and as useful as possible.

The revenue of every established church, such parts of it excepted as may arise from particular lands or manors, is a branch, it ought to be observed, of the general revenue of the state, which is thus diverted to a purpose very different from the defence of the state. The tithe, for example, is a real land-tax, which puts it out of the power of the proprietors of land to contribute so largely towards the defence of the state as they otherwise might be able to do. The rent of land, however, is, according to some, the sole fund; and, according to others, the principal fund, from which, in all great monarchies, the exigencies of the state must be ultimately supplied. The more of this fund that is given to the church, the less, it is evident, can be spared to the state. It may be laid down as a certain maxim, that all other things being supposed equal, the richer the church, the poorer must necessarily be, either the sovereign on the one hand, or the people on the other; and, in all cases, the less able must the state be to defend itself. In several protestant countries, particularly in all the protestant cantons of Switzerland, the revenue which anciently belonged to the Roman catholic church, the tithes and church lands, has been found a fund sufficient, not only to afford competent salaries to the established clergy, but to defray, with little or no addition, all the other expenses of the state. The magistrates of the powerful canton of Berne, in particular, have accumulated, out of the savings from this fund, a very large sum, supposed to amount to several millions; part of which is deposited in a public treasure, and part is placed at interest in what are called the public funds of the different indebted nations of Europe; chiefly in those of France and Great Britain. What may be the amount of the whole expense which the church, either of Berne, or of any other protestant canton, costs the state, I do not pretend to know. By a very exact account it appears, that, in 1755, the whole revenue of the clergy of the church of Scotland, including their glebe or church lands, and the rent of their manses or dwelling-houses, estimated according to a reasonable valuation, amounted only to L.68,514, 1s. $5\frac{1}{12}$d. This very moderate revenue affords a decent subsistence to nine hundred and forty-four ministers. The whole expense of the church, including what is occasionally laid out for the building and reparation of churches, and of the manses of ministers, cannot well be supposed to exceed eighty or eighty-five thousand pounds a-year. The

most opulent church in Christendom does not maintain better the uniformity of faith, the fervour of devotion, the spirit of order, regularity, and austere morals, in the great body of the people, than this very poorly endowed church of Scotland. All the good effects, both civil and religious, which an established church can be supposed to produce, are produced by it as completely as by any other. The greater part of the protestant churches of Switzerland, which, in general, are not better endowed than the church of Scotland, produce those effects in a still higher degree. In the greater part of the protestant cantons, there is not a single person to be found, who does not profess himself to be of the established church. If he professes himself to be of any other, indeed, the law obliges him to leave the canton. But so severe, or, rather, indeed, so oppressive a law, could never have been executed in such free countries, had not the diligence of the clergy beforehand converted to the established church the whole body of the people, with the exception of, perhaps, a few individuals only. In some parts of Switzerland, accordingly, where, from the accidental union of a protestant and Roman catholic country, the conversion has not been so complete, both religions are not only tolerated, but established by law.

The proper performance of every service seems to require, that its pay or recompence should be, as exactly as possible, proportioned to the nature of the service. If any service is very much underpaid, it is very apt to suffer by the meanness and incapacity of the greater part of those who are employed in it. If it is very much overpaid, it is apt to suffer, perhaps still more, by their negligence and idleness. A man of a large revenue, whatever may be his profession, thinks he ought to live like other men of large revenues; and to spend a great part of his time in festivity, in vanity, and in dissipation. But in a clergyman, this train of life not only consumes the time which ought to be employed in the duties of his function, but in the eyes of the common people, destroys almost entirely that sanctity of character, which can alone enable him to perform these duties with proper weight and authority.

PART IV.

Of the Expense of supporting the Dignity of the Sovereign.

Over and above the expenses necessary for enabling the sovereign to perform his several duties, a certain expense is requisite for the support

of his dignity. This expense varies, both with the different periods of improvement, and with the different forms of government.

In an opulent and improved society, where all the different orders of people are growing every day more expensive in their houses, in their furniture, in their tables, in their dress, and in their equipage; it cannot well be expected that the sovereign should alone hold out against the fashion. He naturally, therefore, or rather necessarily, becomes more expensive in all those different articles too. His dignity even seems to require that he should become so.

As, in point of dignity, a monarch is more raised above his subjects than the chief magistrate of any republic is ever supposed to be above his fellow-citizens; so a greater expense is necessary for supporting that higher dignity. We naturally expect more splendour in the court of a king, than in the mansion-house of a doge or burgo-master.

CONCLUSION.

The expense of defending the society, and that of supporting the dignity of the chief magistrate, are both laid out for the general benefit of the whole society. It is reasonable, therefore, that they should be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society; all the different members contributing, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities.

The expense of the administration of justice, too, may no doubt be considered as laid out for the benefit of the whole society. There is no impropriety, therefore, in its being defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society. The persons, however, who give occasion to this expense, are those who, by their injustice in one way or another, make it necessary to seek redress or protection from the courts of justice. The persons, again, most immediately benefited by this expense, are those whom the courts of justice either restore to their rights, or maintain in their rights. The expense of the administration of justice, therefore, may very properly be defrayed by the particular contribution of one or other, or both, of those two different sets of persons, according as different occasions may require, that is, by the fees of court. It cannot be necessary to have recourse to the general contribution of the whole society, except for the conviction of those criminals who have not themselves any estate or fund sufficient for paying those fees.

Those local or provincial expenses, of which the benefit is local or provincial (what is laid out, for example, upon the police of a particular

town or district), ought to be defrayed by a local or provincial revenue, and ought to be no burden upon the general revenue of the society. It is unjust that the whole society should contribute towards an expense, of which the benefit is confined to a part of the society.

The expense of maintaining good roads and communications is, no doubt, beneficial to the whole society, and may, therefore, without any injustice, be defrayed by the general contributions of the whole society. This expense, however, is most immediately and directly beneficial to those who travel or carry goods from one place to another, and to those who consume such goods. The turnpike tolls in England, and the duties called peages in other countries, lay it altogether upon those two different sets of people, and thereby discharge the general revenue of the society from a very considerable burden.

The expense of the institutions for education and religious instruction, is likewise, no doubt, beneficial to the whole society, and may, therefore, without injustice, be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society. This expense, however, might, perhaps, with equal propriety, and even with some advantage, be defrayed altogether by those who receive the immediate benefit of such education and instruction, or by the voluntary contribution of those who think they have occasion for either the one or the other.

When the institutions, or public works, which are beneficial to the whole society, either cannot be maintained altogether, or are not maintained altogether, by the contribution of such particular members of the society as are most immediately benefited by them; the deficiency must, in most cases, be made up by the general contribution of the whole society. The general revenue of the society, over and above defraying the expense of defending the society, and of supporting the dignity of the chief magistrate, must make up for the deficiency of many particular branches of revenue. The sources of this general or public revenue, I shall endeavour to explain in the following chapter.

CHAP. II. OF THE SOURCES OF THE GENERAL OR PUBLIC REVENUE OF THE SOCIETY.

The revenue which must defray, not only the expense of defending the society and of supporting the dignity of the chief magistrate, but all the other necessary expenses of government, for which the constitution of the state has not provided any particular revenue may be drawn, either, first, from some fund which peculiarly belongs to the sovereign or commonwealth, and which is independent of the revenue of the people; or, secondly, from the revenue of the people.

PART I.

Of the Funds, or Sources, of Revenue, which may peculiarly belong to the Sovereign or Commonwealth.

The funds, or sources, of revenue, which may peculiarly belong to the sovereign or commonwealth, must consist, either in stock, or in land.

The sovereign, like any other owner of stock, may derive a revenue from it, either by employing it himself, or by lending it. His revenue is, in the one case, profit, in the other interest.

The revenue of a Tartar or Arabian chief consists in profit. It arises principally from the milk and increase of his own herds and flocks, of which he himself superintends the management, and is the principal shepherd or herdsman of his own horde or tribe. It is, however, in this earliest and rudest state of civil government only, that profit has ever made the principal part of the public revenue of a monarchical state.

Small republics have sometimes derived a considerable revenue from the profit of mercantile projects. The republic of Hamburgh is said to do so from the profits of a public wine-cellar and apothecary's shop.[50*] That state cannot be very great, of which the sovereign has leisure to carry on the trade of a wine-merchant or an apothecary. The profit of a public bank has been a source of revenue to more considerable states. It has been so, not only to Hamburgh, but to Venice and Amsterdam. A revenue of this kind has even by some people been thought not below the attention of so great an empire as that of Great Britain. Reckoning the ordinary dividend of the bank of England at five and a-half per cent., and

its capital at ten millions seven hundred and eighty thousand pounds, the net annual profit, after paying the expense of management, must amount, it is said, to five hundred and ninety-two thousand nine hundred pounds. Government, it is pretended, could borrow this capital at three per cent. interest, and, by taking the management of the bank into its own hands, might make a clear profit of two hundred and sixty-nine thousand five hundred pounds a-year. The orderly, vigilant, and parsimonious administration of such aristocracies as those of Venice and Amsterdam, is extremely proper, it appears from experience, for the management of a mercantile project of this kind. But whether such a government as that of England, which, whatever may be its virtues, has never been famous for good economy; which, in time of peace, has generally conducted itself with the slothful and negligent profusion that is, perhaps, natural to monarchies; and, in time of war, has constantly acted with all the thoughtless extravagance that democracies are apt to fall into, could be safely trusted with the management of such a project, must at least be good deal more doubtful.

The post-office is properly a mercantile project. The government advances the expense of establishing the different offices, and of buying or hiring the necessary horses or carriages, and is repaid, with a large profit, by the duties upon what is carried. It is, perhaps, the only mercantile project which has been successfully managed by, I believe, every sort of government. The capital to be advanced is not very considerable. There is no mystery in the business. The returns are not only certain, but immediate.

Princes, however, have frequently engaged in many other mercantile projects, and have been willing, like private persons, to mend their fortunes, by becoming adventurers in the common branches of trade. They have scarce ever succeeded. The profusion with which the affairs of princes are always managed, renders it almost impossible that they should. The agents of a prince regard the wealth of their master as inexhaustible; are careless at what price they buy, are careless at what price they sell, are careless at what expense they transport his goods from one place to another. Those agents frequently live with the profusion of princes; and sometimes, too, in spite of that profusion, and by a proper method of making up their accounts, acquire the fortunes of princes. It was thus, as we are told by Machiavel, that the agents of Lorenzo of Medicis, not a prince of mean abilities, carried on his trade. The republic of Florence was several times obliged to pay the debt into which their extravagance had involved him. He found it convenient, accordingly to

give up the business of merchant, the business to which his family had originally owed their fortune, and, in the latter part of his life, to employ both what remained of that fortune, and the revenue of the state, of which he had the disposal, in projects and expenses more suitable to his station.

No two characters seem more inconsistent than those of trader and sovereign. If the trading spirit of the English East India company renders them very bad sovereigns, the spirit of sovereignty seems to have rendered them equally bad traders. While they were traders only, they managed their trade successfully, and were able to pay from their profits a moderate dividend to the proprietors of their stock. Since they became sovereigns, with a revenue which, it is said, was originally more than three millions sterling, they have been obliged to beg the ordinary assistance of government, in order to avoid immediate bankruptcy. In their former situation, their servants in India considered themselves as the clerks of merchants; in their present situation, those servants consider themselves as the ministers of sovereigns.

A state may sometimes derive some part of its public revenue from the interest of money, as well as from the profits of stock. If it has amassed a treasure, it may lend a part of that treasure, either to foreign states, or to its own subjects.

The canton of Berne derives a considerable revenue by lending a part of its treasure to foreign states, that is, by placing it in the public funds of the different indebted nations of Europe, chiefly in those of France and England. The security of this revenue must depend, first, upon the security of the funds in which it is placed, or upon the good faith of the government which has the management of them; and, secondly, upon the certainty or probability of the continuance of peace with the debtor nation. In the case of a war, the very first act of hostility on the part of the debtor nation might be the forfeiture of the funds of its creditor. This policy of lending money to foreign states is, so far as I know peculiar to the canton of Berne.

The city of Hamburgh[51]* has established a sort of public pawn-shop, which lends money to the subjects of the state, upon pledges, at six per cent. interest. This pawn-shop, or lombard, as it is called, affords a revenue, it is pretended, to the state, of a hundred and fifty thousand crowns, which, at four and sixpence the crown, amounts to L.33,750 sterling.

The government of Pennsylvania, without amassing any treasure, invented a method of lending, not money, indeed, but what is equivalent to money, to its subjects. By advancing to private people, at interest, and

upon land security to double the value, paper bills of credit, to be redeemed fifteen years after their date; and, in the mean time, made transferable from hand to hand, like banknotes, and declared by act of assembly to be a legal tender in all payments from one inhabitant of the province to another, it raised a moderate revenue, which went a considerable way towards defraying an annual expense of about L.4500, the whole ordinary expense of that frugal and orderly government. The success of an expedient of this kind must have depended upon three different circumstances: first, upon the demand for some other instrument of commerce, besides gold and silver money, or upon the demand for such a quantity of consumable stock as could not be had without sending abroad the greater part of their gold and silver money, in order to purchase it; secondly, upon the good credit of the government which made use of this expedient; and, thirdly, upon the moderation with which it was used, the whole value of the paper bills of credit never exceeding that of the gold and silver money which would have been necessary for carrying on their circulation, had there been no paper bills of credit. The same expedient was, upon different occasions, adopted by several other American colonies; but, from want of this moderation, it produced, in the greater part of them, much more disorder than conveniency.

The unstable and perishable nature of stock and credit, however, renders them unfit to be trusted to as the principal funds of that sure, steady, and permanent revenue, which can alone give security and dignity to government. The government of no great nation, that was advanced beyond the shepherd state, seems ever to have derived the greater part of its public revenue from such sources.

Land is a fund of more stable and permanent nature; and the rent of public lands, accordingly, has been the principal source of the public revenue of many a great nation that was much advanced beyond the shepherd state. From the produce or rent of the public lands, the ancient republics of Greece and Italy derived for a long time the greater part of that revenue which defrayed the necessary expenses of the commonwealth. The rent of the crown lands constituted for a long time the greater part of the revenue of the ancient sovereigns of Europe.

War, and the preparation for war, are the two circumstances which, in modern times, occasion the greater part of the necessary expense of all great states. But in the ancient republics of Greece and Italy, every citizen was a soldier, and both served, and prepared himself for service, at his own expense. Neither of those two circumstances, therefore, could

occasion any very considerable expense to the state. The rent of a very moderate landed estate might be fully sufficient for defraying all the other necessary expenses of government.

In the ancient monarchies of Europe, the manners and customs of the times sufficiently prepared the great body of the people for war; and when they took the field, they were, by the condition of their feudal tenures, to be maintained either at their own expense, or at that of their immediate lords, without bringing any new charge upon the sovereign. The other expenses of government were, the greater part of them, very moderate. The administration of justice, it has been shewn, instead of being a cause of expense was a source of revenue. The labour of the country people, for three days before, and for three days after, harvest, was thought a fund sufficient for making and maintaining all the bridges, highways, and other public works, which the commerce of the country was supposed to require. In those days the principal expense of the sovereign seems to have consisted in the maintenance of his own family and household. The officers of his household, accordingly, were then the great officers of state. The lord treasurer received his rents. The lord steward and lord chamberlain looked after the expense of his family. The care of his stables was committed to the lord constable and the lord marshal. His houses were all built in the form of castles, and seem to have been the principal fortresses which he possessed. The keepers of those houses or castles might be considered as a sort of military governors. They seem to have been the only military officers whom it was necessary to maintain in time of peace. In these circumstances, the rent of a great landed estate might, upon ordinary occasions, very well defray all the necessary expenses of government.

In the present state of the greater part of the civilized monarchies of Europe, the rent of all the lands in the country, managed as they probably would be, if they all belonged to one proprietor, would scarce, perhaps, amount to the ordinary revenue which they levy upon the people even in peaceable times. The ordinary revenue of Great Britain, for example, including not only what is necessary for defraying the current expense of the year, but for paying the interest of the public debts, and for sinking a part of the capital of those debts, amounts to upwards of ten millions a-year. But the land tax, at four shillings in the pound, falls short of two millions a-year. This land tax, as it is called, however, is supposed to be one-fifth, not only of the rent of all the land, but of that of all the houses, and of the interest of all the capital stock of Great Britain, that part of it only excepted which is either lent to the public, or employed as farming

stock in the cultivation of land. A very considerable part of the produce of this tax arises from the rent of houses and the interest of capital stock. The land tax of the city of London, for example, at four shillings in the pound, amounts to L.123,399 : 6 : 7; that of the city of Westminster to L.63,092 : 1 : 5; that of the palaces of Whitehall and St. James's to L.30,754 : 6 : 3. A certain proportion of the land tax is, in the same manner, assessed upon all the other cities and towns corporate in the kingdom; and arises almost altogether, either from the rent of houses, or from what is supposed to be the interest of trading and capital stock. According to the estimation, therefore, by which Great Britain is rated to the land tax, the whole mass of revenue arising from the rent of all the lands, from that of all the houses, and from the interest of all the capital stock, that part of it only excepted which is either lent to the public, or employed in the cultivation of land, does not exceed ten millions sterling a-year, the ordinary revenue which government levies upon the people even in peaceable times. The estimation by which Great Britain is rated to the land tax is, no doubt, taking the whole kingdom at an average, very much below the real value; though in several particular counties and districts it is said to be nearly equal to that value. The rent of the lands alone, exclusive of that of houses and of the interest of stock, has by many people been estimated at twenty millions; an estimation made in a great measure at random, and which, I apprehend, is as likely to be above as below the truth. But if the lands of Great Britain, in the present state of their cultivation, do not afford a rent of more than twenty millions a-year, they could not well afford the half, most probably not the fourth part of that rent, if they all belonged to a single proprietor, and were put under the negligent, expensive, and oppressive management of his factors and agents. The crown lands of Great Britain do not at present afford the fourth part of the rent which could probably be drawn from them if they were the property of private persons. If the crown lands were more extensive, it is probable, they would be still worse managed.

The revenue which the great body of the people derives from land is, in proportion, not to the rent, but to the produce of the land. The whole annual produce of the land of every country, if we except what is reserved for seed, is either annually consumed by the great body of the people, or exchanged for something else that is consumed by them. Whatever keeps down the produce of the land below what it would otherwise rise to, keeps down the revenue of the great body of the people, still more than it does that of the proprietors of land. The rent of land, that portion of the produce which belongs to the proprietors, is

scarce anywhere in Great Britain supposed to be more than a third part of the whole produce. If the land which, in one state of cultivation, affords a revenue of ten millions sterling a-year, would in another afford a rent of twenty millions; the rent being, in both cases, supposed a third part of the produce, the revenue of the proprietors would be less than it otherwise might be, by ten millions a-year only; but the revenue of the great body of the people would be less than it otherwise might be, by thirty millions a-year, deducting only what would be necessary for seed. The population of the country would be less by the number of people which thirty millions a-year, deducting always the seed, could maintain, according to the particular mode of living, and expense which might take place in the different ranks of men, among whom the remainder was distributed.

Though there is not at present in Europe, any civilized state of any kind which derives the greater part of its public revenue from the rent of lands which are the property of the state; yet, in all the great monarchies of Europe, there are still many large tracts of land which belong to the crown. They are generally forest, and sometimes forests where, after travelling several miles, you will scarce find a single tree; a mere waste and loss of country, in respect both of produce and population. In every great monarchy of Europe, the sale of the crown lands would produce a very large sum of money, which, if applied to the payment of the public debts, would deliver from mortgage a much greater revenue than any which those lands have ever afforded to the crown. In countries where lands, improved and cultivated very highly, and yielding, at the time of sale, as great a rent as can easily be got from them, commonly sell at thirty years purchase; the unimproved, uncultivated, and low-rented crown lands, might well be expected to sell at forty, fifty, or sixty years purchase. The crown might immediately enjoy the revenue which this great price would redeem from mortgage. In the course of a few years, it would probably enjoy another revenue. When the crown lands had become private property, they would, in the course of a few years, become well improved and well cultivated. The increase of their produce would increase the population of the country, by augmenting the revenue and consumption of the people. But the revenue which the crown derives from the duties of custom and excise, would necessarily increase with the revenue and consumption of the people.

The revenue which, in any civilized monarchy, the crown derives from the crown lands, though it appears to cost nothing to individuals, in reality costs more to the society than perhaps any other equal revenue which the crown enjoys. It would, in all cases, be for the interest of the

society, to replace this revenue to the crown by some other equal revenue, and to divide the lands among the people, which could not well be done better, perhaps, than by exposing them to public sale.

Lands, for the purposes of pleasure and magnificence, parks, gardens, public walks, &c. possessions which are everywhere considered as causes of expense, not as sources of revenue, seem to be the only lands which, in a great and civilized monarchy, ought to belong to the crown.

Public stock and public lands, therefore, the two sources of revenue which may peculiarly belong to the sovereign or commonwealth, being both improper and insufficient funds for defraying the necessary expense of any great and civilized state; it remains that this expense must, the greater part of it, be defrayed by taxes of one kind or another; the people contributing a part of their own private revenue, in order to make up a public revenue to the sovereign or commonwealth.

PART II.

Of Taxes.

The private revenue of individuals, it has been shown in the first book of this Inquiry, arises, ultimately from the three different sources; rent, profit, and wages. Every tax must finally be paid from some one or other of those three different sources of revenue, or from all of them indifferently. I shall endeavour to give the best account I can, first, of those taxes which, it is intended should fall upon rent; secondly, of those which, it is intended should fall upon profit; thirdly, of those which, it is intended should fall upon wages; and fourthly, of those which, it is intended should fall indifferently upon all those three different sources of private revenue. The particular consideration of each of these four different sources of taxes will divide the second part of the present chapter into four articles, three of which will require several other subdivisions. Many of these taxes, it will appear from the following review, are not finally paid from the fund, or source of revenue, upon which it is intended they should fall.

Before I enter upon the examination of particular taxes, it is necessary to premise the four following maxims with regard to taxes in general.

1. The subjects of every state ought to contribute towards the support of the government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities; that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the state. The expense of government to the

individuals of a great nation, is like the expense of management to the joint tenants of a great estate, who are all obliged to contribute in proportion to their respective interests in the estate. In the observation or neglect of this maxim, consists what is called the equality or inequality of taxation. Every tax, it must be observed once for all, which falls finally upon one only of the three sorts of revenue above mentioned, is necessarily unequal, in so far as it does not affect the other two. In the following examination of different taxes, I shall seldom take much farther notice of this sort of inequality; but shall, in most cases, confine my observations to that inequality which is occasioned by a particular tax falling unequally upon that particular sort of private revenue which is affected by it.

2. The tax which each individual is bound to pay, ought to be certain and not arbitrary. The time of payment, the manner of payment, the quantity to be paid, ought all to be clear and plain to the contributor, and to every other person. Where it is otherwise, every person subject to the tax is put more or less in the power of the tax-getherer, who can either aggravate the tax upon any obnoxious contributor, or extort, by the terror of such aggravation, some present or perquisite to himself. The uncertainty of taxation encourages the insolence, and favours the corruption, of an order of men who are naturally unpopular, even where they are neither insolent nor corrupt. The certainty of what each individual ought to pay is, in taxation, a matter of so great importance, that a very considerable degree of inequality, it appears, I believe, from the experience of all nations, is not near so great an evil as a very small degree of uncertainty.

3. Every tax ought to be levied at the time, or in the manner, in which it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay it. A tax upon the rent of land or of houses, payable at the same term at which such rents are usually paid, is levied at the time when it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay; or when he is most likely to have wherewithal to pay. Taxes upon such consumable goods as are articles of luxury, are all finally paid by the consumer, and generally in a manner that is very convenient for him. He pays them by little and little, as he has occasion to buy the goods. As he is at liberty too, either to buy or not to buy, as he pleases, it must be his own fault if he ever suffers any considerable inconveniency from such taxes.

4. Every tax ought to be so contrived, as both to take out and to keep out of the pockets of the people as little as possible, over and above what it brings into the public treasury of the state. A tax may either take out or

keep out of the pockets of the people a great deal more than it brings into the public treasury, in the four following ways. First, the levying of it may require a great number of officers, whose salaries may eat up the greater part of the produce of the tax, and whose perquisites may impose another additional tax upon the people. Secondly, it may obstruct the industry of the people, and discourage them from applying to certain branches of business which might give maintenance and employment to great multitudes. While it obliges the people to pay, it may thus diminish, or perhaps destroy, some of the funds which might enable them more easily to do so. Thirdly, by the forfeitures and other penalties which those unfortunate individuals incur, who attempt unsuccessfully to evade the tax, it may frequently ruin them, and thereby put an end to the benefit which the community might have received from the employment of their capitals. An injudicious tax offers a great temptation to smuggling. But the penalties of smuggling must arise in proportion to the temptation. The law, contrary to all the ordinary principles of justice, first creates the temptation, and then punishes those who yield to it; and it commonly enhances the punishment, too, in proportion to the very circumstance which ought certainly to alleviate it, the temptation to commit the crime.[52*] Fourthly, by subjecting the people to the frequent visits and the odious examination of the tax-gatherers, it may expose them to much unnecessary trouble, vexation, and oppression; and though vexation is not, strictly speaking, expense, it is certainly equivalent to the expense at which every man would be willing to redeem himself from it. It is in some one or other of these four different ways, that taxes are frequently so much more burdensome to the people than they are beneficial to the sovereign.

The evident justice and utility of the foregoing maxims have recommended them, more or less, to the attention of all nations. All nations have endeavoured, to the best of their judgment, to render their taxes as equal as they could contrive; as certain, as convenient to the contributor, both the time and the mode of payment, and in proportion to the revenue which they brought to the prince, as little burdensome to the people. The following short review of some of the principal taxes which have taken place in different ages and countries, will show, that the endeavours of all nations have not in this respect been equally successful.

ART. I. — *Taxes upon Rent — Taxes upon the Rent of Land.*

A tax upon the rent of land may either be imposed according to a certain canon, every district being valued at a certain rent, which valuation is not afterwards to be altered; or it may be imposed in such a manner, as to vary with every variation in the real rent of the land, and to rise or fall with the improvement or declaration of its cultivation.

A land tax which, like that of Great Britain, is assessed upon each district according to a certain invariable canon, though it should be equal at the time of its first establishment, necessarily becomes unequal in process of time, according to the unequal degrees of improvement or neglect in the cultivation of the different parts of the country. In England, the valuation, according to which the different counties and parishes were assessed to the land tax by the 4th of William and Mary, was very unequal even at its first establishment. This tax, therefore, so far offends against the first of the four maxims above mentioned. It is perfectly agreeable to the other three. It is perfectly certain. The time of payment for the tax, being the same as that for the rent, is as convenient as it can be to the contributor. Though the landlord is, in all cases, the real contributor, the tax is commonly advanced by the tenant, to whom the landlord is obliged to allow it in the payment of the rent. This tax is levied by a much smaller number of officers than any other which affords nearly the same revenue. As the tax upon each district does not rise with the rise of the rent, the sovereign does not share in the profits of the landlord's improvements. Those improvements sometimes contribute, indeed, to the discharge of the other landlords of the district. But the aggravation of the tax, which this may sometimes occasion upon a particular estate, is always so very small, that it never can discourage those improvements, nor keep down the produce of the land below what it would otherwise rise to. As it has no tendency to diminish the quantity, it can have none to raise the price of that produce. It does not obstruct the industry of the people; it subjects the landlord to no other inconveniency besides the unavoidable one of paying the tax.

The advantage, however, which the landlord has derived from the invariable constancy of the valuation, by which all the lands of Great Britain are rated to the land-tax, has been principally owing to some circumstances altogether extraneous to the nature of the tax.

It has been owing in part, to the great prosperity of almost every part of the country, the rents of almost all the estates of Great Britain having, since the time when this valuation was first established, been continually rising, and scarce any of them having fallen. The landlords, therefore, have almost all gained the difference between the tax which they would

have paid, according to the present rent of their estates, and that which they actually pay according to the ancient valuation. Had the state of the country been different, had rents been gradually falling in consequence of the declension of cultivation, the landlords would almost all have lost this difference. In the state of things which has happened to take place since the revolution, the constancy of the valuation has been advantageous to the landlord and hurtful to the sovereign. In a different state of things it might have been advantageous to the sovereign and hurtful to the landlord.

As the tax is made payable in money, so the valuation of the land is expressed in money. Since the establishment of this valuation, the value of silver has been pretty uniform, and there has been no alteration in the standard of the coin, either as to weight or fineness. Had silver risen considerably in its value, as it seems to have done in the course of the two centuries which preceded the discovery of the mines of America, the constancy of the valuation might have proved very oppressive to the landlord. Had silver fallen considerably in its value, as it certainly did for about a century at least after the discovery of those mines, the same constancy of valuation would have reduced very much this branch of the revenue of the sovereign. Had any considerable alteration been made in the standard of the money, either by sinking the same quantity of silver to a lower denomination, or by raising it to a higher; had an ounce of silver, for example, instead of being coined into five shillings and two pence, been coined either into pieces which bore so low a denomination as two shillings and seven pence, or into pieces which bore so high a one as ten shillings and four pence, it would, in the one case, have hurt the revenue of the proprietor, in the other that of the sovereign.

In circumstances, therefore, somewhat different from those which have actually taken place, this constancy of valuation might have been a very great inconveniency, either to the contributors or to the commonwealth. In the course of ages, such circumstances, however, must at some time or other happen. But though empires, like all the other works of men, have all hitherto proved mortal, yet every empire aims at immortality. Every constitution, therefore, which it is meant should be as permanent as the empire itself, ought to be convenient, not in certain circumstances only, but in all circumstances; or ought to be suited, not to those circumstances which are transitory, occasional, or accidental, but to those which are necessary, and therefore always the same.

A tax upon the rent of land, which varies with every variation of the rent, or which rises and falls according to the improvement or neglect of

cultivation, is recommended by that sect of men of letters in France, who call themselves the economists, as the most equitable of all taxes. All taxes, they pretend, fall ultimately upon the rent of land, and ought, therefore, to be imposed equally upon the fund which must finally pay them. That all taxes ought to fall as equally as possible upon the fund which must finally pay them, is certainly true. But without entering into the disagreeable discussion of the metaphysical arguments by which they support their very ingenious theory, it will sufficiently appear, from the following review, what are the taxes which fall finally upon the rent of the land, and what are those which fall finally upon some other fund.

In the Venetian territory, all the arable lands which are given in lease to farmers are taxed at a tenth of the rent.[53*] The leases are recorded in a public register, which is kept by the officers of revenue in each province or district. When the proprietor cultivates his own lands, they are valued according to an equitable estimation, and he is allowed a deduction of one-fifth of the tax; so that for such land he pays only eight instead of ten per cent. of the supposed rent.

A land-tax of this kind is certainly more equal than the land-tax of England. It might not, perhaps, be altogether so certain, and the assessment of the tax might frequently occasion a good deal more trouble to the landlord. It might, too, be a good deal more expensive in the levying.

Such a system of administration, however, might, perhaps, be contrived, as would in a great measure both prevent this uncertainty, and moderate this expense.

The landlord and tenant, for example, might jointly be obliged to record their lease in a public register. Proper penalties might be enacted against concealing or misrepresenting any of the conditions; and if part of those penalties were to be paid to either of the two parties who informed against and convicted the other of such concealment or misrepresentation, it would effectually deter them from combining together in order to defraud the public revenue. All the conditions of the lease might be sufficiently known from such a record.

Some landlords, instead of raising the rent, take a fine for the renewal of the lease. This practice is, in most cases, the expedient of a spendthrift, who, for a sum of ready money sells a future revenue of much greater value. It is, in most cases, therefore, hurtful to the landlord; it is frequently hurtful to the tenant; and it is always hurtful to the community. It frequently takes from the tenant so great a part of his capital, and thereby diminishes so much his ability to cultivate the land,

that he finds it more difficult to pay a small rent than it would otherwise have been to pay a great one. Whatever diminishes his ability to cultivate, necessarily keeps down, below what it would otherwise have been, the most important part of the revenue of the community. By rendering the tax upon such fines a good deal heavier than upon the ordinary rent, this hurtful practice might be discouraged, to the no small advantage of all the different parties concerned, of the landlord, of the tenant, of the sovereign, and of the whole community.

Some leases prescribe to the tenant a certain mode of cultivation, and a certain succession of crops, during the whole continuance of the lease. This condition, which is generally the effect of the landlord's conceit of his own superior knowledge (a conceit in most cases very ill-founded), ought always to be considered as an additional rent, as a rent in service, instead of a rent in money. In order to discourage the practice, which is generally a foolish one, this species of rent might be valued rather high, and consequently taxed somewhat higher than common money-rents.

Some landlords, instead of a rent in money, require a rent in kind, in corn, cattle, poultry, wine, oil, &c.; others, again, require a rent in service. Such rents are always more hurtful to the tenant than beneficial to the landlord. They either take more, or keep more out of the pocket of the former, than they put into that of the latter. In every country where they take place, the tenants are poor and beggarly, pretty much according to the degree in which they take place. By valuing, in the same manner, such rents rather high, and consequently taxing them somewhat higher than common money-rents, a practice which is hurtful to the whole community, might, perhaps, be sufficiently discouraged.

When the landlord chose to occupy himself a part of his own lands, the rent might be valued according to an equitable arbitration of the farmers and landlords in the neighbourhood, and a moderate abatement of the tax might be granted to him, in the same manner as in the Venetian territory, provided the rent of the lands which he occupied did not exceed a certain sum. It is of importance that the landlord should be encouraged to cultivate a part of his own land. His capital is generally greater than that of the tenant, and, with less skill, he can frequently raise a greater produce. The landlord can afford to try experiments, and in generally disposed to do so. His unsuccessful experiments occasion only a moderate loss to himself. His successful ones contribute to the improvement and better cultivation of the whole country. It might be of importance, however, that the abatement of the tax should encourage him to cultivate to a certain extent only. If the landlords should, the greater

part of them, be tempted to farm the whole of their own lands, the country (instead of sober and industrious tenants, who are bound by their own interest to cultivate as well as their capital and skill will allow them) would be filled with idle and profligate bailiffs, whose abusive management would soon degrade the cultivation, and reduce the annual produce of the land, to the diminution, not only of the revenue of their masters, but of the most important part of that of the whole society.

Such a system of administration might, perhaps, free a tax of this kind from any degree of uncertainty, which could occasion either oppression or inconveniency to the contributor; and might, at the same time, serve to introduce into the common management of land such a plan of policy as might contribute a good deal to the general improvement and good cultivation of the country.

The expense of levying a land-tax, which varied with every variation of the rent, would, no doubt, be somewhat greater than that of levying one which was always rated according to a fixed valuation. Some additional expense would necessarily be incurred, both by the different register-offices which it would be proper to establish in the different districts of the country, and by the different valuations which might occasionally be made of the lands which the proprietor chose to occupy himself. The expense of all this, however, might be very moderate, and much below what is incurred in the levying of many other taxes, which afford a very inconsiderable revenue in comparison of what might easily be drawn from a tax of this kind.

The discouragement which a variable land-tax of this kind might give to the improvement of land, seems to be the most important objection which can be made to it. The landlord would certainly be less disposed to improve, when the sovereign, who contributed nothing to the expense, was to share in the profit of the improvement. Even this objection might, perhaps, be obviated, by allowing the landlord, before he began his improvement, to ascertain, in conjunction with the officers of revenue, the actual value of his lands, according to the equitable arbitration of a certain number of landlords and farmers in the neighbourhood, equally chosen by both parties: and by rating him, according to this valuation, for such a number of years as might be fully sufficient for his complete indemnification. To draw the attention of the sovereign towards the improvement of the land, from a regard to the increase of his own revenue, is one of the principal advantages proposed by this species of land-tax. The term, therefore, allowed, for the indemnification of the landlord, ought not to be a great deal longer than what was necessary for

that purpose, lest the remoteness of the interest should discourage too much this attention. It had better, however, be somewhat too long, than in any respect too short. No incitement to the attention of the sovereign can ever counterbalance the smallest discouragement to that of the landlord. The attention of the sovereign can be, at best, but a very general and vague consideration of what is likely to contribute to the better cultivation of the greater part of his dominions. The attention of the landlord is a particular and minute consideration of what is likely to be the most advantageous application of every inch of ground upon his estate. The principal attention of the sovereign ought to be, to encourage, by every means in his power, the attention both of the landlord and of the farmer, by allowing both to pursue their own interest in their own way, and according to their own judgment; by giving to both the most perfect security that they shall enjoy the full recompence of their own industry; and by procuring to both the most extensive market for every part of their produce, in consequence of establishing the easiest and safest communications, both by land and by water, through every part of his own dominions, as well as the most unbounded freedom of exportation to the dominions of all other princes.

If, by such a system of administration, a tax of this kind could be so managed as to give, not only no discouragement, but, on the contrary, some encouragement to the improvement of land, it does not appear likely to occasion any other inconveniency to the landlord, except always the unavoidable one of being obliged to pay the tax.

In all the variations of the state of the society, in the improvement and in the declension of agriculture; in all the variations in the value of silver, and in all those in the standard of the coin, a tax of this kind would, of its own accord, and without any attention of government, readily suit itself to the actual situation of things, and would be equally just and equitable in all those different changes. It would, therefore, be much more proper to be established as a perpetual and unalterable regulation, or as what is called a fundamental law of the commonwealth, than any tax which was always to be levied according to a certain valuation.

Some states, instead of the simple and obvious expedient of a register of leases, have had recourse to the laborious and expensive one of an actual survey and valuation of all the lands in the country. They have suspected, probably, that the lessor and lessee, in order to defraud the public revenue, might combine to conceal the real terms of the lease. Doomsday-book seems to have been the result of a very accurate survey of this kind.

In the ancient dominions of the king of Prussia, the land-tax is assessed according to an actual survey and valuation, which is reviewed and altered from time to time.[54]* According to that valuation, the lay proprietors pay from twenty to twenty-five per cent. of their revenue; ecclesiastics from forty to forty-five per cent. The survey and valuation of Silesia was made by order of the present king, it is said, with great accuracy. According to that valuation, the lands belonging to the bishop of Breslaw are taxed at twenty-five per cent. of their rent. The other revenues of the ecclesiastics of both religions at fifty per cent. The commanderies of the Teutonic order, and of that of Malta, at forty per cent. Lands held by a noble tenure, at thirty-eight and one-third per cent. Lands held by a base tenure, at thirty-five and one-third per cent.

The survey and valuation of Bohemia is said to have been the work of more than a hundred years. It was not perfected till after the peace of 1748, by the orders of the present empress queen.[55]* The survey of the duchy of Milan, which was begun in the time of Charles VI., was not perfected till after 1760. It is esteemed one of the most accurate that has ever been made. The survey of Savoy and Piedmont was executed under the orders of the late king of Sardinia.[56]*

In the dominions of the king of Prussia, the revenue of the church is taxed much higher than that of lay proprietors. The revenue of the church is, the greater part of it, a burden upon the rent of land. It seldom happens that any part of it is applied towards the improvement of land; or is so employed as to contribute, in any respect, towards increasing the revenue of the great body of the people. His Prussian majesty had probably, upon that account, thought it reasonable that it should contribute a good deal more towards relieving the exigencies of the state. In some countries, the lands of the church are exempted from all taxes. In others, they are taxed more lightly than other lands. In the duchy of Milan, the lands which the church possessed before 1575, are rated to the tax at a third only of their value.

In Silesia, lands held by a noble tenure are taxed three per cent. higher than those held by a base tenure. The honours and privileges of different kinds annexed to the former, his Prussian majesty had probably imagined, would sufficiently compensate to the proprietor a small aggravation of the tax; while, at the same time, the humiliating inferiority of the latter would be in some measure alleviated, by being taxed somewhat more lightly. In other countries, the system of taxation, instead of alleviating, aggravates this inequality. In the dominions of the king of Sardinia, and in those provinces of France which are subject to what is

called the real or predial taille, the tax falls altogether upon the lands held by a base tenure. Those held by a noble one are exempted.

A land tax assessed according to a general survey and valuation, how equal soever it may be at first, must, in the course of a very moderate period of time, become unequal. To prevent its becoming so would require the continual and painful attention of government to all the variations in the state and produce of every different farm in the country. The governments of Prussia, of Bohemia, of Sardinia, and of the duchy of Milan, actually exert an attention of this kind; an attention so unsuitable to the nature of government, that it is not likely to be of long continuance, and which, if it is continued, will probably, in the long-run, occasion much more trouble and vexation then it can possibly bring relief to the contributors.

In 1666, the generality of Montauban was assessed to the real or predial taille, according, it is said, to a very exact survey and valuation.[57]* By 1727, this assessment had become altogether unequal. In order to remedy this inconveniency, government has found no better expedient, than to impose upon the whole generality an additional tax of a hundred and twenty thousand livres. This additional tax is rated upon all the different districts subject to the taille according to the old assessment. But it is levied only upon those which, in the actual state of things, are by that assessment under-taxed; and it is applied to the relief of those which, by the same assessment, are over-taxed. Two districts, for example, one of which ought, in the actual state of things, to be taxed at nine hundred, the other at eleven hundred livres, are, by the old assessment, both taxed at a thousand livres. Both these districts are, by the additional tax, rated at eleven hundred livres each. But this additional tax is levied only upon the district under-charged, and it is applied altogether to the relief of that overcharged, which consequently pays only nine hundred livres. The government neither gains nor loses by the additional tax, which is applied altogether to remedy the inequalities arising from the old assessment. The application is pretty much regulated according to the discretion of the intendant of the generality, and must, therefore, be in a great measure arbitrary.

Taxes which are proportioned, not to the Rent, but to the Produce of Land.

Taxes upon the produce of land are, in reality, taxes upon the rent; and though they may be originally advanced by the farmer, are finally paid

by the landlord. When a certain portion of the produce is to be paid away for a tax, the farmer computes as well as he can, what the value of this portion is, one year with another, likely to amount to, and he makes a proportionable abatement in the rent which he agrees to pay to the landlord. There is no farmer who does not compute before hand what the church tythe, which is a land tax of this kind, is, one year with another, likely to amount to.

The tythe, and every other land tax of this kind, under the appearance of perfect equality, are very unequal taxes; a certain portion of the produce being in different situations, equivalent to a very different portion of the rent. In some very rich lands, the produce is so great, that the one half of it is fully sufficient to replace to the farmer his capital employed in cultivation, together with the ordinary profits of farming stock in the neighbourhood. The other half, or, what comes to the same thing, the value of the other half, he could afford to pay as rent to the landlord, if there was no tythe. But if a tenth of the produce is taken from him in the way of tythe, he must require an abatement of the fifth part of his rent, otherwise he cannot get back his capital with the ordinary profit. In this case, the rent of the landlord, instead of amounting to a half, or five-tenths of the whole produce, will amount only to four-tenths of it. In poorer lands, on the contrary, the produce is sometimes so small, and the expense of cultivation so great, that it requires four-fifths of the whole produce, to replace to the farmer his capital with the ordinary profit. In this case, though there was no tythe, the rent of the landlord could amount to no more than one-fifth or two-tenths of the whole produce. But if the farmer pays one-tenth of the produce in the way of tythe, he must require an equal abatement of the rent of the landlord, which will thus be reduced to one-tenth only of the whole produce. Upon the rent of rich lands the tythe may sometimes be a tax of no more than one-fifth part, or four shillings in the pound; whereas upon that of poorer lands, it may sometimes be a tax of one half, or of ten shillings in the pound.

The tythe, as it is frequently a very unequal tax upon the rent, so it is always a great discouragement, both to the improvements of the landlord, and to the cultivation of the farmer. The one cannot venture to make the most important, which are generally the most expensive improvements; nor the other to raise the most valuable, which are generally, too, the most expensive crops; when the church, which lays out no part of the expense, is to share so very largely in the profit. The cultivation of madder was, for a long time, confined by the tythe to the United Provinces, which, being presbyterian countries, and upon that

account exempted from this destructive tax, enjoyed a sort of monopoly of that useful dyeing drug against the rest of Europe. The late attempts to introduce the culture of this plant into England, have been made only in consequence of the statute, which enacted that five shillings an acre should be received in lieu of all manner of tythe upon madder.

As through the greater part of Europe, the church, so in many different countries of Asia, the state, is principally supported by a land tax, proportioned not to the rent, but to the produce of the land. In China, the principal revenue of the sovereign consists in a tenth part of the produce of all the lands of the empire. This tenth part, however, is estimated so very moderately, that, in many provinces, it is said not to exceed a thirtieth part of the ordinary produce. The land tax or land rent which used to be paid to the Mahometan government of Bengal, before that country fell into the hands of the English East India company, is said to have amounted to about a fifth part of the produce. The land tax of ancient Egypt is said likewise to have amounted to a fifth part.

In Asia, this sort of land tax is said to interest the sovereign in the improvement and cultivation of land. The sovereigns of China, those of Bengal while under the Mahometan government, and those of ancient Egypt, are said, accordingly, to have been extremely attentive to the making and maintaining of good roads and navigable canals, in order to increase, as much as possible, both the quantity and value of every part of the produce of the land, by procuring to every part of it the most extensive market which their own dominions could afford. The tythe of the church is divided into such small portions that no one of its proprietors can have any interest of this kind. The parson of a parish could never find his account in making a road or canal to a distant part of the country, in order to extend the market for the produce of his own particular parish. Such taxes, when destined for the maintenance of the state, have some advantages, which may serve in some measure to balance their inconveniency. When destined for the maintenance of the church, they are attended with nothing but inconveniency.

Taxes upon the produce of land may be levied, either in kind, or, according to a certain valuation in money.

The person of a parish, or a gentleman of small fortune who lives upon his estate, may sometimes, perhaps find some advantage in receiving, the one his tythe, and the other his rent, in kind. The quantity to be collected, and the district within which it is to be collected, are so small, that they both can oversee, with their own eyes, the collection and disposal of every part of what is due to them. A gentleman of great

fortune, who lived in the capital, would be in danger of suffering much by the neglect, and more by the fraud, of his factors and agents, if the rents of an estate in a distant province were to be paid to him in this manner. The loss of the sovereign, from the abuse and depredation of his tax-gatherers, would necessarily be much greater. The servants of the most careless private person are, perhaps, more under the eye of their master than those of the most careful prince; and a public revenue, which was paid in kind, would suffer so much from the mismanagement of the collectors, that a very small part of what was levied upon the people would ever arrive at the treasury of the prince. Some part of the public revenue of China, however, is said to be paid in this manner. The mandarins and other tax-gatherers will, no doubt, find their advantage in continuing the practice of a payment, which is so much more liable to abuse than any payment in money.

A tax upon the produce of land, which is levied in money, may be levied, either according to a valuation, which varies with all the variations of the market price; or according to a fixed valuation, a bushel of wheat, for example, being always valued at one and the same money price, whatever may be the state of the market. The produce of a tax levied in the former way will vary only according to the variations in the real produce of the land, according to the improvement or neglect of cultivation. The produce of a tax levied in the latter way will vary, not only according to the variations in the produce of the land, but according both to those in the value of the precious metals, and those in the quantity of those metals, which is at different times contained in coin of the same denomination. The produce of the former will always bear the same proportion to the value of the real produce of the land. The produce of the latter may, at different times, bear very different proportions to that value.

When, instead either of a certain portion of the produce of land, or of the price of a certain portion, a certain sum of money is to be paid in full compensation for all tax or tythe; the tax becomes, in this case, exactly of the same nature with the land tax of England. It neither rises nor falls with the rent of the land. It neither encourages nor discourages improvement. The tythe in the greater part of those parishes which pay what is called a modus, in lieu of all other tythe, is a tax of this kind. During the Mahometan government of Bengal, instead of the payment in kind of the fifth part of the produce, a modus, and, it is said, a very moderate one, was established in the greater part of the districts or zemindaries of the country. Some of the servants of the East India

company, under pretence of restoring the public revenue to its proper value, have, in some provinces, exchanged this modus for a payment in kind. Under their management, this change is likely both to discourage cultivation, and to give new opportunities for abuse in the collection of the public revenue, which has fallen very much below what it was said to have been when it first fell under the management of the company. The servants of the company may, perhaps, have profited by the change, but at the expense, it is probable, both of their masters and of the country.

Taxes upon the Rent of Houses.

The rent of a house may be distinguished into two parts, of which the one may very properly be called the building-rent; the other is commonly called the ground-rent.

The building-rent is the interest or profit of the capital expended in building the house. In order to put the trade of a builder upon a level with other trades, it is necessary that this rent should be sufficient, first, to pay him the same interest which he would have got for his capital, if he had lent it upon good security; and, secondly, to keep the house in constant repair, or, what comes to the same thing, to replace, within a certain term of years, the capital which had been employed in building it. The building-rent, or the ordinary profit of building, is, therefore, everywhere regulated by the ordinary interest of money. Where the market rate of interest is four per cent. the rent of a house, which, over and above paying the ground-rent, affords six or six and a-half per cent. upon the whole expense of building, may, perhaps, afford a sufficient profit to the builder. Where the market rate of interest is five per cent. it may perhaps require seven or seven and a-half per cent. If, in proportion to the interest of money, the trade of the builders affords at any time much greater profit than this, it will soon draw so much capital from other trades as will reduce the profit to its proper level. If it affords at any time much less than this, other trades will soon draw so much capital from it as will again raise that profit.

Whatever part of the whole rent of a house is over and above what is sufficient for affording this reasonable profit, naturally goes to the ground-rent; and, where the owner of the ground and the owner of the building are two different persons, is, in most cases, completely paid to the former. This surplus rent is the price which the inhabitant of the house pays for some real or supposed advantage of the situation. In country houses, at a distance from any great town, where there is plenty

of ground to chuse upon, the ground-rent is scarce any thing, or no more than what the ground which the house stands upon would pay, if employed in agriculture. In country villas, in the neighbourhood of some great town, it is sometimes a good deal higher; and the peculiar conveniency or beauty of situation is there frequently very well paid for. Ground-rents are generally highest in the capital, and in those particular parts of it where there happens to be the greatest demand for houses, whatever be the reason of that demand, whether for trade and business, for pleasure and society, or for mere vanity and fashion.

A tax upon house-rent, payable by the tenant, and proportioned to the whole rent of each house, could not, for any considerable time at least, affect the building-rent. If the builder did not get his reasonable profit, he would be obliged to quit the trade; which, by raising the demand for building, would, in a short time, bring back his profit to its proper level with that of other trades. Neither would such a tax fall altogether upon the ground-rent; but it would divide itself in such a manner, as to fall partly upon the inhabitant of the house, and partly upon the owner of the ground.

Let us suppose, for example, that a particular person judges that he can afford for house-rent an expense of sixty pounds a-year; and let us suppose, too, that a tax of four shillings in the pound, or of one-fifth, payable by the inhabitant, is laid upon house-rent. A house of sixty pounds rent will, in that case, cost him seventy-two pounds a-year, which is twelve pounds more than he thinks he can afford. He will, therefore, content himself with a worse house, or a house of fifty pounds rent, which, with the additional ten pounds that he must pay for the tax, will make up the sum of sixty pounds a-year, the expense which he judges he can afford, and, in order to pay the tax, he will give up a part of the additional conveniency which he might have had from a house of ten pounds a-year more rent. He will give up, I say, a part of this additional conveniency; for he will seldom be obliged to give up the whole, but will, in consequence of the tax, get a better house for fifty pounds a-year, than he could have got if there had been no tax. For as a tax of this kind, by taking away this particular competitor, must diminish the competition for houses of sixty pounds rent, so it must likewise diminish it for those of fifty pounds rent, and in the same manner for those of all other rents, except the lowest rent, for which it would for some time increase the competition. But the rents of every class of houses for which the competition was diminished, would necessarily be more or less reduced. As no part of this reduction, however, could for any considerable time at

least, affect the building-rent, the whole of it must, in the long-run, necessarily fall upon the ground-rent. The final payment of this tax, therefore, would fall partly upon the inhabitant of the house, who, in order to pay his share, would be obliged to give up part of his conveniency; and partly upon the owner of the ground, who, in order to pay his share, would be obliged to give up a part of his revenue. In what proportion this final payment would be divided between them, it is not, perhaps, very easy to ascertain. The division would probably be very different in different circumstances, and a tax of this kind might, according to those different circumstances, affect very unequally, both the inhabitant of the house and the owner of the ground.

The inequality with which a tax of this kind might fall upon the owners of different ground-rents, would arise altogether from the accidental inequality of this division. But the inequality with which it might fall upon the inhabitants of different houses, would arise, not only from this, but from another cause. The proportion of the expense of house-rent to the whole expense of living, is different in the different degrees of fortune. It is, perhaps, highest in the highest degree, and it diminishes gradually through the inferior degrees, so as in general to be lowest in the lowest degree. The necessaries of life occasion the great expense of the poor. They find it difficult to get food, and the greater part of their little revenue is spent in getting it. The luxuries and vanities of life occasion the principal expense of the rich; and a magnificent house embellishes and sets off to the best advantage all the other luxuries and vanities which they possess. A tax upon house-rents, therefore, would in general fall heaviest upon the rich; and in this sort of inequality there would not, perhaps, be any thing very unreasonable. It is not very unreasonable that the rich should contribute to the public expense, not only in proportion to their revenue, but something more than in that proportion.

The rent of houses, though it in some respects resembles the rent of land, is in one respect essentially different from it. The rent of land is paid for the use of a productive subject. The land which pays it produces it. The rent of houses is paid for the use of an unproductive subject. Neither the house, nor the ground which it stands upon, produce any thing. The person who pays the rent, therefore, must draw it from some other source of revenue, distinct from and independent of this subject. A tax upon the rent of houses, so far as it falls upon the inhabitants, must be drawn from the same source as the rent itself, and must be paid from their revenue, whether derived from the wages of labour, the profits of

stock, or the rent of land. So far as it falls upon the inhabitants, it is one of those taxes which fall, not upon one only, but indifferently upon all the three different sources of revenue; and is, in every respect, of the same nature as a tax upon any any other sort of consumable commodities. In general, there is not perhaps, any one article of expense or consumption by which the liberality or narrowness of a man's whole expense can be better judged of than by his house-rent. A proportional tax upon this particular article of expense might, perhaps, produce a more considerable revenue than any which has hitherto been drawn from it in any part of Europe. If the tax, indeed, was very high, the greater part of people would endeavour to evade it as much as they could, by contenting themselves with smaller houses, and by turning the greater part of their expense into some other channel.

The rent of houses might easily be ascertained with sufficient accuracy, by a policy of the same kind with that which would be necessary for ascertaining the ordinary rent of land. Houses not inhabited ought to pay no tax. A tax upon them would fall altogether upon the proprietor, who would thus be taxed for a subject which afforded him neither conveniency nor revenue. Houses inhabited by the proprietor ought to be rated, not according to the expense which they might have cost in building, but according to the rent which an equitable arbitration might judge them likely to bring if leased to a tenant. If rated according to the expense which they might have cost in building, a tax of three or four shillings in the pound, joined with other taxes, would ruin almost all the rich and great families of this, and, I believe, of every other civilized country. Whoever will examine with attention the different town and country houses of some of the richest and greatest families in this country, will find that, at the rate of only six and a-half, or seven per cent. upon the original expense of building, their house-rent is nearly equal to the whole neat rent of their estates. It is the accumulated expense of several successive generations, laid out upon objects of great beauty and magnificence, indeed, but, in proportion to what they cost, of very small exchangeable value.[58*]

Ground-rents are a still more proper subject of taxation than the rent of houses. A tax upon ground-rents would not raise the rent of houses; it would fall altogether upon the owner of the ground-rent, who acts always as a monopolist, and exacts the greatest rent which can be got for the use of his ground. More or less can be got for it, according as the competitors happen to be richer or poorer, or can afford to gratify their fancy for a particular spot of ground at a greater or smaller expense. In every

country, the greatest number of rich competitors is in the capital, and it is there accordingly that the highest ground-rents are always to be found. As the wealth of those competitors would in no respect be increased by a tax upon ground-rents, they would not probably be disposed to pay more for the use of the ground. Whether the tax was to be advanced by the inhabitant or by the owner of the ground, would be of little importance. The more the inhabitant was obliged to pay for the tax, the less he would incline to pay for the ground; so that the final payment of the tax would fall altogether upon the owner of the ground-rent. The ground-rents of uninhabited houses ought to pay no tax.

Both ground-rents, and the ordinary rent of land, are a species of revenue which the owner, in many cases, enjoys without any care or attention of his own. Though a part of this revenue should be taken from him in order to defray the expenses of the state, no discouragement will thereby be given to any sort of industry. The annual produce of the land and labour of the society, the real wealth and revenue of the great body of the people, might be the same after such a tax as before. Ground-rents, and the ordinary rent of land, are therefore, perhaps, the species of revenue which can best bear to have a peculiar tax imposed upon them.

Ground-rents seem, in this respect, a more proper subject of peculiar taxation, than even the ordinary rent of land. The ordinary rent of land is, in many cases, owing partly, at least, to the attention and good management of the landlord. A very heavy tax might discourage, too much, this attention and good management. Ground-rents, so far as they exceed the ordinary rent of land, are altogether owing to the good government of the sovereign, which, by protecting the industry either of the whole people or of the inhabitants of some particular place, enables them to pay so much more than its real value for the ground which they build their houses upon; or to make to its owner so much more than compensation for the loss which he might sustain by this use of it. Nothing can be more reasonable, than that a fund, which owes its existence to the good government of the state, should be taxed peculiarly, or should contribute something more than the greater part of other funds, towards the support of that government.

Though, in many different countries of Europe, taxes have been imposed upon the rent of houses, I do not know of any in which ground-rents have been considered as a separate subject of taxation. The contrivers of taxes have, probably, found some difficulty in ascertaining what part of the rent ought to be considered as ground-rent, and what part ought to be considered as building-rent. It should not, however,

seem very difficult to distinguish those two parts of the rent from one another.

In Great Britain the rent of houses is supposed to be taxed in the same proportion as the rent of land, by what is called the annual land tax. The valuation, according to which each different parish and district is assessed to this tax, is always the same. It was originally extremely unequal, and it still continues to be so. Through the greater part of the kingdom this tax falls still more lightly upon the rent of houses than upon that of land. In some few districts only, which were originally rated high, and in which the rents of houses have fallen considerably, the land tax of three or four shillings in the pound is said to amount to an equal proportion of the real rent of houses. Untenanted houses, though by law subject to the tax, are, in most districts, exempted from it by the favour of assessors; and this exemption sometimes occasions some little variation in the rate of particular houses, though that of the district is always the same. Improvements of rent, by new buildings, repairs, &c. go to the discharge of the district, which occasions still further variations in the rate of particular houses.

In the province of Holland,[59*] every house is taxed at two and a-half per cent. of its value, without any regard, either to the rent which it actually pays, or to the circumstance of its being tenanted or untenanted. There seems to be a hardship in obliging the proprietor to pay a tax for an untenanted house, from which he can derive no revenue, especially so very heavy a tax. In Holland, where the market rate of interest does not exceed three per cent., two and a-half per cent. upon the whole value of the house must, in most cases, amount to more than a third of the building-rent, perhaps of the whole rent. The valuation, indeed, according to which the houses are rated, though very unequal, in said to be always below the real value. When a house is rebuilt, improved, or enlarged, there is a new valuation, and the tax is rated accordingly.

The contrivers of the several taxes which in England have, at different times, been imposed upon houses, seem to have imagined that there was some great difficulty in ascertaining, with tolerable exactness, what was the real rent of every house. They have regulated their taxes, therefore, according to some more obvious circumstance, such as they had probably imagined would, in most cases, bear some proportion to the rent.

The first tax of this kind was hearth-money; or a tax of two shillings upon every hearth. In order to ascertain how many hearths were in the house, it was necessary that the tax-gatherer should enter every room in

it. This odious visit rendered the tax odious. Soon after the Revolution, therefore, it was abolished as a badge of slavery.

The next tax of this kind was a tax of two shillings upon every dwelling-house inhabited. A house with ten windows to pay four shillings more. A house with twenty windows and upwards to pay eight shillings. This tax was afterwards so far altered, that houses with twenty windows, and with less than thirty, were ordered to pay ten shillings, and those with thirty windows and upwards to pay twenty shillings. The number of windows can, in most cases, be counted from the outside, and, in all cases, without entering every room in the house. The visit of the tax-gatherer, therefore, was less offensive in this tax than in the hearth-money.

This tax was afterwards repealed, and in the room of it was established the window-tax, which has undergone two several alterations and augmentations. The window tax, as it stands at present (January 1775), over and above the duty of three shillings upon every house in England, and of one shilling upon every house in Scotland, lays a duty upon every window, which in England augments gradually from twopence, the lowest rate upon houses with not more than seven windows, to two shillings, the highest rate upon houses with twenty-five windows and upwards.

The principal objection to all such taxes is their inequality; an inequality of the worst kind, as they must frequently fall much heavier upon the poor than upon the rich. A house of ten pounds rent in a country town, may sometimes have more windows than a house of five hundred pounds rent in London; and though the inhabitant of the former in likely to be a much poorer man than that of the latter, yet, so far as his contribution is regulated by the window tax, he must contribute more to the support of the state. Such taxes are, therefore, directly contrary to the first of the four maxims above mentioned. They do not seem to offend much against any of the other three.

The natural tendency of the window tax, and of all other taxes upon houses, is to lower rents. The more a man pays for the tax, the less, it is evident, he can afford to pay for the rent. Since the imposition of the window tax, however, the rents of houses have, upon the whole, risen more or less, in almost every town and village of Great Britain, with which I am acquainted. Such has been, almost everywhere, the increase of the demand for houses, that it has raised the rents more than the window tax could sink them; one of the many proofs of the great

prosperity of the country, and of the increasing revenue of its inhabitants. Had it not been for the tax, rents would probably have risen still higher.

ART. II. — *Taxes upon Profit, or upon the Revenue arising from Stock.*

The revenue or profit arising from stock naturally divides itself into two parts; that which pays the interest, and which belongs to the owner of the stock; and that surplus part which is over and above what is necessary for paying the interest.

This latter part of profit is evidently a subject not taxable directly. It is the compensation, and, in most cases, it is no more than a very moderate compensation for the risk and trouble of employing the stock. The employer must have this compensation, otherwise he cannot, consistently with his own interest, continue the employment. If he was taxed directly, therefore, in proportion to the whole profit, he would be obliged either to raise the rate of his profit, or to charge the tax upon the interest of money; that is, to pay less interest. If he raised the rate of his profit in proportion to the tax, the whole tax, though it might be advanced by him, would be finally paid by one or other of two different sets of people, according to the different ways in which he might employ the stock of which he had the management. If he employed it as a farming stock, in the cultivation of land, he could raise the rate of his profit only by retaining a greater portion, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of a greater portion, of the produce of the land; and as this could be done only by a reduction of rent, the final payment of the tax would fall upon the landlord. If he employed it as a mercantile or manufacturing stock, he could raise the rate of his profit only by raising the price of his goods; in which case, the final payment of the tax would fall altogether upon the consumers of those goods. If he did not raise the rate of his profit, he would be obliged to charge the whole tax upon that part of it which was allotted for the interest of money. He could afford less interest for whatever stock he borrowed, and the whole weight of the tax would, in this case, fall ultimately upon the interest of money. So far as he could not relieve himself from the tax in the one way, he would be obliged to relieve himself in the other.

The interest of money seems, at first sight, a subject equally capable of being taxed directly as the rent of land. Like the rent of land, it is a neat produce, which remains, after completely compensating the whole risk and trouble of employing the stock. As a tax upon the rent of land cannot raise rents, because the neat produce which remains, after

replacing the stock of the farmer, together with his reasonable profit, cannot be greater after the tax than before it, so, for the same reason, a tax upon the interest of money could not raise the rate of interest; the quantity of stock or money in the country, like the quantity of land, being supposed to remain the same after the tax as before it. The ordinary rate of profit, it has been shewn, in the first book, is everywhere regulated by the quantity of stock to be employed, in proportion to the quantity of the employment, or of the business which must be done by it. But the quantity of the employment, or of the business to be done by stock, could neither be increased nor diminished by any tax upon the interest of money. If the quantity of the stock to be employed, therefore, was neither increased nor diminished by it, the ordinary rate of profit would necessarily remain the same. But the portion of this profit, necessary for compensating the risk and trouble of the employer, would likewise remain the same; that risk and trouble being in no respect altered. The residue, therefore, that portion which belongs to the owner of the stock, and which pays the interest of money, would necessarily remain the same too. At first sight, therefore, the interest of money seems to be a subject as fit to be taxed directly as the rent of land.

There are, however, two different circumstances, which render the interest of money a much less proper subject of direct taxation than the rent of land.

First, the quantity and value of the land which any man possesses, can never be a secret, and can always be ascertained with great exactness. But the whole amount of the capital stock which he possesses is almost always a secret, and can scarce ever be ascertained with tolerable exactness. It is liable, besides, to almost continual variations. A year seldom passes away, frequently not a month, sometimes scarce a single day, in which it does not rise or fall more or less. An inquisition into every man’s private circumstances, and an inquisition which, in order to accommodate the tax to them, watched over all the fluctuations of his fortune, would be a source of such continual and endless vexation as no person could support.

Secondly, land is a subject which cannot be removed; whereas stock easily may. The proprietor of land is necessarily a citizen of the particular country in which his estate lies. The proprietor of stock is properly a citizen of the world, and is not necessarily attached to any particular country. He would be apt to abandon the country in which he was exposed to a vexatious inquisition, in order to be assessed to a burdensome tax; and would remove his stock to some other country,

where he could either carry on his business, or enjoy his fortune more at his ease. By removing his stock, he would put an end to all the industry which it had maintained in the country which he left. Stock cultivates land; stock employs labour. A tax which tended to drive away stock from any particular country, would so far tend to dry up every source of revenue, both to the sovereign and to the society. Not only the profits of stock, but the rent of land, and the wages of labour, would necessarily be more or less diminished by its removal.

The nations, accordingly, who have attempted to tax the revenue arising from stock, instead of any severe inquisition of this kind, have been obliged to content themselves with some very loose, and, therefore, more or less arbitrary estimation. The extreme inequality and uncertainty of a tax assessed in this manner, can be compensated only by its extreme moderation; in consequence of which, every man finds himself rated so very much below his real revenue, that he gives himself little disturbance though his neighbour should be rated somewhat lower.

By what is called the land tax in England, it was intended that the stock should be taxed in the same proportion as land. When the tax upon land was at four shillings in the pound, or at one-fifth of the supposed rent, it was intended that stock should be taxed at one-fifth of the supposed interest. When the present annual land tax was first imposed, the legal rate of interest was six per cent. Every hundred pounds stock, accordingly, was supposed to be taxed at twenty-four shillings, the fifth part of six pounds. Since the legal rate of interest has been reduced to five per cent. every hundred pounds stock is supposed to be taxed at twenty shillings only. The sum to be raised, by what is called the land tax, was divided between the country and the principal towns. The greater part of it was laid upon the country; and of what was laid upon the towns, the greater part was assessed upon the houses. What remained to be assessed upon the stock or trade of the towns (for the stock upon the land was not meant to be taxed) was very much below the real value of that stock or trade. Whatever inequalities, therefore, there might be in the original assessment, gave little disturbance. Every parish and district still continues to be rated for its land, its houses, and its stock, according to the original assessment; and the almost universal prosperity of the country, which, in most places, has raised very much the value of all these, has rendered those inequalities of still less importance now. The rate, too, upon each district, continuing always the same, the uncertainty of this tax, so far as it might be assessed upon the stock of any individual, has been very much diminished, as well as rendered of much

less consequence. If the greater part of the lands of England are not rated to the land tax at half their actual value, the greater part of the stock of England is, perhaps, scarce rated at the fiftieth part of its actual value. In some towns, the whole land tax is assessed upon houses; as in Westminster, where stock and trade are free. It is otherwise in London.

In all countries, a severe inquisition into the circumstances of private persons has been carefully avoided.

At Hamburg,[60]* every inhabitant is obliged to pay to the state one fourth per cent. of all that he possesses; and as the wealth of the people of Hamburg consists principally in stock, this tax may be considered as a tax upon stock. Every man assesses himself, and, in the presence of the magistrate, puts annually into the public coffer a certain sum of money, which he declares upon oath, to be one fourth per cent. of all that he possesses, but without declaring what it amounts to, or being liable to any examination upon that subject. This tax is generally supposed to be paid with great fidelity. In a small republic, where the people have entire confidence in their magistrates, are convinced of the necessity of the tax for the support of the state, and believe that it will be faithfully applied to that purpose, such conscientious and voluntary payment may sometimes be expected. It is not peculiar to the people of Hamburg.

The canton of Underwald, in Switzerland, is frequently ravaged by storms and inundations, and it is thereby exposed to extraordinary expenses. Upon such occasions the people assemble, and every one is said to declare with the greatest frankness what he is worth, in order to be taxed accordingly. At Zurich, the law orders, that in cases of necessity, every one should be taxed in proportion to his revenue; the amount of which he is obliged to declare upon oath. They have no suspicion, it is said, that any of their fellow-citizens will deceive them. At Basil, the principal revenue of the state arises from a small custom upon goods exported. All the citizens make oath, that they will pay every three months all the taxes imposed by law. All merchants, and even all inn-keepers, are trusted with keeping themselves the account of the goods which they sell, either within or without the territory. At the end of every three months, they send this account to the treasurer, with the amount of the tax computed at the bottom of it. It is not suspected that the revenue suffers by this confidence.[61]*

To oblige every citizen to declare publicly upon oath, the amount of his fortune, must not, it seems, in those Swiss cantons, be reckoned a hardship. At Hamburg it would be reckoned the greatest. Merchants engaged in the hazardous projects of trade, all tremble at the thoughts of

being obliged, at all times, to expose the real state of their circumstances. The ruin of their credit, and the miscarriage of their projects, they foresee, would too often be the consequence. A sober and parsimonious people, who are strangers to all such projects, do not feel that they have occasion for any such concealment.

In Holland, soon after the exaltation of the late prince of Orange to the stadtholdership, a tax of two per cent. or the fiftieth penny, as it was called, was imposed upon the whole substance of every citizen. Every citizen assessed himself, and paid his tax, in the same manner as at Hamburg, and it was in general supposed to have been paid with great fidelity. The people had at that time the greatest affection for their new government, which they had just established by a general insurrection. The tax was to be paid but once, in order to relieve the state in a particular exigency. It was, indeed, too heavy to be permanent. In a country where the market rate of interest seldom exceeds three per cent., a tax of two per cent. amounts to thirteen shillings and four pence in the pound, upon the highest neat revenue which is commonly drawn from stock. It is a tax which very few people could pay, without encroaching more or less upon their capitals. In a particular exigency, the people may, from great public zeal, make a great effort, and give up even a part of their capital, in order to relieve the state. But it is impossible that they should continue to do so for any considerable time; and if they did, the tax would soon ruin them so completely, as to render them altogether incapable of supporting the state.

The tax upon stock, imposed by the land tax bill in England, though it is proportioned to the capital, is not intended to diminish or take away any part of that capital. It is meant only to be a tax upon the interest of money, proportioned to that upon the rent of land; so that when the latter is at four shillings in the pound, the former may be at four shillings in the pound too. The tax at Hamburg, and the still more moderate taxes of Underwald and Zurich, are meant, in the same manner, to be taxes, not upon the capital, but upon the interest or neat revenue of stock. That of Holland was meant to be a tax upon the capital.

Taxes upon the Profit of particular Employments.

In some countries, extraordinary taxes are imposed upon the profits of stock; sometimes when employed in particular branches of trade, and sometimes when employed in agriculture.

Of the former kind, are in England, the tax upon hawkers and pedlars, that upon hackney-coaches and chairs, and that which the keepers of ale-houses pay for a licence to retail ale and spiritous liquors. During the late war, another tax of the same kind was proposed upon shops. The war having been undertaken, it was said, in defence of the trade of the country, the merchants, who were to profit by it, ought to contribute towards the support of it.

A tax, however, upon the profits of stock employed in any particular branch of trade, can never fall finally upon the dealers (who must in all ordinary cases have their reasonable profit, and, where the competition is free, can seldom have more than that profit), but always upon the consumers, who must be obliged to pay in the price of the goods the tax which the dealer advances; and generally with some overcharge.

A tax of this kind, when it is proportioned to the trade of the dealer, is finally paid by the consumer, and occasions no oppression to the dealer. When it is not so proportioned, but is the same upon all dealers, though in this case, too, it is finally paid by the consumer, yet it favours the great, and occasions some oppression to the small dealer. The tax of five shillings a-week upon every hackney coach, and that of ten shillings a-year upon every hackney chair, so far as it is advanced by the different keepers of such coaches and chairs, is exactly enough proportioned to the extent of their respective dealings. It neither favours the great, nor oppresses the smaller dealer. The tax of twenty shillings a-year for a licence to sell ale; of forty shillings for a licence to sell spiritous liquors; and of forty shillings more for a licence to sell wine, being the same upon all retailers, must necessarily give some advantage to the great, and occasion some oppression to the small dealers. The former must find it more easy to get back the tax in the price of their goods than the latter. The moderation of the tax, however, renders this inequality of less importance; and it may to many people appear not improper to give some discouragement to the multiplication of little ale-houses. The tax upon shops, it was intended, should be the same upon all shops. It could not well have been otherwise. It would have been impossible to proportion, with tolerable exactness, the tax upon a shop to the extent of the trade carried on in it, without such an inquisition as would have been altogether insupportable in a free country. If the tax had been considerable, it would have oppressed the small, and forced almost the whole retail trade into the hands of the great dealers. The competition of the former being taken away, the latter would have enjoyed a monopoly of the trade; and, like all other monopolists, would soon have combined

to raise their profits much beyond what was necessary for the payment of the tax. The final payment, instead of falling upon the shop-keeper, would have fallen upon the consumer, with a considerable overcharge to the profit of the shop-keeper. For these reasons, the project of a tax upon shops was laid aside, and in the room of it was substituted the subsidy, 1759.

What in France is called the personal taille, is perhaps, the most important tax upon the profits of stock employed in agriculture, that is levied in any part of Europe.

In the disorderly state of Europe, during the prevalence of the feudal government, the sovereign was obliged to content himself with taxing those who were too weak to refuse to pay taxes. The great lords, though willing to assist him upon particular emergencies, refused to subject themselves to any constant tax, and he was not strong enough to force them. The occupiers of land all over Europe were, the greater part of them, originally bond-men. Through the greater part of Europe, they were gradually emancipated. Some of them acquired the property of landed estates, which they held by some base or ignoble tenure, sometimes under the king, and sometimes under some other great lord, like the ancient copy-holders of England. Others, without acquiring the property, obtained leases for terms of years, of the lands which they occupied under their lord, and thus became less dependent upon him. The great lords seem to have beheld the degree of prosperity and independency, which this inferior order of men had thus come to enjoy, with a malignant and contemptuous indignation, and willingly consented that the sovereign should tax them. In some countries, this tax was confined to the lands which were held in property by an ignoble tenure; and, in this case, the taille was said to be real. The land tax established by the late king of Sardinia, and the taille in the provinces of Languedoc, Provence, Dauphine, and Brittany; in the generality of Montauban, and in the elections of Agen and Condom, as well as in some other districts of France; are taxes upon lands held in property by an ignoble tenure. In other countries, the tax was laid upon the supposed profits of all those who held, in farm or lease, lands belonging to other people, whatever might be the tenure by which the proprietor held them; and in this case, the taille was said to be personal. In the greater part of those provinces of France, which are called the countries of elections, the taille is of this kind. The real taille, as it is imposed only upon a part of the lands of the country, is necessarily an unequal, but it is not always an arbitrary tax, though it is so upon some occasions. The personal taille, as it is intended

to be proportioned to the profits of a certain class of people, which can only be guessed at, is necessarily both arbitrary and unequal.

In France, the personal taille at present (1775) annually imposed upon the twenty generalities, called the countries of elections, amounts to 40,107,239 livres, 16 sous.[62*] The proportion in which this sum is assessed upon those different provinces, varies from year to year, according to the reports which are made to the king's council concerning the goodness or badness of the crops, as well as other circumstances, which may either increase or diminish their respective abilities to pay. Each generality is divided into a certain number of elections; and the proportion in which the sum imposed upon the whole generality is divided among those different elections, varies likewise from year to year, according to the reports made to the council concerning their respective abilities. It seems impossible, that the council, with the best intentions, can ever proportion, with tolerable exactness, either of these two assessments to the real abilities of the province or district upon which they are respectively laid. Ignorance and misinformation must always, more or less, mislead the most upright council. The proportion which each parish ought to support of what is assessed upon the whole election, and that which each individual ought to support of what is assessed upon his particular parish, are both in the same manner varied from year to year, according as circumstances are supposed to require. These circumstances are judged of, in the one case, by the officers of the election, in the other, by those of the parish; and both the one and the other are, more or less, under the direction and influence of the intendant. Not only ignorance and misinformation, but friendship, party animosity, and private resentment, are said frequently to mislead such assessors. No man subject to such a tax, it is evident, can ever be certain, before he is assessed, of what he is to pay. He cannot even be certain after he is assessed. If any person has been taxed who ought to have been exempted, or if any person has been taxed beyond his proportion, though both must pay in the mean time, yet if they complain, and make good their complaints, the whole parish is reimposed next year, in order to reimburse them. If any of the contributors become bankrupt or insolvent, the collector is obliged to advance his tax; and the whole parish is reimposed next year, in order to reimburse the collector. If the collector himself should become bankrupt, the parish which elects him must answer for his conduct to the receiver-general of the election. But, as it might be troublesome for the receiver to prosecute the whole parish, he takes at his choice five or six of the richest contributors, and obliges

them to make good what had been lost by the insolvency of the collector. The parish is afterwards reimposed, in order to reimburse those five or six. Such reimpositions are always over and above the taille of the particular year in which they are laid on.

When a tax is imposed upon the profits of stock in a particular branch of trade, the traders are all careful to bring no more goods to market than what they can sell at a price sufficient to reimburse them from advancing the tax. Some of them withdraw a part of their stocks from the trade, and the market is more sparingly supplied than before. The price of the goods rises, and the final payment of the tax falls upon the consumer. But when a tax is imposed upon the profits of stock employed in agriculture, it is not the interest of the farmers to withdraw any part of their stock from that employment. Each farmer occupies a certain quantity of land, for which he pays rent. For the proper cultivation of this land, a certain quantity of stock is necessary; and by withdrawing any part of this necessary quantity, the farmer is not likely to be more able to pay either the rent or the tax. In order to pay the tax, it can never be his interest to diminish the quantity of his produce, nor consequently to supply the market more sparingly than before. The tax, therefore, will never enable him to raise the price of his produce, so as to reimburse himself, by throwing the final payment upon the consumer. The farmer, however, must have his reasonable profit as well as every other dealer, otherwise he must give up the trade. After the imposition of a tax of this kind, he can get this reasonable profit only by paying less rent to the landlord. The more he is obliged to pay in the way of tax, the less he can afford to pay in the way of rent. A tax of this kind, imposed during the currency of a lease, may, no doubt, distress or ruin the farmer. Upon the renewal of the lease, it must always fall upon the landlord.

In the countries where the personal taille takes place, the farmer is commonly assessed in proportion to the stock which he appears to employ in cultivation. He is, upon this account, frequently afraid to have a good team of horses or oxen, but endeavours to cultivate with the meanest and most wretched instruments of husbandry that he can. Such is his distrust in the justice of his assessors, that he counterfeits poverty, and wishes to appear scarce able to pay any thing, for fear of being obliged to pay too much. By this miserable policy, he does not, perhaps, always consult his own interest in the most effectual manner; and he probably loses more by the diminution of his produce, than he saves by that of his tax. Though, in consequence of this wretched cultivation, the market is, no doubt, somewhat worse supplied; yet, the small rise of

price which this may occasion, as it is not likely even to indemnify the farmer for the diminution of his produce, it is still less likely to enable him to pay more rent to the landlord. The public, the farmer, the landlord, all suffer more or less by this degraded cultivation. That the personal taille tends, in many different ways, to discourage cultivation, and consequently to dry up the principal source of the wealth of every great country, I have already had occasion to observe in the third book of this Inquiry.

What are called poll-taxes in the southern provinces of North America, and the West India islands, annual taxes of so much a-head upon every negro, are properly taxes upon the profits of a certain species of stock employed in agriculture. As the planters, are the greater part of them, both farmers and landlords, the final payment of the tax falls upon them in their quality of landlords, without any retribution.

Taxes of so much a head upon the bondmen employed in cultivation, seem anciently to have been common all over Europe. There subsists at present a tax of this kind in the empire of Russia. It is probably upon this account that poll-taxes of all kinds have often been represented as badges of slavery. Every tax, however, is to the person who pays it, a badge, not of slavery, but of liberty. It denotes that he is subject to government, indeed; but that, as he has some property, he cannot himself be the property of a master. A poll-tax upon slaves is altogether different from a poll-tax upon freemen. The latter is paid by the persons upon whom it is imposed; the former, by a different set of persons. The latter is either altogether arbitrary, or altogether unequal, and, in most cases, is both the one and the other; the former, though in some respects unequal, different slaves being of different values, is in no respect arbitrary. Every master, who knows the number of his own slaves, knows exactly what he has to pay. Those different taxes, however, being called by the same name, have been considered as of the same nature.

The taxes which in Holland are imposed upon men and maid servants, are taxes, not upon stock, but upon expense; and so far resemble the taxes upon consumable commodities. The tax of a guinea a-head for every man-servant, which has lately been imposed in Great Britain, is of the same kind. It falls heaviest upon the middling rank. A man of two hundred a-year may keep a single man-servant. A man of ten thousand a-year will not keep fifty. It does not affect the poor.

Taxes upon the profits of stock, in particular employments, can never affect the interest of money. Nobody will lend his money for less interest to those who exercise the taxed, than to those who exercise the untaxed

employments. Taxes upon the revenue arising from stock in all employments, where the government attempts to levy them with any degree of exactness, will, in many cases, fall upon the interest of money. The vingtieme, or twentieth penny, in France, is a tax of the same kind with what is called the land tax in England, and is assessed, in the same manner, upon the revenue arising upon land, houses, and stock. So far as it affects stock, it is assessed, though not with great rigour, yet with much more exactness than that part of the land tax in England which is imposed upon the same fund. It, in many cases, falls altogether upon the interest of money. Money is frequently sunk in France, upon what are called contracts for the constitution of a rent; that is, perpetual annuities, redeemable at any time by the debtor, upon payment of the sum originally advanced, but of which this redemption is not exigible by the creditor except in particular cases. The vingtieme seems not to have raised the rate of those annuities, though it is exactly levied upon them all.

APPENDIX TO ARTICLES I. AND II. — *Taxes upon the Capital Value of Lands, Houses, and Stock.*

While property remains in the possession of the same person, whatever permanent taxes may have been imposed upon it, they have never been intended to diminish or take away any part of its capital value, but only some part of the revenue arising from it. But when property changes hands, when it is transmitted either from the dead to the living, or from the living to the living, such taxes have frequently been imposed upon it as necessarily take away some part of its capital value.

The transference of all sorts of property from the dead to the living, and that of immoveable property of land and houses from the living to the living, are transactions which are in their nature either public and notorious, or such as cannot be long concealed. Such transactions, therefore, may be taxed directly. The transference of stock or moveable property, from the living to the living, by the lending of money, is frequently a secret transaction, and may always be made so. It cannot easily, therefore, be taxed directly. It has been taxed indirectly in two different ways; first, by requiring that the deed, containing the obligation to repay, should be written upon paper or parchment which had paid a certain stamp duty, otherwise not to be valid; secondly, by requiring, under the like penalty of invalidity, that it should be recorded either in a public or secret register, and by imposing certain duties upon such

registration. Stamp duties, and duties of registration, have frequently been imposed likewise upon the deeds transferring property of all kinds from the dead to the living, and upon those transferring immoveable property from the living to the living; transactions which might easily have been taxed directly.

The vicesima hereditatum, or the twentieth penny of inheritances, imposed by Augustus upon the ancient Romans, was a tax upon the transference of property from the dead to the living. Dion Cassius,[63]* the author who writes concerning it the least indistinctly, says, that it was imposed upon all successions, legacies and donations, in case of death, except upon those to the nearest relations, and to the poor.

Of the same kind is the Dutch tax upon successions.[64]* Collateral successions are taxed according to the degree of relation, from five to thirty per cent. upon the whole value of the succession. Testamentary donations, or legacies to collaterals, are subject to the like duties. Those from husband to wife, or from wife to husband, to the fiftieth penny. The luctuosa hereditas, the mournful succession of ascendants to descendants, to the twentieth penny only. Direct successions, or those of descendants to ascendants, pay no tax. The death of a father, to such of his children as live in the same house with him, is seldom attended with any increase, and frequently with a considerable diminution of revenue; by the loss of his industry, of his office, or of some life-rent estate, of which he may have been in possession. That tax would be cruel and oppressive, which aggravated their loss, by taking from them any part of his succession. It may, however, sometimes be otherwise with those children, who, in the language of the Roman law, are said to be emancipated; in that of the Scotch law, to be foris-familiated; that is, who have received their portion, have got families of their own, and are supported by funds separate and independent of those of their father. Whatever part of his succession might come to such children, would be a real addition to their fortune, and might, therefore, perhaps, without more inconveniency than what attends all duties of this kind, be liable to some tax.

The casualties of the feudal law were taxes upon the transference of land, both from the dead to the living, and from the living to the living. In ancient times, they constituted, in every part of Europe, one of the principal branches of the revenue of the crown.

The heir of every immediate vassal of the crown paid a certain duty, generally a year’s rent, upon receiving the investiture of the estate. If the heir was a minor, the whole rents of the estate, during the continuance of

the minority, devolved to the superior, without any other charge besides the maintenance of the minor, and the payment of the widow's dower, when there happened to be a dowage upon the land. When the minor came to be of age, another tax, called relief, was still due to the superior, which generally amounted likewise to a year's rent. A long minority, which, in the present times, so frequently disburdens a great estate of all its incumbrances, and restores the family to their ancient splendour, could in those times have no such effect. The waste, and not the disincumbrance of the estate, was the common effect of a long minority.

By a feudal law, the vassal could not alienate without the consent of his superior, who generally extorted a fine or composition on granting it. This fine, which was at first arbitrary, came, in many countries, to be regulated at a certain portion of the price of the land. In some countries, where the greater part of the other feudal customs have gone into disuse, this tax upon the alienation of land still continues to make a very considerable branch of the revenue of the sovereign. In the canton of Berne it is so high as a sixth part of the price of all noble fiefs, and a tenth part of that of all ignoble ones.[65*] In the canton of Lucern, the tax upon the sale of land is not universal, and takes place only in certain districts. But if any person sells his land in order to remove out of the territory, he pays ten per cent. upon the whole price of the sale.[66*] Taxes of the same kind, upon the sale either of all lands, or of lands held by certain tenures, take place in many other countries, and make a more or less considerable branch of the revenue of the sovereign.

Such transactions may be taxed indirectly, by means either of stamp duties, or of duties upon registration; and those duties either may, or may not, be proportioned to the value of the subject which is transferred.

In Great Britain, the stamp duties are higher or lower, not so much according to the value of the property transferred (an eighteen-penny or half-crown stamp being sufficient upon a bond for the largest sum of money), as according to the nature of the deed. The highest do not exceed six pounds upon every sheet of paper, or skin of parchment; and these high duties fall chiefly upon grants from the crown, and upon certain law proceedings, without any regard to the value of the subject. There are, in Great Britain, no duties on the registration of deeds or writings, except the fees of the officers who keep the register; and these are seldom more than a reasonable recompense for their labour. The crown derives no revenue from them.

In Holland[67*] there are both stamp duties and duties upon registration; which in some cases are, and in some are not, proportioned to the value

of the property transferred. All testaments must be written upon stamped paper, of which the price is proportioned to the property disposed of; so that there are stamps which cost from three pence or three stivers a-sheet, to three hundred florins, equal to about twenty-seven pounds ten shillings of our money. If the stamp is of an inferior price to what the testator ought to have made use of, his succession is confiscated. This is over and above all their other taxes on succession. Except bills of exchange, and some other mercantile bills, all other deeds, bonds, and contracts, are subject to a stamp duty. This duty, however, does not rise in proportion to the value of the subject. All sales of land and of houses, and all mortgages upon either, must be registered, and, upon registration, pay a duty to the state of two and a-half per cent. upon the amount of the price or of the mortgage. This duty is extended to the sale of all ships and vessels of more than two tons burden, whether decked or undecked. These, it seems, are considered as a sort of houses upon the water. The sale of moveables, when it is ordered by a court of justice, is subject to the like duty of two and a-half per cent.

In France, there are both stamp duties and duties upon registration. The former are considered as a branch of the aids of excise, and, in the provinces where those duties take place, are levied by the excise officers. The latter are considered as a branch of the domain of the crown, and are levied by a different set of officers.

Those modes of taxation by stamp duties and by duties upon registration, are of very modern invention. In the course of little more than a century, however, stamp duties have, in Europe, become almost universal, and duties upon registration extremely common. There is no art which one government sooner learns of another, than that of draining money from the pockets of the people.

Taxes upon the transference of property from the dead to the living, fall finally, as well as immediately, upon the persons to whom the property is transferred. Taxes upon the sale of land fall altogether upon the seller. The seller is almost always under the necessity of selling, and must, therefore, take such a price as he can get. The buyer is scarce ever under the necessity of buying, and will, therefore, only give such a price as he likes. He considers what the land will cost him, in tax and price together. The more he is obliged to pay in the way of tax, the less he will be disposed to give in the way of price. Such taxes, therefore, fall almost always upon a necessitous person, and must, therefore, be frequently very cruel and oppressive. Taxes upon the sale of new-built houses, where the building is sold without the ground, fall generally upon the

buyer, because the builder must generally have his profit; otherwise he must give up the trade. If he advances the tax, therefore, the buyer must generally repay it to him. Taxes upon the sale of old houses, for the same reason as those upon the sale of land, fall generally upon the seller; whom, in most cases, either conveniency or necessity obliges to sell. The number of new-built houses that are annually brought to market, is more or less regulated by the demand. Unless the demand is such as to afford the builder his profit, after paying all expenses, he will build no more houses. The number of old houses which happen at any time to come to market, is regulated by accidents, of which the greater part have no relation to the demand. Two or three great bankruptcies in a mercantile town, will bring many houses to sale, which must be sold for what can be got for them. Taxes upon the sale of ground-rents fall altogether upon the seller, for the same reason as those upon the sale of lands. Stamp duties, and duties upon the registration of bonds and contracts for borrowed money, fall altogether upon the borrower, and, in fact, are always paid by him. Duties of the same kind upon law proceedings fall upon the suitors. They reduce to both the capital value of the subject in dispute. The more it costs to acquire any property, the less must be the neat value of it when acquired.

All taxes upon the transference of property of every kind, so far as they diminish the capital value of that property, tend to diminish the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour. They are all more or less unthrifty taxes that increase the revenue of the sovereign, which seldom maintains any but unproductive labourers, at the expense of the capital of the people, which maintains none but productive.

Such taxes, even when they are proportioned to the value of the property transferred, are still unequal; the frequency of transference not being always equal in property of equal value. When they are not proportioned to this value, which is the case with the greater part of the stamp duties and duties of registration, they are still more so. They are in no respect arbitrary, but are, or may be, in all cases, perfectly clear and certain. Though they sometimes fall upon the person who is not very able to pay, the time of payment is, in most cases, sufficiently convenient for him. When the payment becomes due, he must, in most cases, have the money to pay. They are levied at very little expense, and in general subject the contributors to no other inconveniency, besides always the unavoidable one of paying the tax.

In France, the stamp duties are not much complained of. Those of registration, which they call the Controle, are. They give occasion, it is

pretended, to much extortion in the officers of the farmers-general who collect the tax, which is in a great measure arbitrary and uncertain. In the greater part of the libels which have been written against the present system of finances in France, the abuses of the controle make a principal article. Uncertainty, however, does not seem to be necessarily inherent in the nature of such taxes. If the popular complaints are well founded, the abuse must arise, not so much from the nature of the tax as from the want of precision and distinctness in the words of the edicts or laws which impose it.

The registration of mortgages, and in general of all rights upon immoveable property, as it gives great security both to creditors and purchasers, is extremely advantageous to the public. That of the greater part of deeds of other kinds, is frequently inconvenient and even dangerous to individuals, without any advantage to the public. All registers which, it is acknowledged, ought to be kept secret, ought certainly never to exist. The credit of individuals ought certainly never to depend upon so very slender a security, as the probity and religion of the inferior officers of revenue. But where the fees of registration have been made a source of revenue to the sovereign, register-offices have commonly been multiplied without end, both for the deeds which ought to be registered, and for those which ought not. In France there are several different sorts of secret registers. This abuse, though not perhaps a necessary, it must be acknowledged, is a very natural effect of such taxes.

Such stamp duties as those in England upon cards and dice, upon newspapers and periodical pamphlets, &c. are properly taxes upon consumption; the final payment falls upon the persons who use or consume such commodities. Such stamp duties as those upon licences to retail ale, wine, and spiritous liquors, though intended, perhaps, to fall upon the profits of the retailers, are likewise finally paid by the consumers of those liquors. Such taxes, though called by the same name, and levied by the same officers, and in the same manner with the stamp duties above mentioned upon the transference of property, are, however, of a quite different nature, and fall upon quite different funds.

ART. III. — *Taxes upon the Wages of Labour.*

The wages of the inferior classes of workmen, I have endeavoured to show in the first book are everywhere necessarily regulated by two different circumstances; the demand for labour, and the ordinary or

average price of provisions. The demand for labour, according as it happens to be either increasing, stationary or declining; or to require an increasing, stationary, or declining population; regulates the subsistence of the labourer, and determines in what degree it shall be either liberal, moderate, or scanty. The ordinary average price of provisions determines the quantity of money which must be paid to the workman, in order to enable him, one year with another, to purchase this liberal, moderate, or scanty subsistence. While the demand for the labour and the price of provisions, therefore, remain the same, a direct tax upon the wages of labour can have no other effect, than to raise them somewhat higher than the tax. Let us suppose, for example, that, in particular place, the demand for labour and the price of provisions were such as to render ten shillings a-week the ordinary wages of labour; and that a tax of one-fifth, or four shillings in the pound, was imposed upon wages. If the demand for labour and the price of provisions remained the same, it would still be necessary that the labourer should, in that place, earn such a subsistence as could be bought only for ten shillings a-week; or that, after paying the tax, he should have ten shillings a-week free wages. But, in order to leave him such free wages, after paying such a tax, the price of labour must, in that place, soon rise, not to twelve shillings a-week only, but to twelve and sixpence; that is, in order to enable him to pay a tax of one-fifth, his wages must necessarily soon rise, not one-fifth part only, but one-fourth. Whatever was the proportion of the tax, the wages of labour must, in all cases rise, not only in that proportion, but in a higher proportion. If the tax for example, was one-tenth, the wages of labour must necessarily soon rise, not one-tenth part only, but one-eighth.

A direct tax upon the wages of labour, therefore, though the labourer might, perhaps, pay it out of his hand, could not properly be said to be even advanced by him; at least if the demand for labour and the average price of provisions remained the same after the tax as before it. In all such cases, not only the tax, but something more than the tax, would in reality be advanced by the person who immediately employed him. The final payment would, in different cases, fall upon different persons. The rise which such a tax might occasion in the wages of manufacturing labour would be advanced by the master manufacturer, who would both be entitled and obliged to charge it, with a profit, upon the price of his goods. The final payment of this rise of wages, therefore, together with the additional profit of the master manufacturer, would fall upon the consumer. The rise which such a tax might occasion in the wages of country labour would be advanced by the farmer, who, in order to

maintain the name number of labourers as before, would he obliged to employ a greater capital. In order to get back this greater capital, together with the ordinary profits of stock, it would be necessary that he should retain a larger portion, or, what comes to the same thing, the price of a larger portion, of the produce of the land, and, consequently, that he should pay less rent to the landlord. The final payment of this rise of wages, therefore, would, in this case, fall upon the landlord, together with the additional profit of the farmer who had advanced it. In all cases, a direct tax upon the wages of labour must, in the long-run, occasion both a greater reduction in the rent of land, and a greater rise in the price of manufactured goods than would have followed from the proper assessment of a sum equal to the produce of the tax, partly upon the rent of land, and partly upon consumable commodities.

If direct taxes upon the wages of labour have not always occasioned a proportionable rise in those wages, it is because they have generally occasioned a considerable fall in the demand of labour. The declension of industry, the decrease of employment for the poor, the diminution of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, have generally been the effects of such taxes. In consequence of them, however, the price of labor must always be higher than it otherwise would have been in the actual state of the demand; and this enhancement of price, together with the profit of those who advance it, must always be finally paid by the landlords and consumers.

A tax upon the wages of country labour does not raise the price of the rude produce of land in proportion to the tax; for the same reason that a tax upon the farmer’s profit does not raise that price in that proportion.

Absurd and destructive as such taxes are, however, they take place in many countries. In France, that part of the taille which is charged upon the industry of workmen and day-labourers in country villages, is properly a tax of this kind. Their wages are computed according to the common rate of the district in which they reside; and, that they may be as little liable as possible to any overcharge, their yearly gains are estimated at no more than two hundred working days in the year.[68*] The tax of each individual is varied from year to year, according to different circumstances, of which the collector or the commissary, whom the intendant appoints to assist him, are the judges. In Bohemia, in consequence of the alteration in the system of finances which was begun in 1748, a very heavy tax is imposed upon the industry of artificers. They are divided into four classes. The highest class pay a hundred florins a-year, which, at two-and-twenty pence half penny a-florin, amounts to L.9

: 7 : 6. The second class are taxed at seventy; the third at fifty; and the fourth, comprehending artificers in villages, and the lowest class of those in towns, at twenty-five florins.[69*]

The recompence of ingenious artists, and of men of liberal professions, I have endeavoured to show in the first book, necessarily keeps a certain proportion to the emoluments of inferior trades. A tax upon this recompence, therefore, could have no other effect than to raise it somewhat higher than in proportion to the tax. If it did not rise in this manner, the ingenious arts and the liberal professions, being no longer upon a level with other trades, would be so much deserted, that they would soon return to that level.

The emoluments of offices are not, like those of trades and professions, regulated by the free competition of the market, and do not, therefore, always bear a just proportion to what the nature of the employment requires. They are, perhaps, in most countries, higher than it requires; the persons who have the administration of government being generally disposed to regard both themselves and their immediate dependents, rather more than enough. The emoluments offices, therefore, can, in most cases, very well bear to be taxed. The persons, besides, who enjoy public offices, especially the more lucrative, are, in all countries, the objects of general envy; and a tax upon their emoluments, even though it should be somewhat higher than upon any other sort of revenue, is always a very popular tax. In England, for example, when, by the land-tax, every other sort of revenue was supposed to be assessed at four shillings in the pound, it was very popular to lay a real tax of five shillings and sixpence in the pound upon the salaries of offices which exceeded a hundred pounds a-year; the pensions of the younger branches of the royal family, the pay of the officers of the army and navy, and a few others less obnoxious to envy, excepted. There are in England no other direct taxes upon the wages of labour.

ART. IV. — *Taxes which it is intended should fall indifferently upon every different Species of Revenue.*

The taxes which it is intended should fall indifferently upon every different species of revenue, are capitation taxes, and taxes upon consumable commodities. These must be paid indifferently, from whatever revenue the contributors may possess; from the rent of their land, from the profits of their stock, or from the wages of their labour.

Capitation Taxes.

Capitation taxes, if it is attempted to proportion them to the fortune or revenue of each contributor, become altogether arbitrary. The state of a man's fortune varies from day to day; and, without an inquisition, more intolerable than any tax, and renewed at least once every year, can only be guessed at. His assessment, therefore, must, in most cases, depend upon the good or bad humour of his assessors, and must, therefore, be altogether arbitrary and uncertain.

Capitation taxes, if they are proportioned, not to the supposed fortune, but to the rank of each contributor, become altogether unequal; the degrees of fortune being frequently unequal in the same degree of rank.

Such taxes, therefore, if it is attempted to render them equal, become altogether arbitrary and uncertain; and if it is attempted to render them certain and not arbitrary, become altogether unequal. Let the tax be light or heavy, uncertainty is always a great grievance. In a light tax, a considerable degree of inequality may be supported; in a heavy one, it is altogether intolerable.

In the different poll-taxes which took place in England during the reign of William III. the contributors were, the greater part of them, assessed according to the degree of their rank; as dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts, barons, esquires, gentlemen, the eldest and youngest sons of peers, &c. All shop-keepers and tradesmen worth more than three hundred pounds, that is, the better sort of them, were subject to the same assessment, how great soever might be the difference in their fortunes. Their rank was more considered than their fortune. Several of those who, in the first poll-tax, were rated according to their supposed fortune, were afterwards rated according to their rank. Serjeants, attorneys, and proctors at law, who, in the first poll-tax, were assessed at three shillings in the pound of their supposed income, were afterwards assessed as gentlemen. In the assessment of a tax which was not very heavy, a considerable degree of inequality had been found less insupportable than any degree of uncertainty.

In the capitation which has been levied in France, without any interruption, since the beginning of the present century, the highest orders of people are rated according to their rank, by an invariable tariff; the lower orders of people, according to what is supposed to be their fortune, by an assessment which varies from year to year. The officers of the king's court, the judges, and other officers in the superior courts of justice, the officers of the troops, &c. are assessed in the first manner.

The inferior ranks of people in the provinces are assessed in the second. In France, the great easily submit to a considerable degree of inequality in a tax which, so far as it affects them, is not a very heavy one; but could not brook the arbitrary assessment of an intendant.

The inferior ranks of people must, in that country, suffer patiently the usage which their superiors think proper to give them.

In England, the different poll-taxes never produced the sum which had been expected from them, or which it was supposed they might have produced, had they been exactly levied. In France, the capitation always produces the sum expected from it. The mild government of England, when it assessed the different ranks of people to the poll-tax, contented itself with what that assessment happened to produce, and required no compensation for the loss which the state might sustain, either by those who could not pay, or by those who would not pay (for there were many such), and who, by the indulgent execution of the law, were not forced to pay. The more severe government of France assesses upon each generality a certain sum, which the intendant must find as he can. If any province complains of being assessed too high, it may, in the assessment of next year, obtain an abatement proportioned to the overcharge of the year before; but it must pay in the mean time. The intendant, in order to be sure of finding the sum assessed upon his generality, was empowered to assess it in a larger sum, that the failure or inability of some of the contributors might be compensated by the overcharge of the rest; and till 1765, the fixation of this surplus assessment was left altogether to his discretion. In that year, indeed, the council assumed this power to itself. In the capitation of the provinces, it is observed by the perfectly well informed author of the Memoirs upon the Impositions in France, the proportion which falls upon the nobility, and upon those whose privileges exempt them from the taille, is the least considerable. The largest falls upon those subject to the taille, who are assessed to the capitation at so much a-pound of what they pay to that other tax.

Capitation taxes, so far as they are levied upon the lower ranks of people, are direct taxes upon the wages of labour, and are attended with all the inconveniencies of such taxes.

Capitation taxes are levied at little expense; and, where they are rigorously exacted, afford a very sure revenue to the state. It is upon this account that, in countries where the ease, comfort, and security of the inferior ranks of people are little attended to, capitation taxes are very common. It is in general, however, but a small part of the public revenue, which, in a great empire, has ever been drawn from such taxes; and the

greatest sum which they have ever afforded, might always have been found in some other way much more convenient to the people.

Taxes upon Consumable Commodities.

The impossibility of taxing the people, in proportion to their revenue, by any capitation, seems to have given occasion to the invention of taxes upon consumable commodities. The state not knowing how to tax, directly and proportionably, the revenue of its subjects, endeavours to tax it indirectly by taxing their expense, which, it is supposed, will, in most cases, be nearly in proportion to their revenue. Their expense is taxed, by taxing the consumable commodities upon which it is laid out.

Consumable commodities are either necessaries or luxuries.

By necessaries I understand, not only the commodities which are indispensibly necessary for the support of life, but whatever the custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order, to be without. A linen shirt, for example, is, strictly speaking, not a necessary of life. The Greeks and Romans lived, I suppose, very comfortably, though they had no linen. But in the present times, through the greater part of Europe, a creditable day-labourer would be ashamed to appear in public without a linen shirt, the want of which would be supposed to denote that disgraceful degree of poverty, which, it is presumed, nobody can well fall into without extreme bad conduct. Custom, in the same manner, has rendered leather shoes a necessary of life in England. The poorest creditable person, of either sex, would be ashamed to appear in public without them. In Scotland, custom has rendered them a necessary of life to the lowest order of men; but not to the same order of women, who may, without any discredit, walk about barefooted. In France, they are necessaries neither to men nor to women; the lowest rank of both sexes appearing there publicly, without any discredit, sometimes in wooden shoes, and sometimes barefooted. Under necessaries, therefore, I comprehend, not only those things which nature, but those things which the established rules of decency have rendered necessary to the lowest rank of people. All other things I call luxuries, without meaning, by this appellation, to throw the smallest degree of reproach upon the temperate use of them. Beer and ale, for example, in Great Britain, and wine, even in the wine countries, I call luxuries. A man of any rank may, without any reproach, abstain totally from tasting such liquors. Nature does not render them necessary for the support of life; and custom nowhere renders it indecent to live without them.

As the wages of labour are everywhere regulated, partly by the demand for it, and partly by the average price of the necessary articles of subsistence; whatever raises this average price must necessarily raise those wages; so that the labourer may still be able to purchase that quantity of those necessary articles which the state of the demand for labour, whether increasing, stationary, or declining, requires that he should have.[70*] A tax upon those articles necessarily raises their price somewhat higher than the amount of the tax, because the dealer, who advances the tax, must generally get it back, with a profit. Such a tax must, therefore, occasion a rise in the wages of labour, proportionable to this rise of price.

It is thus that a tax upon the necessaries of life operates exactly in the same manner as a direct tax upon the wages of labour. The labourer, though he may pay it out of his hand, cannot, for any considerable time at least, be properly said even to advance it. It must always, in the long-run, be advanced to him by his immediate employer, in the advanced state of wages. His employer, if he is a manufacturer, will charge upon the price of his goods the rise of wages, together with a profit, so that the final payment of the tax, together with this overcharge, will fall upon the consumer. If his employer is a farmer, the final payment, together with a like overcharge, will fall upon the rent of the landlord.

It is otherwise with taxes upon what I call luxuries, even upon those of the poor. The rise in the price of the taxed commodities, will not necessarily occasion any rise in the wages of labour. A tax upon tobacco, for example, though a luxury of the poor, as well as of the rich, will not raise wages. Though it is taxed in England at three times, and in France at fifteen times its original price, those high duties seem to have no effect upon the wages of labour. The same thing may be said of the taxes upon tea and sugar, which, in England and Holland, have become luxuries of the lowest ranks of people; and of those upon chocolate, which, in Spain, is said to have become so.

The different taxes which, in Great Britain, have, in the course of the present century, been imposed upon spiritous liquors, are not supposed to have had any effect upon the wages of labour. The rise in the price of porter, occasioned by an additional tax of three shillings upon the barrel of strong beer, has not raised the wages of common labour in London. These were about eighteen pence or twenty pence a-day before the tax, and they are not more now.

The high price of such commodities does not necessarily diminish the ability of the inferior ranks of people to bring up families. Upon the

sober and industrious poor, taxes upon such commodities act as sumptuary laws, and dispose them either to moderate, or to refrain altogether from the use of superfluities which they can no longer easily afford. Their ability to bring up families, in consequence of this forced frugality, instead of being diminished, is frequently, perhaps, increased by the tax. It is the sober and industrious poor who generally bring up the most numerous families, and who principally supply the demand for useful labour. All the poor, indeed, are not sober and industrious; and the dissolute and disorderly might continue to indulge themselves in the use of such commodities, after this rise of price, in the same manner as before, without regarding the distress which this indulgence might bring upon their families. Such disorderly persons, however, seldom rear up numerous families, their children generally perishing from neglect, mismanagement, and the scantiness or unwholesomeness of their food. If, by the strength of their constitution, they survive the hardships to which the bad conduct of their parents exposes them, yet the example of that bad conduct commonly corrupts their morals; so that, instead of being useful to society by their industry, they become public nuisances by their vices and disorders. Though the advanced price of the luxuries of the poor, therefore, might increase somewhat the distress of such disorderly families, and thereby diminish somewhat their ability to bring up children, it would not probably diminish much the useful population of the country.

Any rise in the average price of necessaries, unless it be compensated by a proportionable rise in the wages of labour, must necessarily diminish, more or less, the ability of the poor to bring up numerous families, and, consequently, to supply the demand for useful labour; whatever may be the state of that demand, whether increasing, stationary, or declining; or such as requires an increasing, stationary, or declining population.

Taxes upon luxuries have no tendency to raise the price of any other commodities, except that of the commodities taxed. Taxes upon necessaries, by raising the wages of labour, necessarily tend to raise the price of all manufactures, and consequently to diminish the extent of their sale and consumption. Taxes upon luxuries are finally paid by the consumers of the commodities taxed, without any retribution. They fall indifferently upon every species of revenue, the wages of labour, the profits of stock, and the rent of land. Taxes upon necessaries, so far as they affect the labouring poor, are finally paid, partly by landlords, in the diminished rent of their lands, and partly by rich consumers, whether

landlords or others, in the advanced price of manufactured goods; and always with a considerable overcharge. The advanced price of such manufactures as are real necessaries of life, and are destined for the consumption of the poor, of coarse woollens, for example, must be compensated to the poor by a farther advancement of their wages. The middling and superior ranks of people, if they understood their own interest, ought always to oppose all taxes upon the necessaries of life, as well as all taxes upon the wages of labour. The final payment of both the one and the other falls altogether upon themselves, and always with a considerable overcharge. They fall heaviest upon the landlords, who always pay in a double capacity; in that of landlords, by the reduction, of their rent; and in that of rich consumers, by the increase of their expense. The observation of Sir Matthew Decker, that certain taxes are, in the price of certain goods, sometimes repeated and accumulated four or five times, is perfectly just with regard to taxes upon the necessaries of life. In the price of leather, for example, you must pay not only for the tax upon the leather of your own shoes, but for a part of that upon those of the shoemaker and the tanner. You must pay, too, for the tax upon the salt, upon the soap, and upon the candles which those workmen consume while employed in your service; and for the tax upon the leather, which the salt-maker, the soap-maker, and the candle-maker consume, while employed in their service.

In Great Britain, the principal taxes upon the necessaries of life, are those upon the four commodities just now mentioned, salt, leather, soap, and candles.

Salt is a very ancient and a very universal subject of taxation. It was taxed among the Romans, and it is so at present in, I believe, every part of Europe. The quantity annually consumed by any individual is so small, and may be purchased so gradually, that nobody, it seems to have been thought, could feel very sensibly even a pretty heavy tax upon it. It is in England taxed at three shillings and fourpence a bushel; about three times the original price of the commodity. In some other countries, the tax is still higher. Leather is a real necessary of life. The use of linen renders soap such. In countries where the winter nights are long, candles are a necessary instrument of trade. Leather and soap are in Great Britain taxed at three halfpence a-pound; candles at a penny; taxes which, upon the original price of leather, may amount to about eight or ten per cent.; upon that of soap, to about twenty or five-and-twenty per cent.; and upon that of candles to about fourteen or fifteen per cent.; taxes which, though lighter than that upon salt, are still very heavy. As all those four

commodities are real necessaries of life, such heavy taxes upon them must increase some what the expense of the sober and industrious poor, and must consequently raise more or less the wages of their labour.

In a country where the winters are so cold as in Great Britain, fuel is, during that season, in the strictest sense of the word, a necessary of life, not only for the purpose of dressing victuals, but for the comfortable subsistence of many different sorts of workmen who work within doors; and coals are the cheapest of all fuel. The price of fuel has so important an influence upon that of labour, that all over Great Britain, manufactures have confined themselves principally to the coal countries; other parts of the country, on account of the high price of this necessary article, not being able to work so cheap. In some manufactures, besides, coal is a necessary instrument of trade; as in those of glass, iron, and all other metals. If a bounty could in any case be reasonable, it might perhaps be so upon the transportation of coals from those parts of the country in which they abound, to those in which they are wanted. But the legislature, instead of a bounty, has imposed a tax of three shillings and threepence a-ton upon coals carried coastways; which, upon most sorts of coal, is more than sixty per cent. of the original price at the coal pit. Coals carried, either by land or by inland navigation, pay no duty. Where they are naturally cheap, they are consumed duty free; where they are naturally dear, they are loaded with a heavy duty.

Such taxes, though they raise the price of subsistence, and consequently the wages of labour, yet they afford a considerable revenue to government, which it might not be easy to find in any other way. There may, therefore, be good reasons for continuing them. The bounty upon the exportation of corn, so far as it tends, in the actual state of tillage, to raise the price of that necessary article, produces all the like bad effects; and instead of affording any revenue, frequently occasions a very great expense to government. The high duties upon the importation of foreign corn, which, in years of moderate plenty, amount to a prohibition; and the absolute prohibition of the importation, either of live cattle, or of salt provisions, which takes place in the ordinary state of the law, and which, on account of the scarcity, is at present suspended for a limited time with regard to Ireland and the British plantations, have all had the bad effects of taxes upon the necessaries of life, and produce no revenue to government. Nothing seems necessary for the repeal of such regulations, but to convince the public of the futility of that system in consequence of which they have been established.

Taxes upon the necessaries of life are much higher in many other countries than in Great Britain. Duties upon flour and meal when ground at the mill, and upon bread when baked at the oven, take place in many countries. In Holland the money-price of the bread consumed in towns is supposed to be doubled by means of such taxes. In lieu of a part of them, the people who live in the country, pay every year so much a-head, according to the sort of bread they are supposed to consume. Those who consume wheaten bread pay three guilders fifteen stivers; about six shillings and ninepence halfpenny. These, and some other taxes of the same kind, by raising the price of labour, are said to have ruined the greater part of the manufactures of Holland[71*]. Similar taxes, though not quite so heavy, take place in the Milanese, in the states of Genoa, in the duchy of Modena, in the duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla, and the Ecclesiastical state. A French author[72*] of some note, has proposed to reform the finances of his country, by substituting in the room of the greater part of other taxes, this most ruinous of all taxes. There is nothing so absurd, says Cicero, which has not sometimes been asserted by some philosophers.

Taxes upon butcher’s meat are still more common than those upon bread. It may indeed be doubted, whether butcher’s meat is any where a necessary of life. Grain and other vegetables, with the help of milk, cheese, and butter, or oil, where butter is not to be had, it is known from experience, can, without any butcher’s meat, afford the most plentiful, the most wholesome, the most nourishing, and the most invigorating diet. Decency nowhere requires that any man should eat butcher’s meat, as it in most places requires that he should wear a linen shirt or a pair of leather shoes.

Consumable commodities, whether necessaries or luxuries, may be taxed in two different ways. The consumer may either pay an annual sum on account of his using or consuming goods of a certain kind; or the goods may be taxed while they remain in the hands of the dealer, and before they are delivered to the consumer. The consumable goods which last a considerable time before they are consumed altogether, are most properly taxed in the one way; those of which the consumption is either immediate or more speedy, in the other. The coach-tax and plate-tax are examples of the former method of imposing; the greater part of the other duties of excise and customs, of the latter.

A coach may, with good management, last ten or twelve years. It might be taxed, once for all, before it comes out of the hands of the coach-maker. But it is certainly more convenient for the buyer to pay

four pounds a-year for the privilege of keeping a coach, than to pay all at once forty or forty-eight pounds additional price to the coach-maker; or a sum equivalent to what the tax is likely to cost him during the time he uses the same coach. A service of plate in the same manner, may last more than a century. It is certainly easier for the consumer to pay five shillings a-year for every hundred ounces of plate, near one per cent. of the value, than to redeem this long annuity at five-and-twenty of thirty years purchase, which would enhance the price at least five-and-twenty or thirty per cent. The different taxes which affect houses, are certainly more conveniently paid by moderate annual payments, than by a heavy tax of equal value upon the first building or sale of the house.

It was the well-known proposal of Sir Matthew Decker, that all commodities, even those of which the consumption is either immediate or speedy, should be taxed in this manner; the dealer advancing nothing, but the consumer paying a certain annual sum for the licence to consume certain goods. The object of his scheme was to promote all the different branches of foreign trade, particularly the carrying trade, by taking away all duties upon importation and exportation, and thereby enabling the merchant to employ his whole capital and credit in the purchase of goods and the freight of ships, no part of either being diverted towards the advancing of taxes. The project, however, of taxing, in this manner, goods of immediate or speedy consumption, seems liable to the four following very important objections. First, the tax would be more unequal, or not so well proportioned to the expense and consumption of the different contributors, as in the way in which it is commonly imposed. The taxes upon ale, wine, and spiritous liquors, which are advanced by the dealers, are finally paid by the different consumers, exactly in proportion to their respective consumption. But if the tax were to be paid by purchasing a licence to drink those liquors, the sober would, in proportion to his consumption, be taxed much more heavily than the drunken consumer. A family which exercised great hospitality, would be taxed much more lightly than one who entertained fewer guests. Secondly, this mode of taxation, by paying for an annual, half-yearly, or quarterly licence to consume certain goods, would diminish very much one of the principal conveniences of taxes upon goods of speedy consumption; the piece-meal payment. In the price of threepence halfpenny, which is at present paid for a pot of porter, the different taxes upon malt, hops, and beer, together with the extraordinary profit which the brewer charges for having advanced them, may perhaps amount to about three halfpence. If a workman can conveniently spare those three

halfpence, he buys a pot of porter. If he cannot, he contents himself with a pint; and, as a penny saved is a penny got, he thus gains a farthing by his temperance. He pays the tax piece-meal, as he can afford to pay it, and when he can afford to pay it, and every act of payment is perfectly voluntary, and what he can avoid if he chuses to do so. Thirdly, such taxes would operate less as sumptuary laws. When the licence was once purchased, whether the purchaser drunk much or drunk little, his tax would he the same. Fourthly, if a workman were to pay all at once, by yearly, half-yearly, or quarterly payments, a tax equal to what he at present pays, with little or no inconveniency, upon all the different pots and pints of porter which he drinks in any such period of time, the sum might frequently distress him very much. This mode of taxation, therefore, it seems evident, could never, without the most grievous oppression, produce a revenue nearly equal to what is derived from the present mode without any oppression. In several countries, however, commodities of an immediate or very speedy consumption are taxed in this manner. In Holland, people pay so much a-head for a licence to drink tea. I have already mentioned a tax upon bread, which, so far as it is consumed in farm houses and country villages, is there levied in the same manner.

The duties of excise are imposed chiefly upon goods of home produce, destined for home consumption. They are imposed only upon a few sorts of goods of the most general use. There can never be any doubt, either concerning the goods which are subject to those duties, or concerning the particular duty which each species of goods is subject to. They fall almost altogether upon what I call luxuries, excepting always the four duties above mentioned, upon salt, soap, leather, candles, and perhaps that upon green glass.

The duties of customs are much more ancient than those of excise. They seem to have been called customs, as denoting customary payments, which had been in use for time immemorial. They appear to have been originally considered as taxes upon the profits of merchants. During the barbarous times of feudal anarchy, merchants, like all the other inhabitants of burghs, were considered as little better than emancipated bondmen, whose persons were despised, and whose gains were envied. The great nobility, who had consented that the king should tallage the profits of their own tenants, were not unwilling that he should tallage likewise those of an order of men whom it was much less their interest to protect. In those ignorant times, it was not understood, that the profits of merchants are a subject not taxable directly; or that the final

payment of all such taxes must fall, with a considerable overcharge, upon the consumers.

The gains of alien merchants were looked upon more unfavourably than those of English merchants. It was natural, therefore, that those of the former should be taxed more heavily than those of the latter. This distinction between the duties upon aliens and those upon English merchants, which was begun from ignorance, has been continued from the spirit of monopoly, or in order to give our own merchants an advantage, both in the home and in the foreign market.

With this distinction, the ancient duties of customs were imposed equally upon all sorts of goods, necessaries as well as luxuries, goods exported as well as goods imported. Why should the dealers in one sort of goods, it seems to have been thought, be more favoured than those in another? or why should the merchant exporter be more favoured than the merchant importer?

The ancient customs were divided into three branches. The first, and, perhaps, the most ancient of all those duties, was that upon wool and leather. It seems to have been chiefly or altogether an exportation duty. When the woollen manufacture came to be established in England, lest the king should lose any part of his customs upon wool by the exportation of woollen cloths, a like duty was imposed upon them. The other two branches were, first, a duty upon wine, which being imposed at so much a-ton, was called a tonnage; and, secondly, a duty upon all other goods, which being imposed at so much a-pound of their supposed value, was called a poundage. In the forty-seventh year of Edward III., a duty of sixpence in the pound was imposed upon all goods exported and imported, except wools, wool-felts, leather, and wines which were subject to particular duties. In the fourteenth of Richard II., this duty was raised to one shilling in the pound; but, three years afterwards, it was again reduced to sixpence. It was raised to eightpence in the second year of Henry IV.; and, in the fourth of the same prince, to one shilling. From this time to the ninth year of William III., this duty continued at one shilling in the pound. The duties of tonnage and poundage were generally granted to the king by one and the same act of parliament, and were called the subsidy of tonnage and poundage. The subsidy of poundage having continued for so long a time at one shilling in the pound, or at five per cent., a subsidy came, in the language of the customs, to denote a general duty of this kind of five per cent. This subsidy, which is now called the old subsidy, still continues to be levied, according to the book of rates established by the twelfth of Charles II.

The method of ascertaining, by a book of rates, the value of goods subject to this duty, is said to be older than the time of James I. The new subsidy, imposed by the ninth and tenth of William III., was an additional five per cent. upon the greater part of goods. The one-third and the two-third subsidy made up between them another five per cent. of which they were proportionable parts. The subsidy of 1747 made a fourth five per cent. upon the greater part of goods; and that of 1759, a fifth upon some particular sorts of goods. Besides those five subsidies, a great variety of other duties have occasionally been imposed upon particular sorts of goods in order sometimes to relieve the exigencies of the state, and sometimes to regulate the trade of the country, according to the principles of the mercantile system.

That system has come gradually more and more into fashion. The old subsidy was imposed indifferently upon exportation, as well as importation. The four subsequent subsidies, as well as the other duties which have since been occasionally imposed upon particular sorts of goods, have, with a few exceptions, been laid altogether upon importation. The greater part of the ancient duties which had been imposed upon the exportation of the goods of home produce and manufacture, have either been lightened or taken away altogether. In most cases, they have been taken away. Bounties have even been given upon the exportation of some of them. Drawbacks, too, sometimes of the whole, and, in most cases, or a part of the duties which are paid upon the importation of foreign goods, have been granted upon their exportation. Only half the duties imposed by the old subsidy upon importation, are drawn back upon exportation; but the whole of those imposed by the latter subsidies and other imports are, upon the greater parts of the goods, drawn back in the same manner. This growing favour of exportation, and discouragement of importation, have suffered only a few exceptions, which chiefly concern the materials of some manufactures. These our merchants and manufacturers are willing should come as cheap as possible to themselves, and as dear as possible to their rivals and competitors in other countries. Foreign materials are, upon this account, sometimes allowed to be imported duty-free; Spanish wool, for example, flax, and raw linen yarn. The exportation of the materials of home produce, and of those which are the particular produce of our colonies, has sometimes been prohibited, and sometimes subjected to higher duties. The exportation of English wool has been prohibited. That of beaver skins, of beaver wool, and of gum-senega, has been subjected to

higher duties; Great Britain, by the conquests of Canada and Senegal, having got almost the monopoly of those commodities.

That the mercantile system has not been very favourable to the revenue of the great body of the people, to the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, I have endeavoured to show in the fourth book of this Inquiry. It seems not to have been more favourable to the revenue of the sovereign; so far, at least, as that revenue depends upon the duties of customs.

In consequence of that system, the importation of several sorts of goods has been prohibited altogether. This prohibition has, in some cases, entirely prevented, and in others has very much diminished, the importation of those commodities, by reducing the importers to the necessity of smuggling. It has entirely prevented the importation of foreign wollens; and it has very much diminished that of foreign silks and velvets. In both cases, it has entirely annihilated the revenue of customs which might have been levied upon such importation.

The high duties which have been imposed upon the importation of many different sorts of foreign goods in order to discourage their consumption in Great Britain, have, in many cases, served only to encourage smuggling, and, in all cases, have reduced the revenues of the customs below what more moderate duties would have afforded. The saying of Dr. Swift, that in the arithmetic of the customs, two and two, instead of making four, make sometimes only one, holds perfectly true with regard to such heavy duties, which never could have been imposed, had not the mercantile system taught us, in many cases, to employ taxation as an instrument, not of revenue, but of monopoly.

The bounties which are sometimes given upon the exportation of home produce and manufactures, and the drawbacks which are paid upon the re-exportation of the greater part of foreign goods, have given occasion to many frauds, and to a species of smuggling, more destructive of the public revenue than any other. In order to obtain the bounty or drawback, the goods, it is well known, are sometimes shipped, and sent to sea, but soon afterwards clandestinely re-landed in some other part of the country. The defalcation of the revenue of customs occasioned by bounties and drawbacks, of which a great part are obtained fraudulently, is very great. The gross produce of the customs, in the year which ended on the 5th of January 1755, amounted to L.5,068,000. The bounties which were paid out of this revenue, though in that year there was no bounty upon corn, amounted to L.167,800. The drawbacks which were paid upon debentures and certificates, to L.2,156,800. Bounties and

drawbacks together amounted to L.2,324,600. In consequence of these deductions, the revenue of the customs amounted only to L.2,743,400; from which deducting L.287,900 for the expense of management, in salaries and other incidents, the neat revenue of the customs for that year comes out to be L.2,455,500. The expense of management, amounts, in this manner, to between five and six per cent. upon the gross revenue of the customs; and to something more than ten per cent. upon what remains of that revenue, after deducting what is paid away in bounties and drawbacks.

Heavy duties being imposed upon almost all goods imported, our merchant importers smuggle as much, and make entry of as little as they can. Our merchant exporters, on the contrary, make entry of more than they export; sometimes out of vanity, and to pass for great dealers in goods which pay no duty and sometimes to gain a bounty or a drawback. Our exports, in consequence of these different frauds, appear upon the custom-house books greatly to overbalance our imports, to the unspeakable comfort of those politicians, who measure the national prosperity by what they call the balance of trade.

All goods imported, unless particularly exempted, and such exemptions are not very numerous, are liable to some duties of customs. If any goods are imported, not mentioned in the book of rates, they are taxed at 4s. $9^{9}\!/_{20}$d. for every twenty shillings value, according to the oath of the importer, that is, nearly at five subsidies, or five poundage duties. The book of rates is extremely comprehensive, and enumerates a great variety of articles, many of them little used, and, therefore, not well known. It is, upon this account, frequently uncertain under what article a particular sort of goods ought to be classed, and, consequently what duty they ought to pay. Mistakes with regard to this sometimes ruin the custom-house officer, and frequently occasion much trouble, expense, and vexation to the importer. In point of perspicuity, precision, and distinctness, therefore, the duties of customs are much more inferior to those of excise.

In order that the greater part of the members of any society should contribute to the public revenue, in proportion to their respective expense, it does not seem necessary that every single article of that expense should be taxed. The revenue which is levied by the duties of excise is supposed to fall as equally upon the contributors as that which is levied by the duties of customs; and the duties of excise are imposed upon a few articles only of the most general use and consumption. It has been the opinion of many people, that, by proper management, the duties

of customs might likewise, without any loss to the public revenue, and with great advantage to foreign trade, be confined to a few articles only.

The foreign articles, of the most general use and consumption in Great Britain, seem at present to consist chiefly in foreign wines and brandies; in some of the productions of America and the West Indies, sugar, rum, tobacco, cocoa-nuts, &c. and in some of those of the East Indies, tea, coffee, china-ware, spiceries of all kinds, several sorts of piece-goods, &c. These different articles afford, perhaps, at present, the greater part of the revenue which is drawn from the duties of customs. The taxes which at present subsist upon foreign manufactures, if you except those upon the few contained in the foregoing enumeration, have, the greater part of them, been imposed for the purpose, not of revenue, but of monopoly, or to give our own merchants an advantage in the home market. By removing all prohibitions, and by subjecting all foreign manufactures to such moderate taxes, as it was found from experience, afforded upon each article the greatest revenue to the public, our own workmen might still have a considerable advantage in the home market; and many articles, some of which at present afford no revenue to government, and others a very inconsiderable one, might afford a very great one.

High taxes, sometimes by diminishing the consumption of the taxed commodities, and sometimes by encouraging smuggling, frequently afford a smaller revenue to government than what might be drawn from more moderate taxes.

When the diminution of revenue is the effect of the diminution of consumption, there can be but one remedy, and that is the lowering of the tax.

When the diminution of revenue is the effect of the encouragement given to smuggling, it may, perhaps, be remedied in two ways; either by diminishing the temptation to smuggle, or by increasing the difficulty of smuggling. The temptation to smuggle can be be diminished only by the lowering of the tax; and the difficulty of smuggling can be increased only by establishing that system of administration which is most proper for preventing it.

The excise laws, it appears, I believe, from experience, obstruct and embarrass the operations of the smuggler much more effectually than those of the customs. By introducing into the customs a system of administration as similar to that of the excise as the nature of the different duties will admit, the difficulty of smuggling might be very

much increased. This alteration, it has been supposed by many people, might very easily be brought about.

The importer of commodities liable to any duties of customs, it has been said, might, at his option, he allowed either to carry them to his own private warehouse; or to lodge them in a warehouse, provided either at his own expense or at that of the public, but under the key of the custom-house officer, and never to be opened but in his presence. If the merchant carried them to his own private warehouse, the duties to be immediately paid, and never afterwards to be drawn back; and that warehouse to be at all times subject to the visit and examination of the custom-house officer, in order to ascertain how far the quantity contained in it corresponded with that for which the duty had been paid. If he carried them to the public warehouse, no duty to be paid till they were taken out for home consumption. If taken out for exportation, to be duty-free; proper security being always given that they should be so exported. The dealers in those particular commodities, either by wholesale or retail, to be at all times subject to the visit and examination of the custom-house officer; and to be obliged to justify, by proper certificates, the payment of the duty upon the whole quantity contained in their shops or warehouses. What are called the excise duties upon rum imported, are at present levied in this manner; and the same system of administration might, perhaps, be extended to all duties upon goods imported; provided always that those duties were, like the duties of excise, confined to a few sorts of goods of the most general use and consumption. If they were extended to almost all sorts of goods, as at present, public warehouses of sufficient extent could not easily be provided; and goods of a very delicate nature, or of which the preservation required much care and attention, could not safely be trusted by the merchant in any warehouse but his own.

If, by such a system of administration, smuggling to any considerable extent could be prevented, even under pretty high duties; if every duty was occasionally either heightened or lowered according as it was likely, either the one way or the other, to afford the greatest revenue to the state; taxation being always employed as an instrument of revenue, and never of monopoly; it seems not improbable that a revenue, at least equal to the present neat revenue of the customs, might be drawn from duties upon the importation of only a few sorts of goods of the most general use and consumption; and that the duties of customs might thus be brought to the same degree of simplicity, certainty, and precision, as those of excise. What the revenue at present loses by drawbacks upon the re-exportation

of foreign goods, which are afterwards re-landed and consumed at home, would, under this system, be saved altogether. If to this saving, which would alone be very considerable, were added the abolition of all bounties upon the exportation of home produce; in all cases in which those bounties were not in reality drawbacks of some duties of excise which had before been advanced; it cannot well be doubted, but that the neat revenue of customs might, after an alteration of this kind, be fully equal to what it had ever been before.

If, by such a change of system, the public revenue suffered no loss, the trade and manufactures of the country would certainly gain a very considerable advantage. The trade in the commodities not taxed, by far the greatest number would be perfectly free, and might be carried on to and from all parts of the world with every possible advantage. Among those commodities would be comprehended all the necessaries of life, and all the materials of manufacture. So far as the free importation of the necessaries of life reduced their average money price in the home market, it would reduce the money price of labour, but without reducing in any respect its real recompense. The value of money is in proportion to the quantity of the necessaries of life which it will purchase. That of the necessaries of life is altogether independent of the quantity of money which can be had for them. The reduction in the money price of labour would necessarily be attended with a proportionable one in that of all home manufactures, which would thereby gain some advantage in all foreign markets. The price of some manufactures would be reduced, in a still greater proportion, by the free importation of the raw materials. If raw silk could be imported from China and Indostan, duty-free, the silk manufacturers in England could greatly undersell those of both France and Italy. There would be no occasion to prohibit the importation of foreign silks and velvets. The cheapness of their goods would secure to our own workmen, not only the possession of a home, but a very great command of the foreign market. Even the trade in the commodities taxed, would be carried on with much more advantage than at present. If those commodities were delivered out of the public warehouse for foreign exportation, being in this case exempted from all taxes, the trade in them would be perfectly free. The carrying trade, in all sorts of goods, would, under this system, enjoy every possible advantage. If these commodities were delivered out for home consumption, the importer not being obliged to advance the tax till he had an opportunity of selling his goods, either to some dealer, or to some consumer, he could always afford to sell them cheaper than if he had been obliged to advance it at

the moment of importation. Under the same taxes, the foreign trade of consumption, even in the taxed commodities, might in this manner be carried on with much more advantage than it is at present.

It was the object of the famous excise scheme of Sir Robert Walpole, to establish, with regard to wine and tobacco, a system not very unlike that which is here proposed. But though the bill which was then brought into Parliament, comprehended those two commodities only, it was generally supposed to be meant as an introduction to a more extensive scheme of the same kind. Faction, combined with the interest of smuggling merchants, raised so violent, though so unjust a clamour, against that bill, that the minister thought proper to drop it; and, from a dread of exciting a clamour of the same kind, none of his successors have dared to resume the project.

The duties upon foreign luxuries, imported for home consumption, though they sometimes fall upon the poor, fall principally upon people of middling or more than middling fortune. Such are, for example, the duties upon foreign wines, upon coffee, chocolate, tea, sugar, &c.

The duties upon the cheaper luxuries of home produce, destined for home consumption, fall pretty equally upon people of all ranks, in proportion to their respective expense. The poor pay the duties upon malt, hops, beer, and ale, upon their own consumption; the rich, upon both their own consumption and that of their servants.

The whole consumption of the inferior ranks of people, or of those below the middling rank, it must be observed, is, in every country, much greater, not only in quantity, but in value, than that of the middling, and of those above the middling rank. The whole expense of the inferior is much greater than that of the superior ranks. In the first place, almost the whole capital of every country is annually distributed among the inferior ranks of people, as the wages of productive labour. Secondly, a great part of the revenue, arising from both the rent of land and the profits of stock, is annually distributed among the same rank, in the wages and maintenance of menial servants, and other unproductive labourers. Thirdly, some part of the profits of stock belongs to the same rank, as a revenue arising from the employment of their small capitals. The amount of the profits annually made by small shopkeepers, tradesmen, and retailers of all kinds, is everywhere very considerable, and makes a very considerable portion of the annual produce. Fourthly and lastly, some part even of the rent of land belongs to the same rank; a considerable part to those who are somewhat below the middling rank, and a small part even to the lowest rank; common labourers sometimes possessing in

property an acre or two of land. Though the expense of those inferior ranks of people, therefore, taking them individually, is very small, yet the whole mass of it, taking them collectively, amounts always to by much the largest portion of the whole expense of the society; what remains of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, for the consumption of the superior ranks, being always much less, not only in quantity, but in value. The taxes upon expense, therefore, which fall chiefly upon that of the superior ranks of people, upon the smaller portion of the annual produce, are likely to be much less productive than either those which fall indifferently upon the expense of all ranks, or even those which fall chiefly upon that of the inferior ranks, than either those which fall indifferently upon the whole annual produce, or those which fall chiefly upon the larger portion of it. The excise upon the materials and manufacture of home-made fermented and spiritous liquors, is, accordingly, of all the different taxes upon expense, by far the most productive; and this branch of the excise falls very much, perhaps principally, upon the expense of the common people. In the year which ended on the 5th of July 1775, the gross produce of this branch of the excise amounted to L.3,341,837 : 9 : 9.

It must always be remembered, however, that it is the luxuries, and not the necessary expense of the inferior ranks of people, that ought ever to be taxed. The final payment of any tax upon their necessary expense, would fall altogether upon the superior ranks of people; upon the smaller portion of the annual produce, and not upon the greater. Such a tax must, in all cases, either raise the wages of labour, or lessen the demand for it. It could not raise the wages of labour, without throwing the final payment of the tax upon the superior ranks of people. It could not lessen the demand for labour, without lessening the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, the fund upon which all taxes must be finally paid. Whatever might be the state to which a tax of this kind reduced the demand for labour, it must always raise wages higher than they otherwise would be in that state; and the final payment of this enhancement of wages must, in all cases, fall upon the superior ranks of people.

Fermented liquors brewed, and spiritous liquors distilled, not for sale, but for private use, are not in Great Britain liable to any duties of excise. This exemption, of which the object is to save private families from the odious visit and examination of the tax-gatherer, occasions the burden of those duties to fall frequently much lighter upon the rich than upon the poor. It is not, indeed, very common to distil for private use, though it is done sometimes. But in the country, many middling, and almost all rich

and great families, brew their own beer. Their strong beer, therefore, costs them eight shillings a-barrel less than it costs the common brewer, who must have his profit upon the tax, as well as upon all the other expense which he advances. Such families, therefore, must drink their beer at least nine or ten shillings a-barrel cheaper than any liquor of the same quality can be drank by the common people, to whom it is everywhere more convenient to buy their beer, by little and little, from the brewery or the alehouse. Malt, in the same manner, that is made for the use of a private family, is not liable to the visit or examination of the tax-gatherer; but, in this case the family must compound at seven shillings and sixpence a-head for the tax. Seven shillings and sixpence are equal to the excise upon ten bushels of malt; a quantity fully equal to what all the different members of any sober family, men, women, and children, are, at an average, likely to consume. But in rich and great families, where country hospitality is much practised, the malt liquors consumed by the members of the family make but a small part of the consumption of the house. Either on account of this composition, however, or for other reasons, it is not near so common to malt as to brew for private use. It is difficult to imagine any equitable reason, why those who either brew or distil for private use should not be subject to a composition of the same kind.

A greater revenue than what is at present drawn from all the heavy taxes upon malt, beer, and ale, might be raised, it has frequently been said, by a much lighter tax upon malt; the opportunities of defrauding the revenue being much greater in a brewery than in a malt-house; and those who brew for private use being exempted from all duties or composition for duties, which is not the case with those who malt for private use.

In the porter brewery of London, a quarter of malt is commonly brewed into more than two barrels and a-half, sometimes into three barrels of porter. The different taxes upon malt amount to six shillings a-quarter; those upon strong ale and beer to eight shillings a-barrel. In the porter brewery, therefore, the different taxes upon malt, beer, and ale, amount to between twenty-six and thirty shillings upon the produce of a quarter of malt. In the country brewery for common country sale, a quarter of malt is seldom brewed into less than two barrels of strong, and one barrel of small beer; frequently into two barrels and a-half of strong beer. The different taxes upon small beer amount to one shilling and fourpence a-barrel. In the country brewery, therefore, the different taxes upon malt, beer, and ale, seldom amount to less than twenty-three shillings and fourpence, frequently to twenty-six shillings, upon the

produce of a quarter of malt. Taking the whole kingdom at an average, therefore, the whole amount of the duties upon malt, beer, and ale, cannot be estimated at less than twenty-four or twenty-five shillings upon the produce of a quarter of malt. But by taking off all the different duties upon beer and ale, and by trebling the malt tax, or by raising it from six to eighteen shillings upon the quarter of malt, a greater revenue, it is said, might be raised by this single tax, than what is at present drawn from all those heavier taxes.

L.
s.
d.

In 1772, the old malt tax produced
722,023
11
11

The additional
356,776
7
9¾

In 1773, the old tax produced
561,627
3
7½

The additional
278,650
15
3¾

In 1774, the old tax produced
624,614
17
5¾

The additional
310,745

2
8½

In 1775, the old tax produced
657,357
0
8¼

The additional
323,785
12
6¼

———— ———— ———— ———— ————

4)3,835,580
12
0¾

———— ———— ———— ———— ————

Average of these four years
958,895
3
$0\frac{3}{16}$

———— ———— ———— ———— ————

In 1772, the country excise produced
1,243,120
5
3

The London brewery
408,260
7

2¾

In 1773, the country excise
1,245,808
3
3

The London brewery
405,406
17
10½

In 1774, the country excise
1,246,373
14
5½

The London brewery
320,601
18
0¼

In 1775, the country excise
1,214,583
6
1¼

The London brewery
463,670
7
0¼

——— ——— ——— ——— ———

4)6,547,832
19
2¼

——— ——— ——— ——— ———

Average of these four years
1,636,958
4
9½

To which adding the average malt-tax, or
958,895
3
$0^{3}/_{16}$

——— ——— ——— ——— ———

The whole amount of those different taxes comes out to be
2,595,853
7
$9^{11}/_{16}$

——— ——— ——— ——— ———

But, by trebling the malt tax, or by raising it from six to eighteen shillings upon the quarter of malt, that single tax would produce
2,876,685
9
$0^{9}/_{16}$

A sum which exceeds the foregoing by
280,832
1
$2^{14}/_{16}$

Under the old malt tax, indeed, is comprehended a tax of four shillings upon the hogshead of cyder, and another of ten shillings upon the barrel of mum. In 1774, the tax upon cyder produced only L.3083 : 6 : 8. It probably fell somewhat short of its usual amount; all the different

taxes upon cyder, having, that year, produced less than ordinary. The tax upon mum, though much heavier, is still less productive, on account of the smaller consumption of that liquor. But to balance whatever may be the ordinary amount of those two taxes, there is comprehended under what is called the country excise, first, the old excise of six shillings and eightpence upon the hogshead of cyder; secondly, a like tax of six shillings and eightpence upon the hogshead of verjuice; thirdly, another of eight shillings and ninepence upon the hogshead of vinegar; and, lastly, a fourth tax of elevenpence upon the gallon of mead or metheglin. The produce of those different taxes will probably much more than counterbalance that of the duties imposed, by what is called the annual malt tax, upon cyder and mum.

Malt is consumed, not only in the brewery of beer and ale, but in the manufacture of low wines and spirits. If the malt tax were to be raised to eighteen shillings upon the quarter, it might be necessary to make some abatement in the different excises which are imposed upon those particular sorts of low wines and spirits, of which malt makes any part of the materials. In what are called malt spirits, it makes commonly but a third part of the materials; the other two-thirds being either raw barley, or one-third barley and one-third wheat. In the distillery of malt spirits, both the opportunity and the temptation to smuggle are much greater than either in a brewery or in a malt-house; the opportunity, on account of the smaller bulk and greater value of the commodity, and the temptation, on account of the superior height of the duties, which amounted to 3s. $10\frac{2}{3}$d.[73]* upon the gallon of spirits. By increasing the duties upon malt, and reducing those upon the distillery, both the opportunities and the temptation to smuggle would be diminished, which might occasion a still further augmentation of revenue.

It has for some time past been the policy of Great Britain to discourage the consumption of spirituous liquors, on account of their supposed tendency to ruin the health and to corrupt the morals of the common people. According to this policy, the abatement of the taxes upon the distillery ought not to be so great as to reduce, in any respect, the price of those liquors. Spirituous liquors might remain as dear as ever; while, at the same time, the wholesome and invigorating liquors of beer and ale might be considerably reduced in their price. The people might thus be in part relieved from one of the burdens of which they at present complain the most; while, at the same time, the revenue might be considerably augmented.

The objections of Dr. Davenant to this alteration in the present system of excise duties, seem to be without foundation. Those objections are, that the tax, instead of dividing itself, as at present, pretty equally upon the profit of the maltster, upon that of the brewer, and upon that of the retailer, would so far as it affected profit, fall altogether upon that of the maltster; that the maltster could not so easily get back the amount of the tax in the advanced price of his malt, as the brewer and retailer in the advanced price of their liquor; and that so heavy a tax upon malt might reduce the rent and profit of barley land.

No tax can ever reduce, for any considerable time, the rate of profit in any particular trade, which must always keep its level with other trades in the neighbourhood. The present duties upon malt, beer, and ale, do not affect the profits of the dealers in those commodities, who all get back the tax with an additional profit, in the enhanced price of their goods. A tax, indeed, may render the goods upon which it is imposed so dear, as to diminish the consumption of them. But the consumption of malt is in malt liquors; and a tax of eighteen shillings upon the quarter of malt could not well render those liquors dearer than the different taxes, amounting to twenty-four or twenty-five shillings, do at present. Those liquors, on the contrary, would probably become cheaper, and the consumption of them would be more likely to increase than to diminish.

It is not very easy to understand why it should be more difficult for the maltster to get back eighteen shillings in the advanced price of his malt, than it is at present for the brewer to get back twenty-four or twenty-five, sometimes thirty shillings, in that of his liquor. The maltster, indeed, instead of a tax of six shillings, would be obliged to advance one of eighteen shillings upon every quarter of malt. But the brewer is at present obliged to advance a tax of twenty-four or twenty-five, sometimes thirty shillings, upon every quarter of malt which he brews. It could not be more inconvenient for the maltster to advance a lighter tax, than it is at present for the brewer to advance a heavier one. The maltster does not always keep in his granaries a stock of malt, which it will require a longer time to dispose of than the stock of beer and ale which the brewer frequently keeps in his cellars. The former, therefore, may frequently get the returns of his money as soon as the latter. But whatever inconveniency might arise to the maltster from being obliged to advance a heavier tax, it could easily be remedied, by granting him a few months longer credit than is at present commonly given to the brewer.

Nothing could reduce the rent and profit of barley land, which did not reduce the demand for barley. But a change of system, which reduced the

duties upon a quarter of malt brewed into beer and ale, from twenty-four and twenty-five shillings to eighteen shillings, would be more likely to increase than diminish that demand. The rent and profit of barley land, besides, must always be nearly equal to those of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land. If they were less, some part of the barley land would soon be turned to some other purpose; and if they were greater, more land would soon be turned to the raising of barley. When the ordinary price of any particular produce of land is at what may be called a monopoly price, a tax upon it necessarily reduces the rent and profit of the land which grows it. A tax upon the produce of those precious vineyards, of which the wine falls so much short of the effectual demand, that its price is always above the natural proportion to that of the produce of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land, would necessarily reduce the rent and profit of those vineyards. The price of the wines being already the highest that could be got for the quantity commonly sent to market, it could not be raised higher without diminishing that quantity; and the quantity could not be diminished without still greater loss, because the lands could not be turned to any other equally valuable produce. The whole weight of the tax, therefore, would fall upon the rent and profit; properly upon the rent of the vineyard. When it has been proposed to lay any new tax upon sugar, our sugar planters have frequently complained that the whole weight of such taxes fell not upon the consumer, but upon the producer; they never having been able to raise the price of their sugar after the tax higher than it was before. The price had, it seems, before the tax, been a monopoly price; and the arguments adduced to show that sugar was an improper subject of taxation, demonstrated perhaps that it was a proper one; the gains of monopolists, whenever they can be come at, being certainly of all subjects the most proper. But the ordinary price of barley has never been a monopoly price; and the rent and profit of barley land have never been above their natural proportion to those of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land. The different taxes which have been imposed upon malt, beer, and ale, have never lowered the price of barley; have never reduced the rent and profit of barley land. The price of malt to the brewer has constantly risen in proportion to the taxes imposed upon it; and those taxes, together with the different duties upon beer and ale, have constantly either raised the price, or, what comes to the same thing, reduced the quality of those commodities to the consumer. The final payment of those taxes has fallen constantly upon the consumer, and not upon the producer.

The only people likely to suffer by the change of system here proposed, are those who brew for their own private use. But the exemption, which this superior rank of people at present enjoy, from very heavy taxes which are paid by the poor labourer and artificer, is surely most unjust and unequal, and ought to be taken away, even though this change was never to take place. It has probably been the interest of this superior order of people, however, which has hitherto prevented a change of system that could not well fail both to increase the revenue and to relieve the people.

Besides such duties as those of customs and excise above mentioned, there are several others which affect the price of goods more unequally and more indirectly. Of this kind are the duties, which, in French, are called peages, which in old Saxon times were called the duties of passage, and which seem to have been originally established for the same purpose as our turnpike tolls, or the tolls upon our canals and navigable rivers, for the maintenance of the road or of the navigation. Those duties, when applied to such purposes, are most properly imposed according to the bulk or weight of the goods. As they were originally local and provincial duties, applicable to local and provincial purposes, the administration of them was, in most cases, entrusted to the particular town, parish, or lordship, in which they were levied; such communities being, in some way or other, supposed to be accountable for the application. The sovereign, who is altogether unaccountable, has in many countries assumed to himself the administration of those duties; and though he has in most cases enhanced very much the duty, he has in many entirely neglected the application. If the turnpike tolls of Great Britain should ever become one of the resources of government, we may learn, by the example of many other nations, what would probably be the consequence. Such tolls, no doubt, are finally paid by the consumer; but the consumer is not taxed in proportion to his expense, when he pays, not according to the value, but according to the bulk or weight of what he consumes. When such duties are imposed, not according to the bulk or weight, but according to the supposed value of the goods, they become properly a sort of inland customs or excise, which obstruct very much the most important of all branches of commerce, the interior commerce of the country.

In some small states, duties similar to those passage duties are imposed upon goods carried across the territory, either by land or by water, from one foreign country to another. These are in some countries called transit-duties. Some of the little Italian states which are situated

upon the Po, and the rivers which run into it, derive some revenue from duties of this kind, which are paid altogether by foreigners, and which, perhaps, are the only duties that one state can impose upon the subjects of another, without obstructing, in any respect, the industry or commerce of its own. The most important transit-duty in the world, is that levied by the king of Denmark upon all merchant ships which pass through the Sound.

Such taxes upon luxuries, as the greater part of the duties of customs and excise, though they all fall indifferently upon every different species of revenue, and are paid finally, or without any retribution, by whoever consumes the commodities upon which they are imposed, yet they do not always fall equally or proportionally upon the revenue of every individual. As every man's humour regulates the degree of his consumption, every man contributes rather according to his humour, than in proportion to his revenue: the profuse contribute more, the parsimonious less, than their proper proportion. During the minority of a man of great fortune, he contributes commonly very little, by his consumption, towards the support of that state from whose protection he derives a great revenue. Those who live in another country, contribute nothing by their consumption towards the support of the government of that country, in which is situated the source of their revenue. If in this latter country there should be no land tax, nor any considerable duty upon the transference either of moveable or immoveable property, as is the case in Ireland, such absentees may derive a great revenue from the protection of a government, to the support of which they do not contribute a single shilling. This inequality is likely to be greatest in a country of which the government is, in some respects, subordinate and dependant upon that of some other. The people who possess the most extensive property in the dependant, will, in this case, generally chuse to live in the governing country. Ireland is precisely in this situation; and we cannot therefore wonder, that the proposal of a tax upon absentees should be so very popular in that country. It might, perhaps, be a little difficult to ascertain either what sort, or what degree of absence, would subject a man to be taxed as an absentee, or at what precise time the tax should either begin or end. If you except, however, this very peculiar situation, any inequality in the contribution of individuals which can arise from such taxes, is much more than compensated by the very circumstance which occasions that inequality; the circumstance that every man's contribution is altogether voluntary; it being altogether in his power, either to consume, or not to consume, the commodity taxed.

Where such taxes, therefore, are properly assessed, and upon proper commodities, they are paid with less grumbling than any other. When they are advanced by the merchant or manufacturer, the consumer, who finally pays them, soon comes to confound them with the price of the commodities, and almost forgets that he pays any tax.

Such taxes are, or may be, perfectly certain; or may be assessed, so as to leave no doubt concerning either what ought to be paid, or when it ought to be paid; concerning either the quantity or the time of payment. Whatever uncertainty there may sometimes be, either in the duties of customs in Great Britain, or in other duties of the same kind in other countries, it cannot arise from the nature of those duties, but from the inaccurate or unskilful manner in which the law that imposes them is expressed.

Taxes upon luxuries generally are, and always may be, paid piece-meal, or in proportion as the contributors have occasion to purchase the goods upon which they are imposed. In the time and mode of payment, they are, or may be, of all taxes the most convenient. Upon the whole, such taxes, therefore, are perhaps as agreeable to the three first of the four general maxims concerning taxation, as any other. They offend in every respect against the fourth.

Such taxes, in proportion to what they bring into the public treasury of the state, always take out, or keep out, of the pockets of the people, more than almost any other taxes. They seem to do this in all the four different ways in which it is possible to do it.

First, the levying of such taxes, even when imposed in the most judicious manner, requires a great number of custom-house and excise officers, whose salaries and perquisites are a real tax upon the people, which brings nothing into the treasury of the state. This expense, however, it must be acknowledged, is more moderate in Great Britain than in most other countries. In the year which ended on the 5th of July, 1775, the gross produce of the different duties, under the management of the commissioners of excise in England, amounted to L.5,507,308 : 18 : 8¼, which was levied at an expense of little more than five and a-half per cent. From this gross produce, however, there must be deducted what was paid away in bounties and drawbacks upon the exportation of exciseable goods, which will reduce the neat produce below five millions.[74]* The levying of the salt duty, and excise duty, but under a different management, is much more expensive. The neat revenue of the customs does not amount to two millions and a-half, which is levied at an expense of more than ten per cent., in the salaries of officers and other

incidents. But the perquisites of custom-house officers are everywhere much greater than their salaries; at some ports more than double or triple those salaries. If the salaries of officers, and other incidents, therefore, amount to more than ten per cent. upon the neat revenue of the customs, the whole expense of levying that revenue may amount, in salaries and perquisites together, to more than twenty or thirty per cent. The officers of excise receive few or no perquisites; and the administration of that branch of the revenue being of more recent establishment, is in general less corrupted than that of the customs, into which length of time has introduced and authorized many abuses. By charging upon malt the whole revenue which is at present levied by the different duties upon malt and malt liquors, a saving, it is supposed, of more than L.50,000, might be made in the annual expense of the excise. By confining the duties of customs to a few sorts of goods, and by levying those duties according to the excise laws, a much greater saving might probably be made in the annual expense of the customs.

Secondly, such taxes necessarily occasion some obstruction or discouragement to certain branches of industry. As they always raise the price of the commodity taxed, they so far discourage its consumption, and consequently its production. If it is a commodity of home growth or manufacture, less labour comes to be employed in raising and producing it. If it is a foreign commodity of which the tax increases in this manner the price, the commodities of the same kind which are made at home may thereby, indeed, gain some advantage in the home market, and a greater quantity of domestic industry may thereby be turned toward preparing them. But though this rise of price in a foreign commodity, may encourage domestic industry in one particular branch, it necessarily discourages that industry in almost every other. The dearer the Birmingham manufacturer buys his foreign wine, the cheaper he necessarily sells that part of his hardware with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which, he buys it. That part of his hardware, therefore, becomes of less value to him, and he has less encouragement to work at it. The dearer the consumers in one country pay for the surplus produce of another, the cheaper they necessarily sell that part of their own surplus produce with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which, they buy it. That part of their own surplus produce becomes of less value to them, and they have less encouragement to increase its quantity. All taxes upon consumable commodities, therefore, tend to reduce the quantity of productive labour below what it otherwise would be, either in preparing the commodities

taxed, if they are home commodities, or in preparing these with which they are purchased, if they are foreign commodities. Such taxes, too, always alter, more or less, the natural direction of national industry, and turn it into a channel always different from, and generally less advantageous, than that in which is would have run of its own accord.

Thirdly, the hope of evading such taxes by smuggling, gives frequent occasion to forfeitures and other penalties, which entirely ruin the smuggler; a person who, though no doubt highly blameable for violating the laws of his country, is frequently incapable of violating those of natural justice, and would have been, in every respect, an excellent citizen, had not the laws of his country made that a crime which nature never meant to be so. In those corrupted governments, where there is at least a general suspicion of much unnecessary expense, and great misapplication of the public revenue, the laws which guard it are little respected. Not many people are scrupulous about smuggling, when, without perjury, they can find an easy and safe opportunity of doing so. To pretend to have any scruple about buying smuggled goods, though a manifest encouragement to the violation of the revenue laws, and to the perjury which almost always attends it, would, in most countries, be regarded as one of those pedantic pieces of hypocrisy which, instead of gaining credit with anybody, serve only to expose the person who affects to practise them to the suspicion of being a greater knave than most of his neighbours. By this indulgence of the public, the smuggler is often encouraged to continue a trade, which he is thus taught to consider as in some measure innocent; and when the severity of the revenue laws is ready to fall upon him, he is frequently disposed to defend with violence, what he has been accustomed to regard as his just property. From being at first, perhaps, rather imprudent than criminal, he at last too often becomes one of the hardiest and most determined violators of the laws of society. By the ruin of the smuggler, his capital, which had before been employed in maintaining productive labour, is absorbed either in the revenue of the state, or in that of the revenue officer; and is employed in maintaining unproductive, to the diminution of the general capital of the society, and of the useful industry which it might otherwise have maintained.

Fourthly, such taxes, by subjecting at least the dealers in the taxed commodities, to the frequent visits and odious examination of the tax-gatherers, expose them sometimes, no doubt, to some degree of oppression, and always to much trouble and vexation; and though vexation, as has already been said, is not strictly speaking expense, it is

certainly equivalent to the expense at which every man would be willing to redeem himself from it. The laws of excise, though more effectual for the purpose for which they were instituted, are, in this respect, more vexatious than those of the customs. When a merchant has imparted goods subject to certain duties of customs; when he has paid those duties, and lodged the goods in his warehouse; he is not, in most cases, liable to any further trouble or vexation from the custom-house officer. It is otherwise with goods subject to duties of excise. The dealers have no respite from the continual visits and examination of the excise officers. The duties of excise are, upon this account, more unpopular than those of the customs; and so are the officers who levy them. Those officers, it is pretended, though in general, perhaps, they do their duty fully as well as those of the customs; yet, as that duty obliges them to be frequently very troublesome to some of their neighbours, commonly contract a certain hardness of character, which the others frequently have not. This observation, however, may very probably be the mere suggestion of fraudulent dealers, whose smuggling is either prevented or detected by their diligence.

The inconveniencies, however, which are, perhaps, in some degree inseparable from taxes upon consumable commodities, fall as light upon the people of Great Britain as upon those of any other country of which the government is nearly as expensive. Our state is not perfect, and might be mended; but it is as good, or better, than that of most of our neighbours.

In consequence of the notion, that duties upon consumable goods were taxes upon the profits of merchants, those duties have, in some countries, been repeated upon every successive sale of the goods. If the profits of the merchant-importer or merchant-manufacturer were taxed, equality seemed to require that those of all the middle buyers, who intervened between either of them and the consumer, should likewise be taxed. The famous alcavala of Spain seems to have been established upon this principle. It was at first a tax of ten per cent, afterwards of fourteen per cent. and it is at present only six per cent. upon the sale of every sort of property, whether moveable or immoveable; and it is repeated every time the property is sold.[75*] The levying of this tax requires a multitude of revenue officers, sufficient to guard the transportation of goods, not only from one province to another, but from one shop to another. It subjects, not only the dealers in some sorts of goods, but those in all sorts, every farmer, every manufacturer, every merchant and shopkeeper, to the continual visit and examination of the

tax-gatherers. Through the greater part of the country in which a tax of this kind is established, nothing can be produced for distant sale. The produce of every part of the country must be proportioned to the consumption of the neighbourhood. It is to the alcavala, accordingly, that Ustaritz imputes the ruin of the manufactures of Spain. He might have imputed to it, likewise, the declension of agriculture, it being imposed not only upon manufactures, but upon the rude produce of the land.

In the kingdom of Naples, there is a similar tax of three per cent. upon the value of all contracts, and consequently upon that of all contracts of sale. It is both lighter than the Spanish tax, and the greater part of towns and parishes are allowed to pay a composition in lieu of it. They levy this composition in what manner they please, generally in a way that gives no interruption to the interior commerce of the place. The Neapolitan tax, therefore, is not near so ruinous as the Spanish one.

The uniform system of taxation, which, with a few exceptions of no great consequence, takes place in all the different parts of the united kingdom of Great Britain, leaves the interior commerce of the country, the inland and coasting trade, almost entirely free. The inland trade is almost perfectly free; and the greater part of goods may be carried from one end of the kingdom to the other, without requiring any permit or let-pass, without being subject to question, visit or examination, from the revenue officers. There are a few exceptions, but they are such as can give no interruption to any important branch of inland commerce of the country. Goods carried coastwise, indeed, require certificates or coast-cockets. If you except coals, however, the rest are almost all duty-free. This freedom of interior commerce, the effect of the uniformity of the system of taxation, is perhaps one of the principal causes of the prosperity of Great Britain; every great country being necessarily the best and most extensive market for the greater part of the productions of its own industry. If the same freedom in consequence of the same uniformity, could be extended to Ireland and the plantations, both the grandeur of the state, and the prosperity of every part of the empire, would probably be still greater than at present.

In France, the different revenue laws which take place in the different provinces, require a multitude of revenue officers to surround, not only the frontiers of the kingdom, but those of almost each particular province, in order either to prevent the importation of certain goods, or to subject it to the payment of certain duties, to the no small interruption of the interior commerce of the country. Some provinces are allowed to compound for the gabelle, or salt tax; others are exempted from it

altogether. Some provinces are exempted from the exclusive sale of tobacco, which the farmers-general enjoy through the greater part of the kingdom. The aides, which correspond to the excise in England, are very different in different provinces. Some provinces are exempted from them, and pay a composition or equivalent. In those in which they take place, and are in farm, there are many local duties which do not extend beyond a particular town or district. The traites, which correspond to our customs, divide the kingdom into three great parts; first, the provinces subject to the tariff of 1664, which are called the provinces of the five great farms, and under which are comprehended Picardy, Normandy, and the greater part of the interior provinces of the kingdom; secondly, the provinces subject to the tariff of 1667, which are called the provinces reckoned foreign, and under which are comprehended the greater part of the frontier provinces; and, thirdly, those provinces which are said to be treated as foreign, or which, because they are allowed a free commerce with foreign countries, are, in their commerce with the other provinces of France, subjected to the same duties as other foreign countries. These are Alsace, the three bishoprics of Mentz, Toul, and Verdun, and the three cities of Dunkirk, Bayonne, and Marseilles. Both in the provinces of the five great farms (called so on account of an ancient division of the duties of customs into five great branches, each of which was originally the subject of a particular farm, though they are now all united into one), and in those which are said to be reckoned foreign, there are many local duties which do not extend beyond a particular town or district. There are some such even in the provinces which are said to be treated as foreign, particularly in the city of Marseilles. It is unnecessary to observe how much both the restraints upon the interior commerce of the country, and the number of the revenue officers, must be multiplied, in order to guard the frontiers of those different provinces and districts which are subject to such different systems of taxation.

Over and above the general restraints arising from this complicated system of revenue laws, the commerce of wine (after corn, perhaps, the most important production of France) is, in the greater part of the provinces, subject to particular restraints arising from the favour which has been shown to the vineyards of particular provinces and districts above those of others. The provinces most famous for their wines, it will be found, I believe, are those in which the trade in that article is subject to the fewest restraints of this kind. The extensive market which such provinces enjoy, encourages good management both in the cultivation of their vineyards, and in the subsequent preparation of their wines.

Such various and complicated revenue laws are not peculiar to France. The little duchy of Milan is divided into six provinces, in each of which there is a different system of taxation, with regard to several different sorts of consumable goods. The still smaller territories of the duke of Parma are divided into three or four, each of which has, in the same manner, a system of its own. Under such absurd management, nothing but the great fertility of the soil, and happiness of the climate, could preserve such countries from soon relapsing into the lowest state of poverty and barbarism.

Taxes upon consumable commodities may either be levied by an administration, of which the officers are appointed by government, and immediately accountable to government, of which the revenue must, in this case, vary from year to year, according to the occasional variations in the produce of the tax; or they may be let in farm for a rent certain, the farmer being allowed to appoint his own officers, who, though obliged to levy the tax in the manner directed by the law, are under his immediate inspection, and are immediately accountable to him. The best and most frugal way of levying a tax can never be by farm. Over and above what is necessary for paying the stipulated rent, the salaries of the officers, and the whole expense of administration, the farmer must always draw from the produce of the tax a certain profit, proportioned at least to the advance which he makes, to the risk which he runs, to the trouble which he is at, and to the knowledge and skill which it requires to manage so very complicated a concern. Government, by establishing an administration under their own immediate inspection, of the same kind with that which the farmer establishes, might at least save this profit, which is almost always exorbitant. To farm any considerable branch of the public revenue requires either a great capital, or a great credit; circumstances which would alone restrain the competition for such an undertaking to a very small number of people. Of the few who have this capital or credit, a still smaller number have the necessary knowledge or experience; another circumstance which restrains the competition still further. The very few who are in condition to become competitors, find it more for their interest to combine together; to become copartners, instead of competitors; and, when the farm is set up to auction, to offer no rent but what is much below the rent value. In countries where the public revenues are in farm, the farmers are generally the most opulent people. Their wealth would alone excite the public indignation; and the vanity which almost always accompanies such upstart fortunes, the foolish

ostentation with which they commonly display that wealth, excite that indignation still more.

The farmers of the public revenue never find the laws too severe, which punish any attempt to evade the payment of a tax. They have no bowels for the contributors, who are not their subjects, and whose universal bankruptcy, if it should happen the day after the farm is expired, would not much affect their interest. In the greatest exigencies of the state, when the anxiety of the sovereign for the exact payment of his revenue is necessarily the greatest, they seldom fail to complain, that without laws more rigorous than those which actually took place, it will be impossible for them to pay even the usual rent. In those moments of public distress, their commands cannot be disputed. The revenue laws, therefore, become gradually more and more severe. The most sanguinary are always to be found in countries where the greater part of the public revenue is in farm; the mildest, in countries where it is levied under the immediate inspection of the sovereign. Even a bad sovereign feels more compassion for his people than can ever be expected from the farmers of his revenue. He knows that the permanent grandeur of his family depends upon the prosperity of his people, and he will never knowingly ruin that prosperity for the sake of any momentary interest of his own. It is otherwise with the farmers of his revenue, whose grandeur may frequently be the effect of the ruin, and not of the prosperity, of his people.

A tax is sometimes not only farmed for a certain rent, but the farmer has, besides, the monopoly of the commodity taxed. In France, the duties upon tobacco and salt are levied in this manner. In such cases, the farmer, instead of one, levies two exorbitant profits upon the people; the profit of the farmer, and the still more exorbitant one of the monopolist. Tobacco being a luxury, every man is allowed to buy or not to buy as he chuses; but salt being a necessary, every man is obligated to buy of the farmer a certain quantity of it; because, if he did not buy this quantity of the farmer, he would, it is presumed, buy it of some smuggler. The taxes upon both commodities are exorbitant. The temptation to smuggle, consequently, is to many people irresistible; while, at the same time, the rigour of the law, and the vigilance of the farmer’s officers, render the yielding to the temptation almost certainly ruinous. The smuggling of salt and tobacco sends every year several hundred people to the galleys, besides a very considerable number whom it sends to the gibbet. Those taxes, levied in this manner, yield a very considerable revenue to government. In 1767, the farm of tobacco was let for twenty-two

millions five hundred and forty-one thousand two hundred and seventy-eight livres a-year; that of salt for thirty-six millions four hundred and ninety-two thousand four hundred and four livres. The farm, in both cases, was to commence in 1768, and to last for six years. These who consider the blood of the people as nothing, in comparison with the revenue of the prince, may, perhaps, approve of this method of levying taxes. Similar taxes and monopolies of salt and tobacco have been established in many other countries, particularly in the Austrian and Prussian dominions, and in the greater part of the states of Italy.

In France, the greater part of the actual revenue of the crown is derived from eight different sources; the taille, the capitation, the two vingtiemes, the gabelles, the aides, the traites, the domaine, and the farm of tobacco. The five last are, in the greater part of the provinces, under farm. The three first are everywhere levied by an administration, under the immediate inspection and direction of government; and it is universally acknowledged, that in proportion to what they take out of the pockets of the people, they bring more into the treasury of the prince than the other five, of which the administration is much more wasteful and expensive.

The finances of France seem, in their present state, to admit of three very obvious reformations. First, by abolishing the taille and the capitation, and by increasing the number of the vingtiemes, so as to produce an additional revenue equal to the amount of those other taxes, the revenue of the crown might be preserved; the expense of collection might be much diminished; the vexation of the inferior ranks of people, which the taille and capitation occasion, might be entirely prevented; and the superior ranks might not be more burdened than the greater part of them are at present. The vingtieme, I have already observed, is a tax very nearly of the same kind with what is called the land tax of England. The burden of the taille, it is acknowledged, falls finally upon the proprietors of land; and as the greater part of the capitation is assessed upon those who are subject to the taille, at so much a-pound of that other tax, the final payment of the greater part of it must likewise fall upon the same order of people. Though the number of the vingtiemes, therefore, was increased, so as to produce an additional revenue equal to the amount of both those taxes, the superior ranks of people might not be more burdened than they are at present; many individuals, no doubt, would, on account of the great inequalities with which the taille is commonly assessed upon the estates and tenants of different individuals. The interest and opposition of such favoured subjects, are the obstacles most

likely to prevent this, or any other reformation of the same kind. Secondly, by rendering the gabelle, the aides, the traites, the taxes upon tobacco, all the different customs and excises, uniform in all the different parts of the kingdom, those taxes might be levied at much less expense, and the interior commerce of the kingdom might be rendered as free as that of England. Thirdly, and lastly, by subjecting all those taxes to an administration under the immediate inspection and direction of government, the exorbitant profits of the farmers-general might be added to the revenue of the state. The opposition arising from the private interest of individuals, is likely to be as effectual for preventing the two last as the first-mentioned scheme of reformation.

The French system of taxation seems, in every respect, inferior to the British. In Great Britain, ten millions sterling are annually levied upon less than eight millions of people, without its being possible to say that any particular order is oppressed. From the Collections of the Abbé Expilly, and the observations of the author of the Essay upon the Legislation and Commerce of Corn, it appears probable that France, including the provinces of Lorraine and Bar, contains about twenty-three or twenty-four millions of people; three times the number, perhaps, contained in Great Britain. The soil and climate of France are better than those of Great Britain. The country has been much longer in a state of improvement and cultivation, and is, upon that account, better stocked with all those things which it requires a long time to raise up and accumulate; such as great towns, and convenient and well-built houses, both in town and country. With these advantages, it might be expected, that in France a revenue of thirty millions might be levied for the support of the state, with as little inconvenience as a revenue of ten millions is in Great Britain. In 1765 and 1766, the whole revenue paid into the treasury of France, according to the best, though, I acknowledge, very imperfect accounts which I could get of it, usually run between 308 and 325 millions of livres; that is, it did not amount to fifteen millions sterling; not the half of what might have been expected, had the people contributed in the same proportion to their numbers as the people of Great Britain. The people of France, however, it is generally acknowledged, are much more oppressed by taxes than the people of Great Britain. France, however, is certainly the great empire in Europe, which, after that of Great Britain, enjoys the mildest and most indulgent government.

In Holland, the heavy taxes upon the necessaries of life have ruined, it is said, their principal manufacturers, and are likely to discourage,

gradually, even their fisheries and their trade in ship-building. The taxes upon the necessaries of life are inconsiderable in Great Britain, and no manufacture has hitherto been ruined by them. The British taxes which bear hardest on manufactures, are some duties upon the importation of raw materials, particularly upon that of raw silk. The revenue of the States-General and of the different cities, however, is said to amount to more than five millions two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; and as the inhabitants of the United Provinces cannot well be supposed to amount to more than a third part of those of Great Britain, they must, in proportion to their number, be much more heavily taxed.

After all the proper subjects of taxation have been exhausted, if the exigencies of the state still continue to require new taxes, they must be imposed upon improper ones. The taxes upon the necessaries of life, therefore, may be no impeachment of the wisdom of that republic, which, in order to acquire and to maintain its independency, has, in spite of its great frugality, been involved in such expensive wars as have obliged it to contract great debts. The singular countries of Holland and Zealand, besides, require a considerable expense even to preserve their existence, or to prevent their being swallowed up by the sea, which must have contributed to increase considerably the load of taxes in those two provinces. The republican form of government seems to be the principal support of the present grandeur of Holland. The owners of great capitals, the great mercantile families, have generally either some direct share, or some indirect influence, in the administration of that government. For the sake of the respect and authority which they derive from this situation, they are willing to live in a country where their capital, if they employ it themselves, will bring them less profit, and if they lend it to another, less interest; and where the very moderate revenue which they can draw from it will purchase less of the necessaries and conveniencies of life than in any other part of Europe. The residence of such wealthy people necessarily keeps alive, in spite of all disadvantages, a certain degree of industry in the country. Any public calamity which should destroy the republican form of government, which should throw the whole administration into the hands of nobles and of soldiers, which should annihilate altogether the importance of those wealthy merchants, would soon render it disagreeable to them to live in a country where they were no longer likely to be much respected. They would remove both their residence and their capital to some other country, and the industry and commerce of Holland would soon follow the capitals which supported them.

CHAP. III. OF PUBLIC DEBTS.

In that rude state of society which precedes the extension of commerce and the improvement of manufactures; when those expensive luxuries, which commerce and manufactures can alone introduce, are altogether unknown; the person who possesses a large revenue, I have endeavoured to show in the third book of this Inquiry, can spend or enjoy that revenue in no other way than by maintaining nearly as many people as it can maintain. A large revenue may at all times be said to consist in the command of a large quantity of the necessaries of life. In that rude state of things, it is commonly paid in a large quantity of those necessaries, in the materials of plain food and coarse clothing, in corn and cattle, in wool and raw hides. When neither commerce nor manufactures furnish any thing for which the owner can exchange the greater part of those materials which are over and above his own consumption, he can do nothing with the surplus, but feed and clothe nearly as many people as it will feed and clothe. A hospitality in which there is no luxury, and a liberality in which there is no ostentation, occasion, in this situation of things, the principal expenses of the rich and the great. But these I have likewise endeavoured to show, in the same book, are expenses by which people are not very apt to ruin themselves. There is not, perhaps, any selfish pleasure so frivolous, of which the pursuit has not sometimes ruined even sensible men. A passion for cock-fighting has ruined many. But the instances, I believe, are not very numerous, of people who have been ruined by a hospitality or liberality of this kind; though the hospitality of luxury, and the liberality of ostentation have ruined many. Among our feudal ancestors, the long time during which estates used to continue in the same family, sufficiently demonstrates the general disposition of people to live within their income. Though the rustic hospitality, constantly exercised by the great landholders, may not, to us in the present times, seem consistent with that order which we are apt to consider as inseparably connected with good economy; yet we must certainly allow them to have been at least so far frugal, as not commonly to have spent their whole income. A part of their wool and raw hides, they had generally an opportunity of selling for money. Some part of this money, perhaps, they spent in purchasing the few objects of vanity and luxury, with which the circumstances of the times could furnish them; but some part of it they seem commonly to have hoarded. They could not

well, indeed, do any thing else but hoard whatever money they saved. To trade, was disgraceful to a gentleman; and to lend money at interest, which at that time was considered as usury, and prohibited by law, would have been still more so. In those times of violence and disorder, besides, it was convenient to have a hoard of money at hand, that in case they should be driven from their own home, they might have something of known value to carry with them to some place of safety. The same violence which made it convenient to hoard, made it equally convenient to conceal the hoard. The frequency of treasure-trove, or of treasure found, of which no owner was known, sufficiently demonstrates the frequency, in those times, both of hoarding and of concealing the hoard. Treasure-trove was then considered as an important branch of the revenue of the sovereign. All the treasure-trove of the kingdom would scarce, perhaps, in the present times, make an important branch of the revenue of a private gentleman of a good estate.

The same disposition, to save and to hoard, prevailed in the sovereign, as well as in the subjects. Among nations, to whom commerce and manufactures are little known, the sovereign, it has already been observed in the fourth book, is in a situation which naturally disposes him to the parsimony requisite for accumulation. In that situation, the expense, even of a sovereign, cannot be directed by that vanity which delights in the gaudy finery of a court. The ignorance of the times affords but few of the trinkets in which that finery consists. Standing armies are not then necessary; so that the expense, even of a sovereign, like that of any other great lord, can be employed in scarce any thing but bounty to his tenants, and hospitality to his retainers. But bounty and hospitality very seldom lead to extravagance; though vanity almost always does. All the ancient sovereigns of Europe, accordingly, it has already been observed, had treasures. Every Tartar chief, in the present times, is said to have one.

In a commercial country, abounding with every sort of expensive luxury, the sovereign, in the same manner as almost all the great proprietors in his dominions, naturally spends a great part of his revenue in purchasing those luxuries. His own and the neighbouring countries supply him abundantly with all the costly trinkets which compose the splendid, but insignificant, pageantry of a court. For the sake of an inferior pageantry of the same kind, his nobles dismiss their retainers, make their tenants independent, and become gradually themselves as insignificant as the greater part of the wealthy burghers in his dominions. The same frivolous passions, which influence their conduct, influence

his. How can it be supposed that he should be the only rich man in his dominions who is insensible to pleasures of this kind? If he does not, what he is very likely to do, spend upon those pleasures so great a part of his revenue as to debilitate very much the defensive power of the state, it cannot well be expected that he should not spend upon them all that part of it which is over and above what is necessary for supporting that defensive power. His ordinary expense becomes equal to his ordinary revenue, and it is well if it does not frequently exceed it. The amassing of treasure can no longer be expected; and when extraordinary exigencies require extraordinary expenses, he must necessarily call upon his subjects for an extraordinary aid. The present and the late king of Prussia are the only great princes of Europe, who, since the death of Henry IV. of France, in 1610, are supposed to have amassed any considerable treasure. The parsimony which leads to accumulation has become almost as rare in republican as in monarchical governments. The Italian republics, the United Provinces of the Netherlands, are all in debt. The canton of Berne is the single republic in Europe which has amassed any considerable treasure. The other Swiss republics have not. The taste for some sort of pageantry, for splendid buildings, at least, and other public ornaments, frequently prevails as much in the apparently sober senate-house of a little republic, as in the dissipated court of the greatest king.

The want of parsimony, in time of peace, imposes the necessity of contracting debt in time of war. When war comes, there is no money in the treasury, but what is necessary for carrying on the ordinary expense of the peace establishment. In war, an establishment of three or four times that expense becomes necessary for the defence of the state; and consequently, a revenue three or four times greater than the peace revenue. Supposing that the sovereign should have, what he scarce ever has, the immediate means of augmenting his revenue in proportion to the augmentation of his expense; yet still the produce of the taxes, from which this increase of revenue must be drawn, will not begin to come into the treasury, till perhaps ten or twelve months after they are imposed. But the moment in which war begins, or rather the moment in which it appears likely to begin, the army must be augmented, the fleet must be fitted out, the garrisoned towns must be put into a posture of defence; that army, that fleet, those garrisoned towns, must be furnished with arms, ammunition, and provisions. An immediate and great expense must be incurred in that moment of immediate danger, which will not wait for the gradual and slow returns of the new taxes. In this exigency, government can have no other resource but in borrowing.

The same commercial state of society which, by the operation of moral causes, brings government in this manner into the necessity of borrowing, produces in the subjects both an ability and an inclination to lend. If it commonly brings along with it the necessity of borrowing, it likewise brings with it the facility of doing so.

A country abounding with merchants and manufacturers, necessarily abounds with a set of people through whose hands, not only their own capitals, but the capitals of all those who either lend them money, or trust them with goods, pass as frequently, or more frequently, than the revenue of a private man, who, without trade or business, lives upon his income, passes through his hands. The revenue of such a man can regularly pass through his hands only once in a year. But the whole amount of the capital and credit of a merchant, who deals in a trade of which the returns are very quick, may sometimes pass through his hands two, three, or four times in a year. A country abounding with merchants and manufacturers, therefore, necessarily abounds with a set of people, who have it at all times in their power to advance, if they chuse to do so, a very large sum of money to government. Hence the ability in the subjects of a commercial state to lend.

Commerce and manufactures can seldom flourish long in any state which does not enjoy a regular administration of justice; in which the people do not feel themselves secure in the possession of their property; in which the faith of contracts is not supported by law; and in which the authority of the state is not supposed to be regularly employed in enforcing the payment of debts from all those who are able to pay. Commerce and manufactures, in short, can seldom flourish in any state, in which there is not a certain degree of confidence in the justice of government. The same confidence which disposes great merchants and manufacturers upon ordinary occasions, to trust their property to the protection of a particular government, disposes them, upon extraordinary occasions, to trust that government with the use of their property. By lending money to government, they do not even for a moment diminish their ability to carry on their trade and manufactures; on the contrary, they commonly augment it. The necessities of the state render government, upon most occasions willing to borrow upon terms extremely advantageous to the lender. The security which it grants to the original creditor, is made transferable to any other creditor; and from the universal confidence in the justice of the state, generally sells in the market for more than was originally paid for it. The merchant or monied man makes money by lending money to government, and instead of

diminishing, increases his trading capital. He generally considers it as a favour, therefore, when the administration admits him to a share in the first subscription for a new loan. Hence the inclination or willingness in the subjects of a commercial state to lend.

The government of such a state is very apt to repose itself upon this ability and willingness of its subjects to lend it their money on extraordinary occasions. It foresees the facility of borrowing, and therefore dispenses itself from the duty of saving.

In a rude state of society, there are no great mercantile or manufacturing capitals. The individuals, who hoard whatever money they can save, and who conceal their hoard, do so from a distrust of the justice of government; from a fear, that if it was known that they had a hoard, and where that hoard was to be found, they would quickly be plundered. In such a state of things, few people would be able, and nobody would be willing to lend their money to government on extraordinary exigencies. The sovereign feels that he must provide for such exigencies by saving, because he foresees the absolute impossibility of borrowing. This foresight increases still further his natural disposition to save.

The progress of the enormous debts which at present oppress, and will in the long-run probably ruin, all the great nations of Europe, has been pretty uniform. Nations, like private men, have generally begun to borrow upon what may be called personal credit, without assigning or mortgaging any particular fund for the payment of the debt; and when this resource has failed them, they have gone on to borrow upon assignments or mortgages of particular funds.

What is called the unfunded debt of Great Britain, is contracted in the former of those two ways. It consists partly in a debt which bears, or is supposed to bear, no interest, and which resembles the debts that a private man contracts upon account; and partly in a debt which bears interest, and which resembles what a private man contracts upon his bill or promissory-note. The debts which are due, either for extraordinary services, or for services either not provided for, or not paid at the time when they are performed; part of the extraordinaries of the army, navy, and ordnance, the arrears of subsidies to foreign princes, those of seamen’s wages, &c. usually constitute a debt of the first kind. Navy and exchequer bills, which are issued sometimes in payment of a part of such debts, and sometimes for other purposes, constitutes a debt of the second kind; exchequer bills bearing interest from the day on which they are issued, and navy bills six months after they are issued. The bank of

England, either by voluntarily discounting those bills at their current value, or by agreeing with government for certain considerations to circulate exchequer bills, that is, to receive them at par, paying the interest which happens to be due upon them, keeps up the value, and facilitates their circulation, and thereby frequently enables government to contract a very large debt of this kind. In France, where there is no bank, the state bills (billets d'etat[76*]) have sometimes sold at sixty and seventy per cent. discount. During the great recoinage in king William's time, when the bank of England thought proper to put a stop to its usual transactions, exchequer bills and tallies are said to have sold from twenty-five to sixty per cent. discount; owing partly, no doubt, to the supposed instability of the new government established by the Revolution, but partly, too, to the want of the support of the bank of England.

When this resource is exhausted, and it becomes necessary, in order to raise money, to assign or mortgage some particular branch of the public revenue for the payment of the debt, government has, upon different occasions, done this in two different ways. Sometimes it has made this assignment or mortgage for a short period of time only, a year, or a few years, for example; and sometimes for perpetuity. In the one case, the fund was supposed sufficient to pay, within the limited time, both principal and interest of the money borrowed. In the other, it was supposed sufficient to pay the interest only, or a perpetual annuity equivalent to the interest, government being at liberty to redeem, at any time, this annuity, upon paying back the principal sum borrowed. When money was raised in the one way, it was said to be raised by anticipation; when in the other, by perpetual funding, or, more shortly, by funding.

In Great Britain, the annual land and malt taxes are regularly anticipated every year, by virtue of a borrowing clause constantly inserted into the acts which impose them. The bank of England generally advances at an interest, which, since the Revolution, has varied from eight to three per cent., the sums of which those taxes are granted, and receives payment as their produce gradually comes in. If there is a deficiency, which there always is, it is provided for in the supplies of the ensuing year. The only considerable branch of the public revenue which yet remains unmortgaged, is thus regularly spent before it comes in. Like an improvident spendthrift, whose pressing occasions will not allow him to wait for the regular payment of his revenue, the state is in the constant practice of borrowing of its own factors and agents, and of paying interest for the use of its own money.

In the reign of king William, and during a great part of that of queen Anne, before we had become so familiar as we are now with the practice of perpetual funding, the greater part of the new taxes were imposed but for a short period of time (for four, five, six, or seven years only), and a great part of the grants of every year consisted in loans upon anticipations of the produce of those taxes. The produce being frequently insufficient for paying, within the limited term, the principal and interest of the money borrowed, deficiencies arose; to make good which, it became necessary to prolong the term.

In 1697, by the 8th of William III., c. 20, the deficiencies of several taxes were charged upon what was then called the first general mortgage or fund, consisting of a prolongation to the first of August 1706, of several different taxes, which would have expired within a shorter term, and of which the produce was accumulated into one general fund. The deficiencies charged upon this prolonged term amounted to L.5,160,459 : 14 : 9½.

In 1701, those duties, with some others, were still further prolonged, for the like purposes, till the first of August 1710, and were called the second general mortgage or fund. The deficiencies charged upon it amounted to L.2,055,999 : 7 : 11½.

In 1707, those duties were still further prolonged, as a fund for new loans, to the first of August 1712, and were called the third general mortgage or fund. The sum borrowed upon it was L.983,254 : 11 : 9¼.

In 1708, those duties were all (except the old subsidy of tonnage and poundage, of which one moiety only was made a part of this fund, and a duty upon the importation of Scotch linen, which had been taken off by the articles of union) still further continued, as a fund for new loans, to the first of August 1714, and were called the fourth general mortgage or fund. The sum borrowed upon it was L.925,176 : 9 : 2¼.

In 1709, those duties were all (except the old subsidy of tonnage and poundage, which was now left out of this fund altogether) still further continued, for the same purpose, to the first of August 1716, and were called the fifth general mortgage or fund. The sum borrowed upon it was L.922,029 : 6s.

In 1710, those duties were again prolonged to the first of August 1720, and were called the sixth general mortgage or fund. The sum borrowed upon it was L.1,296,552 : 9 : 11¾.

In 1711, the same duties (which at this time were thus subject to four different anticipations), together with several others, were continued for ever, and made a fund for paying the interest of the capital of the South-

sea company, which had that year advanced to government, for paying debts, and making good deficiencies, the sum of L.9,177,967 : 15 : 4, the greatest loan which at that time had ever been made.

Before this period, the principal, so far as I have been able to observe, the only taxes, which, in order to pay the interest of a debt, had been imposed for perpetuity, were these for paying the interest of the money which had been advanced to government by the bank and East-India company, and of what it was expected would be advanced, but which was never advanced, by a projected land bank. The bank fund at this time amounted to L.3,375,027 : 17 : 10½, for which was paid an annuity or interest of L.206,501 : 13 : 5. The East-India fund amounted to L.3,200,000, for which was paid an annuity or interest of L.160,000; the bank fund being at six per cent., the East-India fund at five per cent. interest.

In 1715, by the first of George I., c. 12, the different taxes which had been mortgaged for paying the bank annuity, together with several others, which, by this act, were likewise rendered perpetual, were accumulated into one common fund, called the aggregate fund, which was charged not only with the payment of the bank annuity, but with several other annuities and burdens of different kinds. This fund was afterwards augmented by the third of George I., c. 8., and by the fifth of George I., c. 3, and the different duties which were then added to it were likewise rendered perpetual.

In 1717, by the third of George I., c. 7, several other taxes were rendered perpetual, and accumulated into another common fund, called the general fund, for the payment of certain annuities, amounting in the whole to L.724,849 : 6 : 10½.

In consequence of those different acts, the greater part of the taxes, which before had been anticipated only for a short term of years were rendered perpetual, as a fund for paying, not the capital, but the interest only, of the money which had been borrowed upon them by different successive anticipations.

Had money never been raised but by anticipation, the course of a few years would have liberated the public revenue, without any other attention of government besides that of not overloading the fund, by charging it with more debt than it could pay within the limited term, and not of anticipating a second time before the expiration of the first anticipation. But the greater part of European governments have been incapable of those attentions. They have frequently overloaded the fund, even upon the first anticipation; and when this happened not to be the

case, they have generally taken care to overload it, by anticipating a second and a third time, before the expiration of the first anticipation. The fund becoming in this manner altogether insufficient for paying both principal and interest of the money borrowed upon it, it became necessary to charge it with the interest only, or a perpetual annuity equal to the interest; and such improvident anticipations necessarily gave birth to the more ruinous practice of perpetual funding. But though this practice necessarily puts off the liberation of the public revenue from a fixed period, to one so indefinite that it is not very likely ever to arrive; yet, as a greater sum can, in all cases, be raised by this new practice than by the old one of anticipation, the former, when men have once become familiar with it, has, in the great exigencies of the state, been universally preferred to the latter. To relieve the present exigency, is always the object which principally interests those immediately concerned in the administration of public affairs. The future liberation of the public revenue they leave to the care of posterity.

During the reign of queen Anne, the market rate of interest had fallen from six to five per cent.; and, in the twelfth year of her reign, five per cent. was declared to be the highest rate which could lawfully be taken for money borrowed upon private security. Soon after the greater part of the temporary taxes of Great Britain had been rendered perpetual, and distributed into the aggregate, South-sea, and general funds, the creditors of the public, like those of private persons, were induced to accept of five per cent. for the interest of their money, which occasioned a saving of one per cent. upon the capital of the greater part of the debts which had been thus funded for perpetuity, or of one-sixth of the greater part of the annuities which were paid out of the three great funds above mentioned. This saving left a considerable surplus in the produce of the different taxes which had been accumulated into those funds, over and above what was necessary for paying the annuities which were now charged upon them, and laid the foundation of what has since been called the sinking fund. In 1717, it amounted to L.323,434 : 7 : 7½. In 1727, the interest of the greater part of the public debts was still further reduced to four per cent.; and, in 1753 and 1757, to three and a-half, and three per cent., which reductions still further augmented the sinking fund.

A sinking fund, though instituted for the payment of old, facilitates very much the contracting of new debts. It is a subsidiary fund, always at hand, to be mortgaged in aid of any other doubtful fund, upon which money is proposed to be raised in any exigency of the state. Whether the

sinking fund of Great Britain has been more frequently applied to the one or to other of those two purposes, will sufficiently appear by and by.

Besides these two methods of borrowing, by anticipations and by a perpetual funding, there are two other methods, which hold a sort of middle place between them; these are, that of borrowing upon annuities for terms of years, and that of borrowing upon annuities for lives.

During the reigns of king William and queen Anne, large sums were frequently borrowed upon annuities for terms of years, which were sometimes longer and sometimes shorter. In 1693, an act was passed for borrowing one million upon an annuity of fourteen per cent., or L.140,000 a-year, for sixteen years. In 1691, an act was passed for borrowing a million upon annuities for lives, upon terms which, in the present times, would appear very advantageous; but the subscription was not filled up. In the following year, the deficiency was made good, by borrowing upon annuities for lives, at fourteen per cent. or a little more than seven years purchase. In 1695, the persons who had purchased those annuities were allowed to exchange them for others of ninety-six years, upon paying into the exchequer sixty-three pounds in the hundred; that is, the difference between fourteen per cent. for life, and fourteen per cent. for ninety-six years, was sold for sixty-three pounds, or for four and a-half years purchase. Such was the supposed instability of government, that even these terms procured few purchasers. In the reign of queen Anne, money was, upon different occasions, borrowed both upon annuities for lives, and upon annuities for terms of thirty-two, of eighty-nine, of ninety-eight, and of ninety-nine years. In 1719, the proprietors of the annuities for thirty-two years were induced to accept, in lieu of them, South-sea stock to the amount of eleven and a-half years purchase of the annuities, together with an additional quantity of stock, equal to the arrears which happened then to be due upon them. In 1720, the greater part of the other annuities for terms of years, both long and short, were subscribed into the same fund. The long annuities, at that time, amounted to L.666,821 : 8 : 3½ a-year. On the 5th of January 1775, the remainder of them, or what was not subscribed at that time, amounted only to L.136,453 : 12 : 8.

During the two wars which began in 1739 and in 1755, little money was borrowed, either upon annuities for terms of years, or upon those for lives. An annuity for ninety-eight or ninety-nine years, however, is worth nearly as much as a perpetuity, and should therefore, one might think, be a fund for borrowing nearly as much. But those who, in order to make family settlements, and to provide for remote futurity, buy into the public

stocks, would not care to purchase into one of which the value was continually diminishing; and such people make a very considerable proportion, both of the proprietors and purchasers of stock. An annuity for a long term of years, therefore, though its intrinsic value may be very nearly the same with that of a perpetual annuity, will not find nearly the same number of purchasers. The subscribers to a new loan, who mean generally to sell their subscription as soon as possible, prefer greatly a perpetual annuity, redeemable by parliament, to an irredeemable annuity, for a long term of years, of only equal amount. The value of the former may be supposed always the same, or very nearly the same; and it makes, therefore, a more convenient transferable stock than the latter.

During the two last-mentioned wars, annuities, either for terms of years or for lives, were seldom granted, but as premiums to the subscribers of a new loan, over and above the redeemable annuity or interest, upon the credit of which the loan was supposed to be made. They were granted, not as the proper fund upon which the money was borrowed, but as an additional encouragement to the lender.

Annuities for lives have occasionally been granted in two different ways; either upon separate lives, or upon lots of lives, which, in French, are called tontines, from the name of their inventor. When annuities are granted upon separate lives, the death of every individual annuitant disburdens the public revenue, so far as it was affected by his annuity. When annuities are granted upon tontines, the liberation of the public revenue does not commence till the death of all the annuitants comprehended in one lot, which may, sometimes consist of twenty or thirty persons, of whom the survivors succeed to the annuities of all those who die before them; the last survivor succeeding to the annuities of the whole lot. Upon the same revenue, more money can always be raised by tontines than by annuities for separate lives. An annuity, with a right of survivorship, is really worth more than an equal annuity for a separate life; and, from the confidence which every man naturally has in his own good fortune, the principle upon which is founded the success of all lotteries, such an annuity generally sells for something more than it is worth. In countries where it is usual for government to raise money by granting annuities, tontines are, upon this account, generally preferred to annuities for separate lives. The expedient which will raise most money, is almost always preferred to that which is likely to bring about, in the speediest manner, the liberation of the public revenue.

In France, a much greater proportion of the public debts consists in annuities for lives than in England. According to a memoir presented by

the parliament of Bourdeaux to the king, in 1764, the whole public debt of France is estimated at twenty-four hundred millions of livres; of which the capital, for which annuities for lives had been granted, is supposed to amount to three hundred millions, the eighth part of the whole public debt. The annuities themselves are computed to amount to thirty millions a-year, the fourth part of one hundred and twenty millions, the supposed interest of that whole debt. These estimations, I know very well, are not exact; but having been presented by so very respectable a body as approximations to the truth, they may, I apprehend, be considered as such. It is not the different degrees of anxiety in the two governments of France and England for the liberation of the public revenue, which occasions this difference in their respective modes of borrowing; it arises altogether from the different views and interests of the lenders.

In England, the seat of government being in the greatest mercantile city in the world, the merchants are generally the people who advance money to government. By advancing it, they do not mean to diminish, but, on the contrary, to increase their mercantile capitals; and unless they expected to sell, with some profit, their share in the subscription for a new loan, they never would subscribe. But if, by advancing their money, they were to purchase, instead of perpetual annuities, annuities for lives only, whether their own or those of other people, they would not always be so likely to sell them with a profit. Annuities upon their own lives they would always sell with loss; because no man will give for an annuity upon the life of another, whose age and state of health are nearly the same with his own, the same price which he would give for one upon his own. An annuity upon the life of a third person, indeed, is, no doubt, of equal value to the buyer and the seller; but its real value begins to diminish from the moment it is granted, and continues to do so, more and more, as long as it subsists. It can never, therefore, make so convenient a transferable stock as a perpetual annuity, of which the real value may be supposed always the same, or very nearly the same.

In France, the seat of government not being in a great mercantile city, merchants do not make so great a proportion of the people who advance money to government. The people concerned in the finances, the farmers-general, the receivers of the taxes which are not in farm, the court-bankers, &c. make the greater part of those who advance their money in all public exigencies. Such people are commonly men of mean birth, but of great wealth, and frequently of great pride. They are too proud to marry their equals, and women of quality disdain to marry

them. They frequently resolve, therefore, to live bachelors; and having neither any families of their own, nor much regard for those of their relations, whom they are not always very fond of acknowledging, they desire only to live in splendour during their own time, and are not unwilling that their fortune should end with themselves. The number of rich people, besides, who are either averse to marry, or whose condition of life renders it either improper or inconvenient for them to do so, is much greater in France than in England. To such people, who have little or no care for posterity, nothing can be more convenient than to exchange their capital for a revenue, which is to last just as long, and no longer, than they wish it to do.

The ordinary expense of the greater part of modern governments, in time of peace, being equal, or nearly equal, to their ordinary revenue, when war comes, they are both unwilling and unable to increase their revenue in proportion to the increase of their expense. They are unwilling, for fear of offending the people, who, by so great and so sudden an increase of taxes, would soon be disgusted with the war; and they are unable, from not well knowing what taxes would be sufficient to produce the revenue wanted. The facility of borrowing delivers them from the embarrassment which this fear and inability would otherwise occasion. By means of borrowing, they are enabled, with a very moderate increase of taxes, to raise, from year to year, money sufficient for carrying on the war; and by the practice of perpetual funding, they are enabled, with the smallest possible increase of taxes, to raise annually the largest possible sum of money. In great empires, the people who live in the capital, and in the provinces remote from the scene of action, feel, many of them, scarce any inconveniency from the war, but enjoy, at their ease, the amusement of reading in the newspapers the exploits of their own fleets and armies. To them this amusement compensates the small difference between the taxes which they pay on account of the war, and those which they had been accustomed to pay in time of peace. They are commonly dissatisfied with the return of peace, which puts an end to their amusement, and to a thousand visionary hopes of conquest and national glory, from a longer continuance of the war.

The return of peace, indeed, seldom relieves them from the greater part of the taxes imposed during the war. These are mortgaged for the interest of the debt contracted, in order to carry it on. If, over and above paying the interest of this debt, and defraying the ordinary expense of government, the old revenue, together with the new taxes, produce some surplus revenue, it may, perhaps, be converted into a sinking fund for

paying off the debt. But, in the first place, this sinking fund, even supposing it should be applied to no other purpose, is generally altogether inadequate for paying, in the course of any period during which it can reasonably be expected that peace should continue, the whole debt contracted during the war; and, in the second place, this fund is almost always applied to other purposes.

The new taxes were imposed for the sole purpose of paying the interest of the money borrowed upon them. If they produce more, it is generally something which was neither intended nor expected, and is, therefore, seldom very considerable. Sinking funds have generally arisen, not so much from any surplus of the taxes which was over and above what was necessary for paying the interest or annuity originally charged upon them, as from a subsequent reduction of that interest; that of Holland in 1655, and that of the ecclesiastical state in 1685, were both formed in this manner. Hence the usual insufficiency of such funds.

During the most profound peace, various events occur, which require an extraordinary expense; and government finds it always more convenient to defray this expense by misapplying the sinking fund, than by imposing a new tax. Every new tax is immediately felt more or less by the people. It occasions always some murmur, and meets with some opposition. The more taxes may have been multiplied, the higher they may have been raised upon every different subject of taxation; the more loudly the people complain of every new tax, the more difficult it becomes, too, either to find out new subjects of taxation, or to raise much higher the taxes already imposed upon the old. A momentary suspension of the payment of debt is not immediately felt by the people, and occasions neither murmur nor complaint. To borrow of the sinking fund is always an obvious and easy expedient for getting out of the present difficulty. The more the public debts may have been accumulated, the more necessary it may have become to study to reduce them; the more dangerous, the more ruinous it may be to missapply any part of the sinking fund; the less likely is the public debt to be reduced to any considerable degree, the more likely, the more certainly, is the sinking fund to be misapplied towards defraying all the extraordinary expenses which occur in time of peace. When a nation is already overburdened with taxes, nothing but the necessities of a new war, nothing but either the animosity of national vengeance, or the anxiety for national security, can induce the people to submit, with tolerable patience, to a new tax. Hence the usual misapplication of the sinking fund.

In Great Britain, from the time that we had first recourse to the ruinous expedient of perpetual funding, the reduction of the public debt, in time of peace, has never borne any proportion to its accumulation in time of war. It was in the war which began in 1668, and was concluded by the treaty of Ryswick, in 1697, that the foundation of the present enormous debt of Great Britain was first laid.

On the 31st of December 1697, the public debts of Great Britain, funded and unfunded, amounted to L.21,515,742 : 13 : 8½. A great part of those debts had been contracted upon short anticipations, and some part upon annuities for lives; so that, before the 31st of December 1701, in less than four years, there had partly been paid off, and partly reverted to the public, the sum of L.5,121,041 : 12 : 0¾; a greater reduction of the public debt than has ever since been brought about in so short a period of time. The remaining debt, therefore, amounted only to L.16,394,701 : 1 : 7¼.

In the war which began in 1702, and which was concluded by the treaty of Utrecht, the public debts were still more accumulated. On the 31st of December 1714, they amounted to L.53,681,076 : 5 : $6\frac{1}{12}$. The subscription into the South-sea fund, of the short and long annuities, increased the capital of the public debt; so that, on the 31st of December 1722, it amounted to L.55,282,978 : 1 : $3\frac{5}{6}$. The reduction of the debt began in 1723, and went on so slowly, that, on the 31st of December 1739, during seventeen years of profound peace, the whole sum paid off was no more than L.8,328,354 : 17 : $11\frac{3}{12}$, the capital of the public debt, at that time, amounting to L.46,954,623 : 3 : $4\frac{7}{12}$.

The Spanish war, which began in 1739, and the French war which soon followed it, occasioned a further increase of the debt, which, on the 31st of December 1748, after the war had been concluded by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, amounted to L.78,293,313 : 1 : 10¾. The most profound peace of 17 years continuance, had taken no more than L.8,328,354 : 17 : 11¼ from it. A war, of less than nine years continuance, added L.31,338,689 : 18 : $6\frac{1}{6}$ to it.[77*]

During the administration of Mr. Pelham, the interest of the public debt was reduced, or at least measures were taken for reducing it, from four to three per cent.; the sinking fund was increased, and some part of the public debt was paid off. In 1755, before the breaking out of the late war, the funded debt of Great Britain amounted to L.72,289,673. On the 5th of January 1763, at the conclusion of the peace, the funded debt amounted to L.122,603,336 : 8 : 2¼. The unfunded debt has been stated

at L.13,927,589 : 2 : 2. But the expense occasioned by the war did not end with the conclusion of the peace; so that, though on the 5th of January 1764, the funded debt was increased (partly by a new loan, and partly by funding a part of the unfunded debt) to L.129,586,789 : 10 : 1¾, there still remained (according to the very well informed author of Considerations on the Trade and Finances of Great Britain) an unfunded debt, which was brought to account in that and the following year, of L.9,975,017, 12s. $2^{15}/_{44}$d. In 1764, therefore, the public debt of Great Britain, funded and unfunded together, amounted, according to this author, to L.139,561,807 : 2 : 4. The annuities for lives, too, which had been granted as premiums to the subscribers to the new loans in 1757, estimated at fourteen-years purchase, were valued at L.472,500; and the annuities for long terms of years, granted as premiums likewise, in 1761 and 1762, estimated at twenty-seven years and a-half purchase, were valued at L.6,826,875. During a peace of about seven years continuance, the prudent and truly patriotic administration of Mr. Pelham was not able to pay off an old debt of six millions. During a war of nearly the same continuance, a new debt of more than seventy-five millions was contracted.

On the 5th of January 1775, the funded debt of Great Britain amounted to L.124,996,086, 1s. 6¼d. The unfunded, exclusive of a large civil-list debt, to L.4,150,236 : 3 : $11^{7}/_{8}$. Both together, to L.129,146,322 : 5 : 6. According to this account, the whole debt paid off, during eleven years of profound peace, amounted only to L.10,415,476 : 16 : $9^{7}/_{8}$. Even this small reduction of debt, however, has not been all made from the savings out of the ordinary revenue of the state. Several extraneous sums, altogether independent of that ordinary revenue, have contributed towards it. Amongst these we may reckon an additional shilling in the pound land tax, for three years; the two millions received from the East-India company, as indemnification for their territorial acquisitions; and the one hundred and ten thousand pounds received from the bank for the renewal of their charter. To these must be added several other sums, which, as they arose out of the late war, ought perhaps to be considered as deductions from the expenses of it. The principal are,

The produce of French prizes
L.690,449
18
9

Composition for French prisoners

670,000
0
0

What has been received from the sale of the ceded islands
95,500
0
0

——— ——— ——— ——— ———

Total,
L.1,455,949
18
9

If we add to this sum the balance of the earl of Chatham's and Mr. Calcraft's accounts, and other army savings of the same kind, together with what has been received from the bank, the East-India company, and the additional shilling in the pound land tax, the whole must be a good deal more than five millions. The debt, therefore, which, since the peace, has been paid out of the savings from the ordinary revenue of the state, has not, one year with another, amounted to half a million a-year. The sinking fund has, no doubt, been considerably augmented since the peace, by the debt which had been paid off, by the reduction of the redeemable four per cents to three per cents, and by the annuities for lives which have fallen in; and, if peace were to continue, a million, perhaps, might now be annually spared out of it towards the discharge of the debt. Another million, accordingly, was paid in the course of last year; but at the same time, a large civil-list debt was left unpaid, and we are now involved in a new war, which, in its progress, may prove as expensive as any of our former wars.[78]* The new debt which will probably be contracted before the end of the next campaign, may, perhaps, be nearly equal to all the old debt which has been paid off from the savings out of the ordinary revenue of the state. It would be altogether chimerical, therefore, to expect that the public debt should ever be completely discharged, by any savings which are likely to be made from that ordinary revenue as it stands at present.

The public funds of the different indebted nations of Europe, particularly those of England, have, by one author, been represented as the accumulation of a great capital, superadded to the other capital of the country, by means of which its trade is extended, its manufactures are multiplied, and its lands cultivated and improved, much beyond what they could have been by means of that other capital only. He does not consider that the capital which the first creditors of the public advanced to government, was, from the moment in which he advanced it, a certain portion of the annual produce, turned away from serving in the function of a capital, to serve in that of a revenue; from maintaining productive labourers, to maintain unproductive ones, and to be spent and wasted, generally in the course of the year, without even the hope of any future reproduction. In return for the capital which they advanced, they obtained, indeed, an annuity of the public funds, in most cases, of more than equal value. This annuity, no doubt, replaced to them their capital, and enabled them to carry on their trade and business to the same, or, perhaps, to a greater extent than before; that is, they were enabled, either to borrow of other people a new capital, upon the credit of this annuity or, by selling it, to get from other people a new capital of their own, equal, or superior, to that which they had advanced to government. This new capital, however, which they in this manner either bought or borrowed of other people, must have existed in the country before, and must have been employed, as all capitals are, in maintaining productive labour. When it came into the hands of those who had advanced their money to government, though it was, in some respects, a new capital to them, it was not so to the country, but was only a capital withdrawn from certain employments, in order to be turned towards others. Though it replaced to them what they had advanced to government, it did not replace it to the country. Had they not advanced this capital to government, there would have been in the country two capitals, two portions of the annual produce, instead of one, employed in maintaining productive labour.

When, for defraying the expense of government, a revenue is raised within the year, from the produce of free or unmortgaged taxes, a certain portion of the revenue of private people is only turned away from maintaining one species of unproductive labour, towards maintaining another. Some part of what they pay in those taxes, might, no doubt, have been accumulated into capital, and consequently employed in maintaining productive labour; but the greater part would probably have been spent, and consequently employed in maintaining unproductive

labour. The public expense, however, when defrayed in this manner, no doubt hinders, more or less, the further accumulation of new capital; but it does not necessarily occasion the destruction of any actually-existing capital.

When the public expense is defrayed by funding, it is defrayed by the annual destruction of some capital which had before existed in the country; by the perversion of some portion of the annual produce which had before been destined for the maintenance of productive labour, towards that of unproductive labour. As in this case, however, the taxes are lighter than they would have been, had a revenue sufficient for defraying the same expense been raised within the year; the private revenue of individuals is necessarily less burdened, and consequently their ability to save and accumulate some part of that revenue into capital, is a good deal less impaired. If the method of funding destroys more old capital, it, at the same time, hinders less the accumulation or acquisition of new capital, than that of defraying the public expense by a revenue raised within the year. Under the system of funding, the frugality and industry of private people can more easily repair the breaches which the waste and extravagance of government may occasionally make in the general capital of the society.

It is only during the continuance of war, however, that the system of funding has this advantage over the other system. Were the expense of war to be defrayed always by a revenue raised within the year, the taxes from which that extraordinary revenue was drawn would last no longer than the war. The ability of private people to accumulate, though less during the war, would have been greater during the peace, than under the system of funding. War would not necessarily have occasioned the destruction of any old capitals, and peace would have occasioned the accumulation of many more new. Wars would, in general, be more speedily concluded, and less wantonly undertaken. The people feeling, during continuance of war, the complete burden of it, would soon grow weary of it; and government, in order to humour them, would not be under the necessity of carrying it on longer than it was necessary to do so. The foresight of the heavy and unavoidable burdens of war would hinder the people from wantonly calling for it when there was no real or solid interest to fight for. The seasons during which the ability of private people to accumulate was somewhat impaired, would occur more rarely, and be of shorter continuance. Those, on the contrary, during which that ability was in the highest vigour, would be of much longer duration than they can well be under the system of funding.

When funding, besides, has made a certain progress, the multiplication of taxes which it brings along with it, sometimes impairs as much the ability of private people to accumulate, even in time of peace, as the other system would in time of war. The peace revenue of Great Britain amounts at present to more than ten millions a year. If free and unmortgaged, it might be sufficient, with proper management, and without contracting a shilling of new debt, to carry on the most vigorous war. The private revenue of the inhabitants of Great Britain is at present as much incumbered in time of peace, their ability to accumulate is as much impaired, as it would have been in the time of the most expensive war, had the pernicious system of funding never been adopted.

In the payment of the interest of the public debt, it has been said, it is the right hand which pays the left. The money does not go out of the country. It is only a part of the revenue of one set of the inhabitants which is transferred to another; and the nation is not a farthing the poorer. This apology is founded altogether in the sophistry of the mercantile system; and, after the long examinatior, which I have already bestowed upon that system, it may, perhaps, be unnecessary to say any thing further about it. It supposes, besides, that the whole public debt is owing to the inhabitants of the country, which happens not to be true; the Dutch, as well as several other foreign nations, having a very considerable share in our public funds. But though the whole debt were owing to the inhabitants of the country, it would not, upon that account, be less pernicious.

Land and capital stock are the two original sources of all revenue, both private and public. Capital stock pays the wages of productive labour, whether employed in agriculture, manufactures, or commerce. The management of those two original sources of revenue belongs to two different sets of people; the proprietors of land, and the owners or employers of capital stock.

The proprietor of land is interested, for the sake of his own revenue, to keep his estate in as good condition as he can, by building and repairing his tenants houses, by making and maintaining the necessary drains and inclosures, and all those other expensive improvements which it properly belongs to the landlord to make and maintain. But, by different land taxes, the revenue of the landlord may be so much diminished, and, by different duties upon the necessaries and conveniencies of life, that diminished revenue maybe rendered of so little real value, that he may find himself altogether unable to make or maintain those expensive improvements. When the landlord, however,

ceases to do his part, it is altogether impossible that the tenant should continue to do his. As the distress of the landlord increases, the agriculture of the country must necessarily decline.

When, by different taxes upon the necessaries and conveniencies of life, the owners and employers of capital stock find, that whatever revenue they derive from it, will not, in a particular country, purchase the same quantity of those necessaries and conveniencies which an equal revenue would in almost any other, they will be disposed to remove to some other. And when, in order to raise those taxes, all or the greater part of merchants and manufacturers, that is, all or the greater part of the employers of great capitals, come to be continually exposed to the mortifying and vexatious visits of the tax-gatherers, this disposition to remove will soon be changed into an actual removing. The industry of the country will necessarily fall with the removal of the capital which supported it, and the ruin of trade and manufactures will follow the declension of agriculture.

To transfer from the owners of those two great sources of revenue, land, and capital stock, from the persons immediately interested in the good condition of every particular portion of land, and in the good management of every particular portion of capital stock, to another set of persons (the creditors of the public, who have no such particular interest), the greater part of the revenue arising from either, must, in the long-run, occasion both the neglect of land, and the waste or removal of capital stock. A creditor of the public has, no doubt, a general interest in the prosperity of the agriculture, manufactures, and commerce of the country; and consequently in the good condition of its land, and in the good management of its capital stock. Should there be any general failure or declension in any of these things, the produce of the different taxes might no longer be sufficient to pay him the annuity or interest which is due to him. But a creditor of the public, considered merely as such, has no interest in the good condition of any particular portion of land, or in the good management of any particular portion of capital stock. As a creditor of the public, he has no knowledge of any such particular portion. He has no inspection of it. He can have no care about it. Its ruin may in some cases be unknown to him, and cannot directly affect him.

The practice of funding has gradually enfeebled every state which has adopted it. The Italian republics seem to have begun it. Genoa and Venice, the only two remaining which can pretend to an independent existence, have both been enfeebled by it. Spain seems to have learned

the practice from the Italian republics, and (its taxes being probably less judicious than theirs) it has, in proportion to its natural strength, been still more enfeebled. The debts of Spain are of very old standing. It was deeply in debt before the end of the sixteenth century, about a hundred years before England owed a shilling. France, notwithstanding all its natural resources, languishes under an oppressive load of the same kind. The republic of the United Provinces is as much enfeebled by its debts as either Genoa or Venice. Is it likely that, in Great Britain alone, a practice, which has brought either weakness or dissolution into every other country, should prove altogether innocent?

The system of taxation established in those different countries, it may be said, is inferior to that of England. I believe it is so. But it ought to be remembered, that when the wisest government has exhausted all the proper subjects of taxation, it must, in cases of urgent necessity, have recourse to improper ones. The wise republic of Holland has, upon some occasions, been obliged to have recourse to taxes as inconvenient as the greater part of those of Spain. Another war, begun before any considerable liberation of the public revenue had been brought about, and growing in its progress as expensive as the last war, may, from irresistible necessity, render the British system of taxation as oppressive as that of Holland, or even as that of Spain. To the honour of our present system of taxation, indeed, it has hitherto given so little embarrassment to industry, that, during the course even of the most expensive wars, the frugality and good conduct of individuals seem to have been able, by saving and accumulation, to repair all the breaches which the waste and extravagance of government had made in the general capital of the society. At the conclusion of the late war, the most expensive that Great Britain ever waged, her agriculture was as flourishing, her manufacturers as numerous and as fully employed, and her commerce as extensive, as they had ever been before. The capital, therefore, which supported all those different branches of industry, must have been equal to what it had ever been before. Since the peace, agriculture has been still further improved; the rents of houses have risen in every town and village of the country, a proof of the increasing wealth and revenue of the people; and the annual amount of the greater part of the old taxes, of the principal branches of the excise and customs, in particular, has been continually increasing, an equally clear proof of an increasing consumption, and consequently of an increasing produce, which could alone support that consumption. Great Britain seems to support with ease, a burden which, half a century ago, nobody believed her capable of supporting. Let us

not, however, upon this account, rashly conclude that she is capable of supporting any burden; not even be too confident that she could support, without great distress, a burden a little greater than what has already been laid upon her.

When national debts have once been accumulated to a certain degree, there is scarce, I believe, a single instance of their having been fairly and completely paid. The liberation of the public revenue, if it has ever been brought about at all, has always been brought about by a bankruptcy; sometimes by an avowed one, though frequently by a pretended payment.

The raising of the denomination of the coin has been the most usual expedient by which a real public bankruptcy has been disguised under the appearance of a pretended payment. If a sixpence, for example, should, either by act of parliament or royal proclamation, be raised to the denomination of a shilling, and twenty sixpences to that of a pound sterling; the person who, under the old denomination, had borrowed twenty shillings, or near four ounces of silver, would, under the new, pay with twenty sixpences, or with something less than two ounces. A national debt of about a hundred and twenty-eight millions, near the capital of the funded and unfunded debt of Great Britain, might, in this manner, be paid with about sixty-four millions of our present money. It would, indeed, be a pretended payment only, and the creditors of the public would really be defrauded of ten shillings in the pound of what was due to them. The calamity, too, would extend much further than to the creditors of the public, and those of every private person would suffer a proportionable loss; and this without any advantage, but in most cases with a great additional loss, to the creditors of the public. If the creditors of the public, indeed, were generally much in debt to other people, they might in some measure compensate their loss by paying their creditors in the same coin in which the public had paid them. But in most countries, the creditors of the public are, the greater part of them, wealthy people, who stand more in the relation of creditors than in that of debtors, towards the rest of their fellow-citizens. A pretended payment of this kind, therefore, instead of alleviating, aggravates, in most cases, the loss of the creditors of the public; and, without any advantage to the public, extends the calamity to a great number of other innocent people. It occasions a general and most pernicious subversion of the fortunes of private people; enriching, in most cases, the idle and profuse debtor, at the expense of the industrious and frugal creditor; and transporting a great part of the national capital from the hands which were likely to

increase and improve it, to those who are likely to dissipate and destroy it. When it becomes necessary for a state to declare itself bankrupt, in the same manner as when it becomes necessary for an individual to do so, a fair, open, and avowed bankruptcy, is always the measure which is both least dishonourable to the debtor, and least hurtful to the creditor. The honour of a state is surely very poorly provided for, when, in order to cover the disgrace of a real bankruptcy, it has recourse to a juggling trick of this kind, so easily seen through, and at the same time so extremely pernicious.

Almost all states, however, ancient as well as modern, when reduced to this necessity, have, upon some occasions, played this very juggling trick. The Romans, at the end of the first Punic war, reduced the As, the coin or denomination by which they computed the value of all their other coins, from containing twelve ounces of copper, to contain only two ounces; that is, they raised two ounces of copper to a denomination which had always before expressed the value of twelve ounces. The republic was, in this manner, enabled to pay the great debts which it had contracted with the sixth part of what it really owed. So sudden and so great a bankruptcy, we should in the present times be apt to imagine, must have occasioned a very violent popular clamour. It does not appear to have occasioned any. The law which enacted it was, like all other laws relating to the coin, introduced and carried through the assembly of the people by a tribune, and was probably a very popular law. In Rome, as in all other ancient republics, the poor people were constantly in debt to the rich and the great, who, in order to secure their votes at the annual elections, used to lend them money at exorbitant interest, which, being never paid, soon accumulated into a sum too great for the debtor to pay, or for any body else to pay for him. The debtor, for fear of a very severe execution, was obliged, without any further gratuity, to vote for the candidate whom the creditor recommended. In spite of all the laws against bribery and corruption, the bounty of the candidates, together with the occasional distributions of coin which were ordered by the senate, were the principal funds from which, during the latter times of the Roman republic, the poorer citizens derived their subsistence. To deliver themselves from this subjection to their creditors, the poorer citizens were continually calling out, either for an entire abolition of debts, or for what they called new tables; that is, for a law which should entitle them to a complete acquittance, upon paying only a certain proportion of their accumulated debts. The law which reduced the coin of all denominations to a sixth part of its former value, as it enabled them

to pay their debts with a sixth part of what they really owed, was equivalent to the most advantageous new tables. In order to satisfy the people, the rich and the great were, upon several different occasions, obliged to consent to laws, both for abolishing debts, and for introducing new tables; and they probably were induced to consent to this law, partly for the same reason, and partly that, by liberating the public revenue, they might restore vigour to that government, of which they themselves had the principal direction. An operation of this kind would at once reduce a debt of L.128,000,000 to L.21,333,333 : 6 : 8. In the course of the second Punic war, the As was still further reduced, first, from two ounces of copper to one ounce, and afterwards from one ounce to half an ounce; that is, to the twenty-fourth part of its original value. By combining the three Roman operations into one, a debt of a hundred and twenty-eight millions of our present money, might in this manner be reduced all at once to a debt of L.5,333,333 : 6 : 8. Even the enormous debt of Great Britain might in this manner soon be paid.

By means of such expedients, the coin of, I believe, all nations, has been gradually reduced more and more below its original value, and the same nominal sum has been gradually brought to contain a smaller and a smaller quantity of silver.

Nations have sometimes, for the same purpose, adulterated the standard of their coin; that is, have mixed a greater quantity of alloy in it. If in the pound weight of our silver coin, for example, instead of eighteen penny-weight, according to the present standard, there were mixed eight ounces of alloy; a pound sterling, or twenty shillings of such coin, would be worth little more than six shillings and eightpence of our present money. The quantity of silver contained in six shillings and eightpence of our present money, would thus be raised very nearly to the denomination of a pound sterling. The adulteration of the standard has exactly the same effect with what the French call an augmentation, or a direct raising of the denomination of the coin.

An augmentation, or a direct raising of the denomination of the coin, always is, and from its nature must be, an open and avowed operation. By means of it, pieces of a smaller weight and bulk are called by the same name, which had before been given to pieces of a greater weight and bulk. The adulteration of the standard, on the contrary, has generally been a concealed operation. By means of it, pieces are issued from the mint, of the same denomination, and, as nearly as could be contrived, of the same weight, bulk, and appearance, with pieces which had been current before of much greater value. When king John of France,[79*] in

order to pay his debts, adulterated his coin, all the officers of his mint were sworn to secrecy. Both operations are unjust. But a simple augmentation is an injustice of open violence; whereas an adulteration is an injustice of treacherous fraud. This latter operation, therefore, as soon as it has been discovered, and it could never be concealed very long, has always excited much greater indignation than the former. The coin, after any considerable augmentation, has very seldom been brought back to its former weight; but after the greatest adulterations, it has almost always been brought back to its former fineness. It has scarce ever happened, that the fury and indignation of the people could otherwise be appeased.

In the end of the reign of Henry VIII., and in the beginning of that of Edward VI., the English coin was not only raised in its denomination, but adulterated in its standard. The like frauds were practised in Scotland during the minority of James VI. They have occasionally been practised in most other countries.

That the public revenue of Great Britain can never be completely liberated, or even that any considerable progress can ever be made towards that liberation, while the surplus of that revenue, or what is over and above defraying the annual expense of the peace establishment, is so very small, it seems altogether in vain to expect. That liberation, it is evident, can never be brought about, without either some very considerable augmentation of the public revenue, or some equally considerable reduction of the public expense.

A more equal land tax, a more equal tax upon the rent of houses, and such alterations in the present system of customs and excise as those which have been mentioned in the foregoing chapter, might, perhaps, without increasing the burden of the greater part of the people, but only distributing the weight of it more equally upon the whole, produce a considerable augmentation of revenue. The most sanguine projector, however, could scarce flatter himself, that any augmentation of this kind would be such as could give any reasonable hopes, either of liberating the public revenue altogether, or even of making such progress towards that liberation in time of peace, as either to prevent or to compensate the further accumulation of the public debt in the next war.

By extending the British system of taxation to all the different provinces of the empire, inhabited by people either of British or European extraction, a much greater augmentation of revenue might be expected. This, however, could scarce, perhaps, be done, consistently with the principles of the British constitution, without admitting into the British parliament, or, if you will, into the states-general of the British

empire, a fair and equal representation of all those different provinces; that of each province bearing the same proportion to the produce of its taxes, as the representation of Great Britain might bear to the produce of the taxes levied upon Great Britain. The private interest of many powerful individuals, the confirmed prejudices of great bodies of people, seem, indeed, at present, to oppose to so great a change, such obstacles as it may be very difficult, perhaps altogether impossible, to surmount. Without, however, pretending to determine whether such a union be practicable or impracticable, it may not, perhaps, be improper, in a speculative work of this kind, to consider how far the British system of taxation might be applicable to all the different provinces of the empire; what revenue might be expected from it, if so applied; and in what manner a general union of this kind might be likely to affect the happiness and prosperity of the different provinces comprehended within it. Such a speculation, can, at worst, be regarded but as a new Utopia, less amusing, certainly, but no more useless and chimerical than the old one.

The land tax, the stamp duties, and the different duties of customs and excise, constitute the four principal branches of the British taxes.

Ireland is certainly as able, and our American and West India plantations more able, to pay a land tax, than Great Britain. Where the landlord is subject neither to tythe nor poor’s rate, he must certainly be more able to pay such a tax, than where he is subject to both those other burdens. The tythe, where there is no modus, and where it is levied in kind, diminishes more what would otherwise be the rent of the landlord, than a land tax which really amounted to five shillings in the pound. Such a tythe will be found, in most cases, to amount to more than a fourth part of the real rent of the land, or of what remains after replacing completely the capital of the farmer, together with his reasonable profit. If all moduses and all impropriations were taken away, the complete church tythe of Great Britain and Ireland could not well be estimated at less than six or seven millions. If there was no tythe either in Great Britain or Ireland, the landlords could afford to pay six or seven millions additional land tax, without being more burdened than a very great part of them are at present. America pays no tythe, and could, therefore, very well afford to pay a land tax. The lands in America and the West Indies, indeed, are, in general, not tenanted nor leased out to farmers. They could not, therefore, be assessed according to any rent roll. But neither were the lands of Great Britain, in the 4th of William and Mary, assessed according to any rent roll, but according to a very loose and inaccurate

estimation. The lands in America might be assessed either in the same manner, or in according to an equitable valuation, in consequence of an accurate survey, like that which was lately made in the Milanese, and in the dominions of Austria, Prussia, and Sardinia.

Stamp duties, it is evident, might be levied without any variation, in all countries where the forms of law process, and the deeds by which property, both real and personal, is transferred, are the same, or nearly the same.

The extension of the custom-house laws of Great Britain to Ireland and the plantations, provided it was accompanied, as in justice it ought to be, with an extension of the freedom of trade, would be in the highest degree advantageous to both. All the invidious restraints which at present oppress the trade of Ireland, the distinction between the enumerated and non-enumerated commodities of America, would be entirely at an end. The countries north of Cape Finisterre would be as open to every part of the produce of America, as those south of that cape are to some parts of that produce at present. The trade between all the different parts of the British empire would, in consequence of this uniformity in the customs-house laws, be as free as the coasting trade of Great Britain is at present. The British empire would thus afford, within itself, an immense internal market for every part of the produce of all its different provinces. So great an extension of market would soon compensate, both to Ireland and the plantations, all that they could suffer from the increase of the duties of customs.

The excise is the only part of the British system of taxation, which would require to be varied in any respect, according as it was applied to the different provinces of the empire. It might be applied to Ireland without any variation; the produce and consumption of that kingdom being exactly of the same nature with those of Great Britain. In its application to America and the West Indies, of which the produce and consumption are so very different from those of Great Britain, some modification might be necessary, in the same manner as in its application to the cyder and beer counties of England.

A fermented liquor, for example, which is called beer, but which, as it is made of molasses, bears very little resemblance to our beer, makes a considerable part of the common drink of the people in America. This liquor, as it can be kept only for a few days, cannot, like our beer, be prepared and stored up for sale in great breweries, but every private family must brew it for their own use, in the same manner as they cook their victuals. But to subject every private family to the odious visits and

examination of the tax-gatherers, in the same manner as we subject the keepers of alehouses and the brewers for public sale, would be altogether inconsistent with liberty. If, for the sake of equality, it was thought necessary to lay a tax upon this liquor, it might be taxed by taxing the material of which it is made, either at the place of manufacture, or, if the circumstances of the trade rendered such an excise improper, by laying a duty upon its importation into the colony in which it was to be consumed. Besides the duty of one penny a-gallon imposed by the British parliament upon the importation of molasses into America, there is a provincial tax of this kind upon their importation into Massachusetts Bay, in ships belonging to any other colony, of eightpence the hogshead; and another upon their importation from the northern colonies into South Carolina, of fivepence the gallon. Or, if neither of these methods was found convenient, each family might compound for its consumption of this liquor, either according to the number of persons of which it consisted, in the same manner as private families compound for the malt tax in England; or according to the different ages and sexes of those persons, in the same manner as several different taxes are levied in Holland; or, nearly as Sir Matthew Decker proposes, that all taxes upon consumable commodities should be levied in England. This mode of taxation, it has already been observed, when applied to objects of a speedy consumption, is not a very convenient one. It might be adopted, however, in cases where no better could be done.

Sugar, rum, and tobacco, are commodities which are nowhere necessaries of life, which are become objects of almost universal consumption, and which are, therefore, extremely proper subjects of taxation. If a union with the colonies were to take place, those commodities might be taxed, either before they go out of the hands of the manufacturer or grower; or, if this mode of taxation did not suit the circumstances of those persons, they might be deposited in public warehouses, both at the place of manufacture, and at all the different ports of the empire, to which they might afterwards be transported, to remain there, under the joint custody of the owner and the revenue officer, till such time as they should be delivered out, either to the consumer, to the merchant-retailer for home consumption, or to the merchant-exporter; the tax not to be advanced till such delivery. When delivered out for exportation, to go duty-free, upon proper security being given, that they should really be exported out of the empire. These are, perhaps, the principal commodities, with regard to which the union with

the colonies might require some considerable change in the present system of British taxation.

What might be the amount of the revenue which this system of taxation, extended to all the different provinces of the empire, might produce, it must, no doubt, be altogether impossible to ascertain with tolerable exactness. By means of this system, there is annually levied in Great Britain, upon less than eight millions of people, more than ten millions of revenue. Ireland contains more than two millions of people, and, according to the accounts laid before the congress, the twelve associated provinces of America contain more than three. Those accounts, however, may have been exaggerated, in order, perhaps, either to encourage their own people, or to intimidate those of this country; and we shall suppose, therefore, that our North American and West Indian colonies, taken together, contain no more than three millions; or that the whole British empire, in Europe and America, contains no more than thirteen millions of inhabitants. If, upon less than eight millions of inhabitants, this system of taxation raises a revenue of more than ten millions sterling; it ought, upon thirteen millions of inhabitants, to raise a revenue of more than sixteen millions two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. From this revenue, supposing that this system could produce it, must be deducted the revenue usually raised in Ireland and the plantations, for defraying the expense of the respective civil governments. The expense of the civil and military establishment of Ireland, together with the interest of the public debt, amounts, at a medium of the two years which ended March 1775, to something less than seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds a-year. By a very exact account of the revenue of the principal colonies of America and the West Indies, it amounted, before the commencement of the present disturbances, to a hundred and forty-one thousand eight hundred pounds. In this account, however, the revenue of Maryland, of North Carolina, and of all our late acquisitions, both upon the continent, and in the islands, is omitted; which may, perhaps, make a difference of thirty or forty thousand pounds. For the sake of even numbers, therefore, let us suppose that the revenue necessary for supporting the civil government of Ireland and the plantations may amount to a million. There would remain, consequently, a revenue of fifteen millions two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, to be applied towards defraying the general expense of the empire, and towards paying the public debt. But if, from the present revenue of Great Britain, a million could, in peaceable times, be spared towards the payment of that debt, six millions two hundred and fifty

thousand pounds could very well be spared from this improved revenue. This great sinking fund, too, might be augmented every year by the interest of the debt which had been discharged the year before; and might, in this manner, increase so very rapidly, as to be sufficient in a few years to discharge the whole debt, and thus to restore completely the at-present debilitated and languishing vigour of the empire. In the mean time, the people might be relieved from some of the most burdensome taxes; from those which are imposed either upon the necessaries of life, or upon the materials of manufacture. The labouring poor would thus be enabled to live better, to work cheaper, and to send their goods cheaper to market. The cheapness of their goods would increase the demand for them, and consequently for the labour of those who produced them. This increase in the demand for labour would both increase the numbers, and improve the circumstances of the labouring poor. Their consumption would increase, and, together with it, the revenue arising from all those articles of their consumption upon which the taxes might be allowed to remain.

The revenue arising from this system of taxation, however, might not immediately increase in proportion to the number of people who were subjected to it. Great indulgence would for some time be due to those provinces of the empire which were thus subjected to burdens to which they had not before been accustomed; and even when the same taxes came to be levied everywhere as exactly as possible, they would not everywhere produce a revenue proportioned to the numbers of the people. In a poor country, the consumption of the principal commodities subject to the duties of customs and excise, is very small; and in a thinly inhabited country, the opportunities of smuggling are very great. The consumption of malt liquors among the inferior ranks of people in Scotland is very small; and the excise upon malt, beer, and ale, produces less there than in England, in proportion to the numbers of the people and the rate of the duties, which upon malt is different, on account of a supposed difference of quality. In these particular branches of the excise, there is not, I apprehend, much more smuggling in the one country than in the other. The duties upon the distillery, and the greater part of the duties of customs, in proportion to the numbers of people in the respective countries, produce less in Scotland than in England, not only on account of the smaller consumption of the taxed commodities, but of the much greater facility of smuggling. In Ireland, the inferior ranks of people are still poorer than in Scotland, and many parts of the country are almost as thinly inhabited. In Ireland, therefore, the consumption of

the taxed commodities might, in proportion to the number of the people, be still less than in Scotland, and the facility of smuggling nearly the same. In America and the West Indies, the white people, even of the lowest rank, are in much better circumstances than those of the same rank in England; and their consumption of all the luxuries in which they usually indulge themselves, is probably much greater. The blacks, indeed, who make the greater part of the inhabitants, both of the southern colonies upon the continent and of the West India islands, as they are in a state of slavery, are, no doubt, in a worse condition than the poorest people either in Scotland or Ireland. We must not, however, upon that account, imagine that they are worse fed, or that their consumption of articles which might be subjected to moderate duties, is less than that even of the lower ranks of people in England. In order that they may work well, it is the interest of their master that they should be fed well, and kept in good heart, in the same manner as it is his interest that his working cattle should be so. The blacks, accordingly, have almost everywhere their allowance of rum, and of molasses or spruce-beer, in the same manner as the white servants; and this allowance would not probably be withdrawn, though those articles should be subjected to moderate duties. The consumption of the taxed commodities, therefore, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, would probably be as great in America and the West Indies as in any part of the British empire. The opportunities of smuggling, indeed, would be much greater; America, in proportion to the extent of the country, being much more thinly inhabited than either Scotland or Ireland. If the revenue, however, which is at present raised by the different duties upon malt and malt liquors, were to be levied by a single duty upon malt, the opportunity of smuggling in the most important branch of the excise would be almost entirely taken away; and if the duties of customs, instead of being imposed upon almost all the different articles of importation, were confined to a few of the most general use and consumption, and if the levying of those duties were subjected to the excise laws, the opportunity of smuggling, though not so entirely taken away, would be very much diminished. In consequence of those two apparently very simple and easy alterations, the duties of customs and excise might probably produce a revenue as great, in proportion to the consumption of the most thinly inhabited province, as they do at present, in proportion to that of the most populous.

The Americans, it has been said, indeed, have no gold or silver money, the interior commerce of the country being carried on by a paper

currency; and the gold and silver, which occasionally come among them, being all sent to Great Britain, in return for the commodities which they receive from us. But without gold and silver, it is added, there is no possibility of paying taxes. We already get all the gold and silver which they have. How is it possible to draw from them what they have not?

The present scarcity of gold and silver money in America, is not the effect of the poverty of that country, or of the inability of the people there to purchase those metals. In a country where the wages of labour are so much higher, and the price of provisions so much lower than in England, the greater part of the people must surely have wherewithal to purchase a greater quantity, if it were either necessary or convenient for them to do so. The scarcity of those metals, therefore, must be the effect of choice, and not of necessity.

It is for transacting either domestic or foreign business, that gold or silver money is either necessary or convenient.

The domestic business of every country, it has been shewn in the second book of this Inquiry, may, at least in peaceable times, be transacted by means of a paper currency, with nearly the same degree of conveniency as by gold and silver money. It is convenient for the Americans, who could always employ with profit, in the improvement of their lands, a greater stock than they can easily get, to save as much as possible the expense of so costly an instrument of commerce as gold and silver; and rather to employ that part of their surplus produce which would be necessary for purchasing those metals, in purchasing the instruments of trade, the materials of clothing, several parts of household furniture, and the iron work necessary for building and extending their settlements and plantations; in purchasing not dead stock, but active and productive stock. The colony governments find it for their interest to supply the people with such a quantity of paper money as is fully sufficient, and generally more than sufficient, for transacting their domestic business. Some of those governments, that of Pennsylvania, particularly, derive a revenue from lending this paper money to their subjects, at an interest of so much per cent. Others, like that of Massachusetts Bay, advance, upon extraordinary emergencies, a paper money of this kind for defraying the public expense; and afterwards, when it suits the conveniency of the colony, redeem it at the depreciated value to which it gradually falls. In 1747,[80*] that colony paid in this manner the greater part of its public debts, with the tenth part of the money for which its bills had been granted. It suits the conveniency of the planters, to save the expense of employing gold and silver money in

their domestic transactions; and it suits the conveniency of the colony governments, to supply them with a medium, which, though attended with some very considerable disadvantages, enables them to save that expense. The redundancy of paper money necessarily banishes gold and silver from the domestic transactions of the colonies, for the same reason that it has banished those metals from the greater part of the domestic transactions in Scotland; and in both countries, it is not the poverty, but the enterprizing and projecting spirit of the people, their desire of employing all the stock which they can get, as active and productive stock, which has occasioned this redundancy of paper money.

In the exterior commerce which the different colonies carry on with Great Britain, gold and silver are more or less employed, exactly in proportion as they are more or less necessary. Where those metals are not necessary, they seldom appear. Where they are necessary, they are generally found.

In the commerce between Great Britain and the tobacco colonies, the British goods are generally advanced to the colonists at a pretty long credit, and are afterwards paid for in tobacco, rated at a certain price. It is more convenient for the colonists to pay in tobacco than in gold and silver. It would be more convenient for any merchant to pay for the goods which his correspondents had sold to him, in some other sort of goods which he might happen to deal in, than in money. Such a merchant would have no occasion to keep any part of his stock by him unemployed, and in ready money, for answering occasional demands. He could have, at all times, a larger quantity of goods in his shop or warehouse, and he could deal to a greater extent. But it seldom happens to be convenient for all the correspondents of a merchant to receive payment for the goods which they sell to him, in goods of some other kind which he happens to deal in. The British merchants who trade to Virginia and Maryland, happen to be a particular set of correspondents, to whom it is more convenient to receive payment for the goods which they sell to those colonies in tobacco, than in gold and silver. They expect to make a profit by the sale of the tobacco; they could make none by that of the gold and silver. Gold and silver, therefore, very seldom appear in the commerce between Great Britain and the tobacco colonies. Maryland and Virginia have as little occasion for those metals in their foreign, as in their domestic commerce. They are said, accordingly, to have less gold and silver money than any other colonies in America. They are reckoned, however, as thriving, and consequently as rich, as any of their neighbours.

In the northern colonies, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, the four governments of New England, &c. the value of their own produce which they export to Great Britain is not equal to that of the manufactures which they import for their own use, and for that of some of the other colonies, to which they are the carriers. A balance, therefore, must be paid to the mother-country in gold and silver, and this balance they generally find.

In the sugar colonies, the value of the produce annually exported to Great Britain is much greater than that of all the goods imported from thence. If the sugar and rum annually sent to the mother-country were paid for in those colonies, Great Britain would be obliged to send out, every year, a very large balance in money; and the trade to the West Indies would, by a certain species of politicians, be considered as extremely disadvantageous. But it so happens, that many of the principal proprietors of the sugar plantations reside in Great Britain. Their rents are remitted to them in sugar and rum, the produce of their estates. The sugar and rum which the West India merchants purchase in those colonies upon their own account, are not equal in value to the goods which they annually sell there. A balance, therefore, must necessarily he paid to them in gold and silver, and this balance, too, is generally found.

The difficulty and irregularity of payment from the different colonies to Great Britain, have not been at all in proportion to the greatness or smallness of the balances which were respectively due from them. Payments have, in general, been more regular from the northern than from the tobacco colonies, though the former have generally paid a pretty large balance in money, while the latter have either paid no balance, or a much smaller one. The difficulty of getting payment from our different sugar colonies has been greater or less in proportion, not so much to the extent of the balances respectively due from them, as to the quantity of uncultivated land which they contained; that is, to the greater or smaller temptation which the planters have been under of over-trading, or of undertaking the settlement and plantation of greater quantities of waste land than suited the extent of their capitals. The returns from the great island of Jamaica, where there is still much uncultivated land, have, upon this account, been, in general, more irregular and uncertain than those from the smaller islands of Barbadoes, Antigua, and St. Christopher’s, which have, for these many years, been completely cultivated, and have, upon that account, afforded less field for the speculations of the planter. The new acquisitions of Grenada, Tobago, St. Vincent’s, and Dominica, have opened a new field for

speculations of this kind; and the returns from those islands have of late been as irregular and uncertain as those from the great island of Jamaica.

It is not, therefore, the poverty of the colonies which occasions, in the greater part of them, the present scarcity of gold and silver money. Their great demand for active and productive stock makes it convenient for them to have as little dead stock as possible, and disposes them, upon that account, to content themselves with a cheaper, though less commodious instrument of commerce, than gold and silver. They are thereby enabled to convert the value of that gold and silver into the instruments of trade, into the materials of clothing, into household furniture, and into the iron work necessary for building and extending their settlements and plantations. In those branches of business which cannot be transacted without gold and silver money, it appears, that they can always find the necessary quantity of those metals; and if they frequently do not find it, their failure is generally the effect, not of their necessary poverty, but of their unnecessary and excessive enterprise. It is not because they are poor that their payments are irregular and uncertain, but because they are too eager to become excessively rich. Though all that part of the produce of the colony taxes, which was over and above what was necessary for defraying the expense of their own civil and military establishments, were to be remitted to Great Britain in gold and silver, the colonies have abundantly wherewithal to purchase the requisite quantity of those metals. They would in this case be obliged, indeed, to exchange a part of their surplus produce, with which they now purchase active and productive stock, for dead stock. In transacting their domestic business, they would be obliged to employ a costly, instead of a cheap instrument of commerce; and the expense of purchasing this costly instrument might damp somewhat the vivacity and ardour of their excessive enterprise in the improvement of land. It might not, however, be necessary to remit any part of the American revenue in gold and silver. It might be remitted in bills drawn upon, and accepted by, particular merchants or companies in Great Britain, to whom a part of the surplus produce of America had been consigned, who would pay into the treasury the American revenue in money, after having themselves received the value of it in goods; and the whole business might frequently be transacted without exporting a single ounce of gold or silver from America.

It is not contrary to justice, that both Ireland and America should contribute towards the discharge of the public debt of Great Britain. That debt has been contracted in support of the government established by the

Revolution; a government to which the protestants of Ireland owe, not only the whole authority which they at present enjoy in their own country, but every security which they possess for their liberty, their property, and their religion; a government to which several of the colonies of America owe their present charters, and consequently their present constitution; and to which all the colonies of America owe the liberty, security, and property, which they have ever since enjoyed. That public debt has been contracted in the defence, not of Great Britain alone, but of all the different provinces of the empire. The immense debt contracted in the late war in particular, and a great part of that contracted in the war before, were both properly contracted in defence of America.

By a union with Great Britain, Ireland would gain, besides the freedom of trade, other advantages much more important, and which would much more than compensate any increase of taxes that might accompany that union. By the union with England, the middling and inferior ranks of people in Scotland gained a complete deliverance from the power of an aristocracy, which had always before oppressed them. By a union with Great Britain, the greater part of people of all ranks in Ireland would gain an equally complete deliverance from a much more oppressive aristocracy; an aristocracy not founded, like that of Scotland, in the natural and respectable distinctions of birth and fortune, but in the most odious of all distinctions, those of religious and political prejudices; distinctions which, more than any other, animate both the insolence of the oppressors, and the hatred and indignation of the oppressed, and which commonly render the inhabitants of the same country more hostile to one another than those of different countries ever are. Without a union with Great Britain, the inhabitants of Ireland are not likely, for many ages, to consider themselves as one people.

No oppressive aristocracy has ever prevailed in the colonies. Even they, however, would, in point of happiness and tranquillity, gain considerably by a union with Great Britain. It would, at least, deliver them from those rancourous and virulent factions which are inseparable from small democracies, and which have so frequently divided the affections of their people, and disturbed the tranquillity of their governments, in their form so nearly democratical. In the case of a total separation from Great Britain, which, unless prevented by a union of this kind, seems very likely to take place, those factions would be ten times more virulent than ever. Before the commencement of the present disturbances, the coercive power of the mother-country had always been able to restrain those factions from breaking out into any thing worse

than gross brutality and insult. If that coercive power were entirely taken away, they would probably soon break out into open violence and bloodshed. In all great countries which are united under one uniform government, the spirit of party commonly prevails less in the remote provinces than in the centre of the empire. The distance of those provinces from the capital, from the principal seat of the great scramble of faction and ambition, makes them enter less into the views of any of the contending parties, and renders them more indifferent and impartial spectators of the conduct of all. The spirit of party prevails less in Scotland than in England. In the case of a union, it would probably prevail less in Ireland than in Scotland; and the colonies would probably soon enjoy a degree of concord and unanimity, at present unknown in any part of the British empire. Both Ireland and the colonies, indeed, would be subjected to heavier taxes than any which they at present pay. In consequence, however, of a diligent and faithful application of the public revenue towards the discharge of the national debt, the greater part of those taxes might not be of long continuance, and the public revenue of Great Britain might soon be reduced to what was necessary for maintaining a moderate peace-establishment.

The territorial acquisitions of the East-India Company, the undoubted right of the Crown, that is, of the state and people of Great Britain, might be rendered another source of revenue, more abundant, perhaps, than all those already mentioned. Those countries are represented as more fertile, more extensive, and, in proportion to their extent, much richer and more populous than Great Britain. In order to draw a great revenue from them, it would not probably be necessary to introduce any new system of taxation into countries which are already sufficiently, and more than sufficiently, taxed. It might, perhaps, be more proper to lighten than to aggravate the burden of those unfortunate countries, and to endeavour to draw a revenue from them, not by imposing new taxes, but by preventing the embezzlement and misapplication of the greater part of those which they already pay.

If it should be found impracticable for Great Britain to draw any considerable augmentation of revenue from any of the resources above mentioned, the only resource which can remain to her, is a diminution of her expense. In the mode of collecting and in that of expending the public revenue, though in both there may be still room for improvement, Great Britain seems to be at least as economical as any of her neighbours. The military establishment which she maintains for her own defence in time of peace, is more moderate than that of any European

state, which can pretend to rival her either in wealth or in power. None of those articles, therefore, seem to admit of any considerable reduction of expense. The expense of the peace-establishment of the colonies was, before the commencement of the present disturbances, very considerable, and is an expense which may, and, if no revenue can be drawn from them, ought certainly to be saved altogether. This constant expense in time of peace, though very great, is insignificant in comparison with what the defence of the colonies has cost us in time of war. The last war, which was undertaken altogether on account of the colonies, cost Great Britain, it has already been observed, upwards of ninety millions. The Spanish war of 1739 was principally undertaken on their account; in which, and in the French war that was the consequence of it, Great Britain, spent upwards of forty millions; a great part of which ought justly to be charged to the colonies. In those two wars, the colonies cost Great Britain much more than double the sum which the national debt amounted to before the commencement of the first of them. Had it not been for those wars, that debt might, and probably would by this time, have been completely paid; and had it not been for the colonies, the former of those wars might not, and the latter certainly would not, have been undertaken. It was because the colonies were supposed to be provinces of the British Empire, that this expense was laid out upon them. But countries which contribute neither revenue nor military force towards the support of the empire, cannot be considered as provinces. They may, perhaps, be considered as appendages, as a sort of splendid and shewy equipage of the empire. But if the empire can no longer support the expense of keeping up this equipage, it ought certainly to lay it down; and if it cannot raise its revenue in proportion to its expense, it ought at least to accommodate its expense to its revenue. If the colonies, notwithstanding their refusal to submit to British taxes, are still to be considered as provinces of the British empire, their defence, in some future war, may cost Great Britain as great an expense as it ever has done in any former war. The rulers of Great Britain have, for more than a century past, amused the people with the imagination that they possessed a great empire on the west side of the Atlantic. This empire, however, has hitherto existed in imagination only. It has hitherto been, not an empire, but the project of an empire; not a gold mine, but the project of a gold mine; a project which has cost, which continues to cost, and which, if pursued in the same way as it has been hitherto, is likely to cost, immense expense, without being likely to bring any profit; for the effects of the monopoly of the colony trade, it has been shewn, are to the great

body of the people, mere loss instead of profit. It is surely now time that our rulers should either realize this golden dream, in which they have been indulging themselves, perhaps, as well as the people; or that they should awake from it themselves, and endeavour to awaken the people. If the project cannot be completed, it ought to be given up. If any of the provinces of the British empire cannot be made to contribute towards the support of the whole empire, it is surely time that Great Britain should free herself from the expense of defending those provinces in time of war, and of supporting any part of their civil or military establishments in time of peace; and endeavour to accommodate her future views and designs to the real mediocrity of her circumstances.

NOTES

[1] It is mentioned, that when about three years old, he was stolen from the door of his uncle, Mr. Douglas, in Strathenry, where his mother had been on a visit, by some tinkers, or gypsies. He was rescued in Leslie wood by his uncle, who was thus the happy instrument, Mr. Stewart observes, of preserving to the world, a genius, which was destined, not only to extend the boundaries of science, but to enlighten and reform the commercial policy of Europe.

[2] Boswell’s Life of Johnson, vol. iv.

[3] Edinburgh Review, vol. i. .

[4] It may not be uninteresting to mention what has been said of the manner in which the writings of Mr. Smith were composed.— ‘Mr. Smith observed to me, not long before his death,’ says Mr. Stewart, ‘that after all his practice in writing, he composed as slowly, and with as great difficulty as at first.’ He added, at the same time, that Mr. Hume had acquired so great a facility in this respect, that the last volume of his History was printed from the original copy, with a few marginal corrections. Mr. Smith, when be was employed in composition, generally walked up and down his apartment, dictating to a secretary. All Mr. Hume’s works, it has been said, were written with his own hand.

[5] This observation, as may easily be perceived, cannot apply in certain indirect imposts, such as those for the support of the roads; which, as they cannot be confounded with the price of any consumable commodity, combine all the inconveniencies of indirect, with those of direct imposts.

[6] Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. 33, ca.

[7] Pliny, lib. xxxiii. ca.

[8] This was written in 1773, before the commencement of the late disturbances.

[9] See his scheme for the maintenance of the poor, in Burn’s History of the Poor Laws.

[10] See Denisart, Article Taux des Interests, tom. iii, .

[11] See Idyllium xxi.

[12] See Madox Firma Burgi &c.

[13] See the Statute of Labourers, 25, Ed. III.

[14] Voyages d'un Philosophe.

[15] Douglas's Summary, vol. ii, , 373.

[16] See his Preface to Anderson's Diplomata Scotiæ.

[17] Lowndes's Essay on the Silver Coin, 68.

[18] See Tracts on the Corn Trade, Tract 3.

[19] Solorzano, vol. ii.

[20] Postscript to the Universal Merchant, and 16. This postscript was not printed till 1756, three years after the publication of the book, which has never had a second edition. The postscript is, therefore, to be found in few copies; it corrects several error in the book.

[21] See Ruddiman's Preface to Anderson's Diplomata, &c. Scotiæ.

[22] Lib. x, c. 29.

[23] Lib. ix, c. 17.

[24] Kalm's Travels, vol. i, , 344.

[25] See Smith's Memoirs of Wool, vol. i. c. 5, 6, 7. also vol. ii.

[26] Wanting in the account. The year 1646 supplied by Bishop Fleetwood.

[27] See Ruddiman's Preface to Anderson's Diplomata, &c. Scotiæ.

[28] The method described in the text was by no means either the must common or the most expensive one in which those adventurers sometimes raised money by circulation. It frequently happened, that A in

Edinburgh would enable B in London to pay the first bill of exchange, by drawing, a few days before it became due, a second bill at three months date upon the same B in London. This bill, being payable to his own order, A sold in Edinburgh at par; and with its contents purchased bills upon London, payable at sight to the order of B, to whom he sent them by the post. Towards the end of the late war, the exchange between Edinburgh and London was frequently three per cent. against Edinburgh, and those bills at sight must frequently have cost A that premium. This transaction, therefore, being repeated at least four times in the year, and being loaded with a commission of at least one half per cent, upon each repetition, must at that period have cost A, at least, fourteen per cent. in the year. At other times A would enable B to discharge the first bill of exchange, by drawing, a few days before it became due, a second bill at two months date, not upon B, but upon some third person, C, for example, in London. This other bill was made payable to the order of B, who, upon its being accepted by C, discounted it with some banker in London; and A enabled C to discharge it, by drawing, a few days before it became due, a third bill likewise at two months date, sometimes upon his first correspondent B and sometimes upon some fourth or fifth person, D or E, for example. This third bill was made payable to the order of C, who, as soon as it was accepted, discounted it in the same manner with some banker in London. Such operations being repeated at least six times in the year, and being loaded with a commission of at least one half per cent. upon each repetition, together with legal interest of five per cent. this method of raising money, in the same manner as described in the text, must have cost A something more than eight per cent. By saving, however, the exchange between Edinburgh and London, it was less expensive than that mentioned in the foregoing part of this note; but then it required an established credit with more houses than one in London, an advantage which many of these adventurers could not always find it easy to procure.

[29] James Postlethwaite’s History of the Public Revenue,

[30] Some French authors of great learning and ingenuity have used those words in a different sense. In the last chapter of the fourth book, I shall endeavour to shew that their sense is an improper one.

[31] See Brady’s Historical Treatise of Cities and Boroughs, . &c.

[32] See Madox, Firma Burgi, ; also History of the Exchequer, cha, sect. v, , first edition.

[33] See Madox, Firma Burgi. See also Pfeffel in the Remarkable events under Frederick II. and his Successors of the House of Suabia.

[34] See Madox

[35] See Pfeffel

[36] See Sandi Istoria civile de Vinezia, part 2, vol. i, page 247 and 256.

[37] The following are the prices at which the bank of Amsterdam at present (September 1775) receives bullion and coin of different kinds:

SILVER.

Mexico dollars

} Guilders. B — 22 per mark.

French crowns

English silver coin

Mexico dollars, new coin

21 10

Ducatoons

3 0

Rix-dollars

2 8

Bar silver, containing 11-12ths fine silver, 21 per mark, and in this proportion down to 1-4th fine, on which 5 guilders are given.

Fine bars, 28 per mark.

GOLD.

Portugal coin

} B — 310 per mark.

Guineas

Louis d’ors, new

Ditto old

300

New ducats

4 19 8 per ducat.

Bar or ingot gold is received in proportion to its fineness, compared with the above foreign gold coin. Upon fine bars the bank gives 340 per mark. In general, however, something more is given upon coin of a known fineness, than upon gold and silver bars, of which the fineness cannot be ascertained but by a process of melting and assaying.

[38] This paragraph was written in the year 1775.

[39] See the accounts at the end of this Book.

[40] Before the 13th of the present king, the following were the duties payable upon the importation of the different sorts of grain:

Grain.

Duties.

Duties.

Duties.

Beans to 28s. per qr.

19s. 10d. after till 40s.

16s. 8d.

then 12d.

Barley to 28s.

19s. 10d. after till 32s.

16s.

12d.

Malt is prohibited by the annual malt-tax bill.

Oats to 16s.

5s. 10d. after

9½d.

Pease to 40s.

16s. 0d. after

9¾d.

Rye to 36s.

19s. 10d. till 40s.

16s. 8d.

then 12d.

Wheat to 44s.

21s. 9d. till 53s. 4d.

17s.

then 8s.

till L.4, and after that about 1s. 4d.

Buck-wheat to 32s. per qr. to pay 16s.

These different duties were imposed, partly by the 22d of Charles II. in place of the old subsidy, partly by the new subsidy, by the one-third and two-thirds subsidy, and by the subsidy 1747.

[41] See Dictionnaire des Monnoies, tom. ii. article Seigneurage, , par M. Abbot de Baringhen, Conseiller-Commissaire en la Cour des Monnoies à Paris.

[42] The interest of every proprietor of India stock, however, is by no means the same with that of the country in the government of which his

vote gives him some influence. — See book v, chap. i, part ii.

[43] See book I chap. I

[44] See the Journal of Mr. De Lange, in Bell’s Travels, vol. ii. , 276, 293.

[45] Plin. 1. ix. c. 30.

[46] Plin. 1. viii. c. 48.

[47] They are to be found in Tyrol’s History of England.

[48] Since publishing the first two editions of this book, I have got good reasons to believe that all the turnpike tolls levied in Great Britain do not produce a neat revenue that amounts to half a million; a sum which, under the management of government, would not be sufficient to keep in repair five of the principal roads in the kingdom.

[49] I have now good reason to believe that all those conjectural sums are by much too large.

[50] See Memoires concernant les Droits et Impositions en Europe, tome i. page 73. This work was compiled by the order of the court, for the use of a commission employed for some years past in considering the proper means for reforming the finances of France. The account of the French taxes, which takes up three volumes in quarto, may be regarded as perfectly authentic. That of those of other European nations was compiled from such information as the French ministers at the different courts could procure. It is much shorter, and probably not quite so exact as that of the French taxes.

[51] See Memoires concernant les Droits et Impositions en Europe tome i. .

[52] See Sketches of the History of Man page 474, and Seq.

[53] Memoires concernant les Droits, , 241.

[54] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. i. , 115, 116, &c.

[55] Id. tom. i. , 84.

[56] Id. , &c.; also , &c. to 316.

[57] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. ii. , &c.

[58] Since the first publication of this book, a tax nearly upon the above-mentioned principles has been imposed.

[59] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. .

[60] Memoires concernant les Droits, tom. i, .

[61] Memoires concernant les Droits, tom. i, , 167, 171.

[62] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. ii. .

[63] Lib. 55. See also Burman, de Vectigalibus Pop. Rom. cap. xi. and Bouchaud de l'impot du vingtieme sur les successions.

[64] See Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. i. .

[65] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. i. .

[66] Id. .

[67] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. i. , 224, 225.

[68] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. ii. .

[69] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. iii. .

[70] See book i. cha.

[71] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c., , 211.

[72] Le Reformateur

[73] Though the duties directly imposed upon proof spirits amount only to 2s. 6d. per gallon, these, added to the duties upon the low wines, from which they are distilled, amount to 3s. $10^{2}/_{3}$d. Both low wines and proof spirits are, to prevent frauds, now rated according to what they gauge in the wash.

[74] The neat production of that year, after deducting all expenses and allowances, amounted to L.4,975,652 : 19 : 6.

[75] Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. 1,

[76] See Examen des Reflections Politiques sut les Finances.

[77] See James Postlethwaite’s History of the Public Revenue.

[78] It has proved more expensive than any one of our former wars, and has involved us in an additional debt of more than one hundred millions. During a profound peace of eleven years, little more than ten millions of debt was paid; during a war of seven years, more than one hundred millions was contracted.

[79] See Du Cange Glossary, voce Moneta; the Benedictine Edition.

[80] See Hutchinson’s History of Massachusetts Bay vol. ii, page 436, et seq.

ESSAYS ON PHILOSOPHICAL SUBJECTS



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Statue of Smith built in 1867–1870 at the old headquarters of the University of London, 6 Burlington Gardens

THE PRINCIPLES WHICH LEAD AND DIRECT PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRIES; AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE HISTORY OF ASTRONOMY.

Wonder, surprise, and admiration, are words which, though often confounded, denote, in our language, sentiments that are indeed allied, but that are in some respects different also, and distinct from one another. What is new and singular, excites that sentiment which, in strict propriety, is called Wonder; what is unexpected, Surprise; and what is great or beautiful, Admiration.

We wonder at all extraordinary and uncommon objects, at all the rarer phenomena of nature, at meteors, comets, eclipses, at singular plants and animals, and at every thing, in short, with which we have before been either little or not at all acquainted; and we still wonder, though forewarned of what we are to see.

We are surprised at those things which we have seen often, but which we least of all expected to meet with in the place where we find them; we are surprised at the sudden appearance of a friend, whom we have seen a thousand times, but whom we did not at all imagine we were to see then.

We admire the beauty of a plain or the greatness of a mountain, though we have seen both often before, and though nothing appears to us in either, but what we had expected with certainty to see.

Whether this criticism upon the precise meaning of these words be just, is of little importance. I imagine it is just, though I acknowledge, that the best writers in our language have not always made use of them according to it. Milton, upon the appearance of Death to Satan, says, that

> The Fiend what this might be admir’d,
> Admir’d, not fear’d. —— —

But if this criticism be just, the proper expression should have been wonder’d. — Dryden, upon the discovery of Iphigenia sleeping, says that

> The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes,
> And gaping mouth, that testified surprise.

But what Cimon must have felt upon this occasion could not so much be Surprise, as Wonder and Admiration. All that I contend for is, that the sentiments excited by what is new, by what is unexpected, and by what is great and beautiful are really different, however the words made use of to express them may sometimes be confounded. Even the admiration which is excited by beauty, is quite different (as will appear more fully hereafter) from that which is inspired by greatness, though we have but one word to denote them.

These sentiments, like all others when inspired by one and the same object, mutually support and enliven one another: an object with which we are quite familiar, and which we see every day, produces, though both great and beautiful, but a small effect upon us; because our admiration is not supported either by Wonder or by Surprise: and if we have heard a very accurate description of a monster, our Wonder will be the less when we see it; because our previous knowledge of it will in a great measure prevent our Surprise.

It is the design of this essay to consider particularly the nature and causes of each of these sentiments, whose influence is of far wider extent than we should be apt upon a careless view to imagine. I shall begin with Surprise.

Sec. I:— Of the Effect of Unexpectedness, or of Surprise.

When an object of any kind, which has been for some time expected and foreseen, presents itself, whatever be the emotion which it is by nature fitted to excite, the mind must have been prepared for it, and must even in some measure have conceived it before-hand; because the idea of the object having been so long present to it, must have before-hand excited some degree of the same emotion which the object itself would excite: the change, therefore, which its presence produces comes thus to be less considerable, and the emotion or passion which it excites glides gradually and easily into the heart, without violence, pain or difficulty.

But the contrary of all this happens when the object is unexpected; the passion is then poured in all at once upon the heart, which is thrown, if it is a strong passion, into the most violent and convulsive emotions, such as sometimes cause immediate death; sometimes, by the suddenness of the ecstacy, so entirely disjoint the whole frame of the imagination, that it never after returns to its former tone and composure, but falls either into a frenzy or habitual lunacy; and such as almost always occasion a momentary loss of reason, or of that attention to other things which our situation or our duty requires.

How much we dread the effects of the more violent passions, when they come suddenly upon the mind, appears from those preparations which all men think necessary when going to inform any one of what is capable of exciting them. Who would choose all at once to inform his friend of an extraordinary calamity that had befallen him, without taking care before-hand, by alarming him with an uncertain fear, to announce, if one may say so, his misfortune, and thereby prepare and dispose him for receiving the tidings?

Those panic terrors which sometimes seize armies in the field, or great cities, when an enemy is in the neighbourhood, and which deprive for a time the most determined of all deliberate judgments, are never excited but by the sudden apprehension of unexpected danger. Such violent consternations, which at once confound whole multitudes, benumb their understandings, and agitate their hearts, with all the agony of extravagant fear, can never be produced by any foreseen danger, how great soever. Fear, though naturally a very strong passion, never rises to

such excesses, unless exasperated both by wonder, from the uncertain nature of the danger, and by surprise, from the suddenness of the apprehension.

Surprise, therefore, is not to be regarded as an original emotion of a species distinct from all others. The violent and sudden change produced upon the mind, when an emotion of any kind is brought suddenly upon it, constitutes the whole nature of Surprise.

But when not only a passion and a great passion comes all at once upon the mind, but when it comes upon it while the mind is in the mood most unfit for conceiving it, the Surprise is then the greatest. Surprises of joy when the mind is sunk into grief, or of grief when it is elated with joy, are therefore the most unsupportable. The change is in this case the greatest possible. Not only a strong passion is conceived all at once, but a strong passion the direct opposite of that which was before in possession of the soul. When a load of sorrow comes down upon the heart that is expanded and elated with gaiety and joy, it seems not only to damp and oppress it, but almost to crush and bruise it, as a real weight would crush and bruise the body. On the contrary, when from an unexpected change of fortune, a tide of gladness seems, if I may say so, to spring up all at once within it, when depressed and contracted with grief and sorrow, it feels as if suddenly extended and heaved up with violent and irresistible force, and is torn with pangs of all others most exquisite, and which almost always occasion faintings, deliriums, and sometimes instant death. For it may be worth while to observe, that though grief be a more violent passion than joy, as indeed all uneasy sensations seem naturally more pungent than the opposite agreeable ones, yet of the two, Surprises of joy are still more insupportable than Surprises of grief. We are told that after the battle of Thrasimenus, while a Roman lady, who had been informed that her son was slain in the action, was sitting alone bemoaning her misfortunes, the young man who escaped came suddenly into the room to her, and that she cried out and expired instantly in a transport of joy. Let us suppose the contrary of this to have happened, and that in the midst of domestic festivity and mirth, he had suddenly fallen down dead at her feet, is it likely that the effects would have been equally violent? I imagine not. The heart springs to joy with a sort of natural elasticity, it abandons itself to so agreeable an emotion, as soon as the object is presented; it seems to pant and leap forward to meet it, and the passion in its full force takes at once entire and complete possession of the soul. But it is otherwise with grief; the heart recoils from, and resists the first approaches of that disagreeable

passion, and it requires some time before the melancholy object can produce its full effect. Grief comes on slowly and gradually, nor ever rises at once to that height of agony to which it is increased after a little time. But joy comes rushing upon us all at once like a torrent. The change produced, therefore, by a surprise of joy is more sudden, and upon that account more violent and apt to have more fatal effects, than that which is occasioned by a surprise of grief; there seems, too, to be something in the nature of surprise, which makes it unite more easily with the brisk and quick motion of joy, than with the slower and heavier movement of grief. Most men who can take the trouble to recollect, will find that they have heard of more people who died or became distracted with sudden joy, than with sudden grief. Yet from the nature of human affairs, the latter must be much more frequent than the former. A man may break his leg, or lose his son, though he has had no warning of either of these events, but he can hardly meet with an extraordinary piece of good fortune, without having had some foresight of what was to happen.

Not only grief and joy, but all the other passions, are more violent, when opposite extremes succeed each other. Is any resentment so keen as what follows the quarrels of lovers, or any love so passionate as what attends their reconcilement?

Even the objects of the external senses affect us in a more lively manner, when opposite extremes succeed to or are placed beside each other. Moderate warmth seems intolerable heat if felt after extreme cold. What is bitter will seem more so when tasted after what is very sweet; a dirty white will seem bright and pure when placed by a jet black. The vivacity in short of every sensation, as well as of every sentiment, seems to be greater or less in proportion to the change made by the impression of either upon the situation of the mind or organ; but this change must necessarily be the greatest when opposite sentiments and sensations are contrasted, or succeed immediately to one another. Both sentiments and sensations are then the liveliest; and this superior vivacity proceeds from nothing but their being brought upon the mind or organ when in a state most unfit for conceiving them.

As the opposition of contrasted sentiments heightens their vivacity, so the resemblance of those which immediately succeed each other renders them more faint and languid. A parent who has lost several children immediately after one another, will be less affected with the death of the last than with that of the first, though the loss in itself be, in this case, undoubtedly greater; but his mind being already sunk into sorrow, the

new misfortune seems to produce no other effect than a continuance of the same melancholy, and is by no means apt to occasion such transports of grief as are ordinarily excited by the first calamity of the kind; he receives it, though with great dejection, yet with some degree of calmness and composure, and without anything of that anguish and agitation of mind which the novelty of the misfortune is apt to occasion. Those who have been unfortunate through the whole course of their lives are often indeed habitually melancholy, and sometimes peevish and splenetic, yet upon any fresh disappointment, though they are vexed and complain a little, they seldom fly out into any more violent passion, and never fall into those transports of rage or grief which often, upon like occasions, distract the fortunate and successful.

Upon this are founded, in a great measure, some of the effects of habit and custom. It is well known that custom deadens the vivacity of both pain and pleasure, abates the grief we should feel for the one, and weakens the joy we should derive from the other. The pain is supported without agony, and the pleasure enjoyed without rapture: because custom and the frequent repetition of any object comes at last to form and bend the mind or organ to that habitual mood and disposition which fits them to receive its impression, without undergoing any very violent change.

Sec. II:— Of Wonder, or of the Effects of Novelty.

It is evident that the mind takes pleasure in observing the resemblances that are discoverable betwixt different objects. It is by means of such observations that it endeavours to arrange and methodise all its ideas, and to reduce them into proper classes and assortments. Where it can observe but one single quality that is common to a great variety of otherwise widely different objects, that single circumstance will be sufficient for it to connect them all together, to reduce them to one common class, and to call them by one general name. It is thus that all things endowed with a power of self-motion, beasts, birds, fishes, insects, are classed under the general name of Animal; and that these again, along with those which want that power, are arranged under the still more general word, Substance: and this is the origin of those assortments of objects and ideas which in the schools are called Genera and Species, and of those abstract and general names, which in all languages are made use of to express them.

The further we advance in knowledge and experience, the greater number of divisions and subdivisions of those Genera and Species we are both inclined and obliged to make. We observe a greater variety of particularities amongst those things which have a gross resemblance; and having made new divisions of them, according to those newly-observed particularities, we are then no longer to be satisfied with being able to refer an object to a remote genus, or very general class of things, to many of which it has but a loose and imperfect resemblance. A person, indeed, unacquainted with botany may expect to satisfy your curiosity, by telling you, that such a vegetable is a weed, or, perhaps in still more general terms, that it is a plant. But a botanist will neither give nor accept of such an answer. He has broke and divided that great class of objects into a number of inferior assortments, accord to those varieties which his experience has discovered among them; and he wants to refer each individual plant to some tribe of vegetables, with all of which it may have a more exact resemblance, than with many things comprehended under the extensive genus of plants. A child imagines that it gives a satisfactory answer when it tells you, that an object whose name it knows not is a thing, and fancies that it informs you of something, when it thus ascertains to which of the two most obvious and comprehensive classes

of objects a particular impression ought to be referred; to the class of realities or solid substances which it calls things, or to that of appearances which it calls nothings.

Whatever, in short, occurs to us we are fond of referring to some species or class of things, with all of which it has a nearly exact resemblance: and though we often know no more about them than about it, yet we are apt to fancy that by being able to do so, we show ourselves to be better acquainted with it, and to have a more thorough insight into its nature. But when something quite new and singular is presented, we feel ourselves incapable of doing this. The memory cannot, from all its stores, cast up any image that nearly resembles this strange appearance. If by some of its qualities it seems to resemble, and to be connected with a species which we have before been acquainted with, it is by others separated and detached from that, and from all the other assortments of things we have hitherto been able to make. It stands alone and by itself in the imagination, and refuses to be grouped or confounded with any set of objects whatever. The imagination and memory exert themselves to no purpose, and in vain look around all their classes of ideas in order to find one under which it may be arranged. They fluctuate to no purpose from thought to thought, and we remain still uncertain and undetermined where to place it, or what to think of it. It is this fluctuation and vain recollection, together with the emotion or movement of the spirits that they excite, which constitute the sentiment properly called Wonder, and which occasion that staring, and sometimes that rolling of the eyes, that suspension of the breath, and that swelling of the heart, which we may all observe, both in ourselves and others, when wondering at some new object, and which are the natural symptoms of uncertain and undetermined thought. What sort of a thing can that be? What is that like? are the questions which, upon such an occasion, we are all naturally disposed to ask. If we can recollect many such objects which exactly resemble this new appearance, and which present themselves to the imagination naturally, and as it were of their own accord, our Wonder is entirely at an end. If we can recollect but a few, and which it requires too some trouble to be able to call up, our Wonder is indeed diminished, but not quite destroyed. If we can recollect none, but are quite at a loss, it is the greatest possible.

With what curious attention does a naturalist examine a singular plant, or a singular fossil, that is presented to him? He is at no loss to refer it to the general genus of plants or fossils; but this does not satisfy him, and when he considers all the different tribes or species of either with which

he has hitherto been acquainted, they all, he thinks, refuse to admit the new object among them. It stands alone in his imagination, and as it were detached from all the other species of that genus to which it belongs. He labours, however, to connect it with some one or other of them. Sometimes he thinks it may be placed in this, and sometimes in that other assortment; nor is he ever satisfied, till he has fallen upon one which, in most of its qualities, it resembles. When he cannot do this, rather than it should stand quite by itself, he will enlarge the precincts, if I may say so, of some species, in order to make room for it; or he will create a new species on purpose to receive it, and call it a Play of Nature, or give it some other appellation, under which he arranges all the oddities that he knows not what else to do with. But to some class or other of known objects he must refer it, and betwixt it and them he must find out some resemblance or other, before he can get rid of that Wonder, that uncertainty and anxious curiosity excited by its singular appearance, and by its dissimilitude with all the objects he had hitherto observed.

As single and individual objects thus excite our Wonder when, by their uncommon qualities and singular appearance, they make us uncertain to what species of things we ought to refer them; so a succession of objects which follow one another in an uncommon train or order, will produce the same effect, though there be nothing particular in any one of them taken by itself.

When one accustomed object appears after another, which it does not usually follow, it first excites, by its unexpectedness, the sentiment properly called Surprise, and afterwards, by the singularity of the succession, or order of its appearance, the sentiment properly called Wonder. We start and are surprised at seeing it there, and then wonder how it came there. The motion of a small piece of iron along a plain table is in itself no extraordinary object, yet the person who first saw it begin, without any visible impulse, in consequence of the motion of a loadstone at some little distance from it, could not behold it without the most extreme Surprise; and when that momentary emotion was over, he would still wonder how it came to be conjoined to an event with which, according to the ordinary train of things, he could have so little suspected it to have any connection.

When two objects, however unlike, have often been observed to follow each other, and have constantly presented themselves to the senses in that order, they come to be connected together in the fancy, that the idea of the one seems, of its own accord, to call up and introduce that of the other. If the objects are still observed to succeed each other as

before, this connection, or, as it has been called, this association of their ideas, becomes stricter and stricter, and the habit of the imagination to pass from the conception of the one to that of the other, grows more and more rivetted and confirmed. As its ideas move more rapidly than external objects, it is continually running before them, and therefore anticipates, before it happens, every event which falls out according to this ordinary course of things. When objects succeed each other in the same train in which the ideas of the imagination have thus been accustomed to move, and in which, though not conducted by that chain of events presented to the senses, they have acquired a tendency to go on of their own accord, such objects appear all closely connected with one another, and the thought glides easily along them, without effort and without interruption. They fall in with the natural career of the imagination; and as the ideas which represented such a train of things would seem all mutually to introduce each other, every last thought to be called up by the foregoing, and to call up the succeeding; so when the objects themselves occur, every last event seems, in the same manner, to be introduced by the foregoing, and to introduce the succeeding. There is no break, no stop, no gap, no interval. The ideas excited by so coherent a chain of things seem, as it were, to float through the mind of their own accord, without obliging it to exert itself, or to make any effort in order to pass from one of them to another.

But if this customary connection be interrupted, if one or more objects appear in an order quite different from that to which the imagination has been accustomed, and for which it is prepared, the contrary of all this happens. We are at first surprised by the unexpectedness of the new appearance, and when that momentary emotion is over, we still wonder how it came to occur in that place. The imagination no longer feels the usual facility of passing from the event which goes before to that which comes after. It is an order or law of succession to which it has not been accustomed, and which it therefore finds some difficulty in following, or in attending to. The fancy is stopped and interrupted in that natural movement or career, according to which it was proceeding. Those two events seem to stand at a distance from each other; it endeavours to bring them together, but they refuse to unite; and it feels, or imagines it feels, something like a gap or interval betwixt them. It naturally hesitates, and, as it were, pauses upon the brink of this interval; it endeavours to find out something which may fill up the gap, which, like a bridge, may so far at least unite those seemingly distant objects, as to render the passage of

the thought betwixt them smooth, and natural, and easy. The supposition of a chain of intermediate, though invisible, events, which succeed each other in a train similar to that in which the imagination has been accustomed to move, and which links together those two disjointed appearances, is the only means by which the imagination can fill up this interval, is the only bridge which, if one may say so, can smooth its passage from the one object to the other. Thus, when we observe the motion of the iron, in consequence of that of the loadstone, we gaze and hesitate, and feel a want of connection betwixt two events which follow one another in so unusual a train. But when, with Des Cartes, we imagine certain invisible effluvia to circulate round one of them, and by their repeated impulses to impel the other, both to move towards it, and to follow its motion, we fill up the interval betwixt them, we join them together by a sort of bridge, and thus take off that hesitation and difficulty which the imagination felt in passing from the one to the other. That the iron should move after the loadstone seems, upon this hypothesis, in some measure according to the ordinary course of things. Motion after impulse is an order of succession with which of all things we are the most familiar. Two objects which are so connected seem, to our mind, no longer to be disjointed, and the imagination flows smoothly and easily along them.

Such is the nature of this second species of Wonder, which arises from an unusual succession of things. The stop which is thereby given to the career of the imagination, the difficulty which it finds in passing along such disjointed objects, and the feeling of something like a gap or interval betwixt them, constitute the whole essence of this emotion. Upon the clear discovery of a connecting chain of intermediate events, it vanishes altogether. What obstructed the movement of the imagination is then removed. Who wonders at the machinery of the opera-house who has once been admitted behind the scenes? In the wonders of nature, however, it rarely happens that we can discover so clearly this connecting chain. With regard to a few even of them, indeed, we seem to have been really admitted behind the scenes, and our wonder accordingly is entirely at an end. Thus the eclipses of the sun and moon, which once, more than all the other appearances in the heavens, excited the terror and amazement of mankind, seem now no longer to be wonderful, since the connecting chain has been found out which joins them to the ordinary course of things. Nay, in those cases in which we have been less successful, even the vague hypothesis of Des Cartes, and the yet more indetermined notions of Aristotle, have, with their followers, contributed

to give some coherence to the appearances of nature, and might diminish, though they could not destroy, their wonder. If they did not completely fill up the interval betwixt the two disjointed objects, they bestowed upon them, however, some sort of loose connection which they wanted before.

That the imagination feels a real difficulty in passing along two events which follow one another in an uncommon order, may be confirmed by many obvious observations. If it attempts to attend beyond a certain time to a long series of this kind, the continual efforts it is obliged to make, in order to pass from one object to another, and thus follow the progress of the succession, soon fatigue it, and if repeated too often, disorder and disjoint its whole frame. It is thus that too severe an application to study sometimes brings on lunacy and frenzy, in those especially who are somewhat advanced in life, but whose imaginations, from being too late in applying, have not got those habits which dispose them to follow easily the reasonings in the abstract sciences. Every step of a demonstration, which to an old practitioner is quite natural and easy, requires from them the most intense application of thought.

Spurred on, however, either by ambition or by admiration for the subject, they still continue till they become, first confused, then giddy, and at last distracted. Could we conceive a person of the soundest judgment, who had grown up to maturity, and whose imagination had acquired those habits, and that mould, which the constitution of things in this world necessarily impresses upon it, to be all at once transported alive to some other planet, where nature was governed by laws quite different from those which take place here; as he would be continually obliged to attend to events, which must to him appear in the highest degree jarring, irregular, and discordant, he would soon feel the same confusion and giddiness begin to come upon him, which would at last end in the same manner, in lunacy and distraction. Neither, to produce this effect, is it necessary that the objects should be either great or interesting, or even uncommon, in themselves. It is sufficient that they follow one another in an uncommon order. Let any one attempt to look over even a game of cards, and to attend particularly to every single stroke, and if he is unacquainted with the nature and rules of the games; that is, with the laws which regulate the succession of the cards; he will soon feel the same confusion and giddiness begin to come upon him, which, were it to be continued for days and months, would end in the same manner, in lunacy and distraction. But if the mind be thus thrown into the most violent disorder, when it attends to a long series of events

which follow one another in an uncommon train, it must feel some degree of the same disorder, when it observes even a single event fall out in this unusual manner: for the violent disorder can arise from nothing but the too frequent repetition of this smaller uneasiness.

That it is the unusualness alone of the succession which occasions this stop and interruption in the progress of the imagination as well as the notion of an interval betwixt the two immediately succeeding objects, to be filled up by some chain of intermediate events, is not less evident. The same orders of succession, which to one set of men seem quite according to the natural course of things, and such as require no intermediate events to join them, shall to another appear altogether incoherent and disjointed, unless some such events be supposed: and this for no other reason, but because such orders of succession are familiar to the one, and strange to the other. When we enter the work-houses of the most common artizans; such as dyers, brewers, distillers; we observe a number of appearances, which present themselves in an order that seems to us very strange and wonderful. Our thought cannot easily follow it, we feel an interval betwixt every two of them, and require some chain of intermediate events, to fill it up, and link them together. But the artizan himself, who has been for many years familiar with the consequences of all the operations of his art, feels no such interval. They fall in with what custom has made the natural movement of his imagination: they no longer excite his Wonder, and if he is not a genius superior to his profession, so as to be capable of making the very easy reflection, that those things, though familiar to him, may be strange to us, he will be disdisposed rather to laugh at, than sympathize with our Wonder. He cannot conceive what occasion there is for any connecting events to unite those appearances, which seem to him to succeed each other very naturally. It is their nature, he tells us, to follow one another in this order, and that accordingly they always do so. In the same manner bread has, since the world begun been the common nourishment of the human body, and men have so long seen it, every day, converted into flesh and bones, substances in all respects so unlike it, that they have seldom had the curiosity to inquire by what process of intermediate events this change is brought about. Because the passage of the thought from the one object to the other is by custom become quite smooth and easy, almost without the supposition of any such process. Philosophers, indeed, who often look for a chain of invisible objects to join together two events that occur in an order familiar to all the world, have endeavoured to find out a chain of this kind betwixt the two events I have just now mentioned; in the same

manner as they have endeavoured, by a like intermediate chain, to connect the gravity, the elasticity, and even the cohesion of natural bodies, with some of their other qualities. These, however, are all of them such combinations of events as give no stop to the imaginations of the bulk of mankind, as excite no Wonder, nor any apprehension that there is wanting the strictest connection between them. But as in those sounds, which to the greater part of men seem perfectly agreeable to measure and harmony, the nicer ear of a musician will discover a want, both of the most exact time, and of the most perfect coincidence; so the more practised thought of a philosopher, who has spent his whole life in the study of the connecting principles of nature, will often feel an interval betwixt two objects, which, to more careless observers, seem very strictly conjoined. By long attention to all the connections which have ever been presented to his observation, by having often compared them with one another, he has, like the musician, acquired, if one may so, a nicer ear, and a more delicate feeling with regard to things of this nature. And as to the one, that music seems dissonance which falls short of the most perfect harmony; so to the other, those events seem altogether separated and disjoined, which may fall short of the strictest and most perfect connection.

Philosophy is the science of the connecting principles of nature Nature, after the largest experience that common observation can acquire, seems to abound with events which appear solitary and incoherent with all that go before them, which therefore disturb the easy movement of the imagination; which makes its ideas succeed each other, if one may say so, by irregular starts and sallies; and which thus tend, in some measure, to introduce those confusions and distractions we formerly mentioned. Philosophy, by representing the invisible chains which bind together all these disjointed objects, endeavours to introduce order into this chaos of jarring and discordant appearances, to allay this tumult of the imagination, and to restore it, when it surveys the great revolutions of the universe, to that tone of tranquillity and composure, which is both most agreeable in itself, and most suitable to its nature. Philosophy, therefore, may be regarded as one of those arts which address themselves to the imagination; and whose theory and history, upon that account, fall properly within the circumference of our subject. Let us endeavour to trace it, from its first origin, up to that summit of perfection to which it is at present supposed to have arrived, and to which, indeed, it has equally been supposed to have arrived in almost all former times. It is the most sublime of all the agreeable arts, and its

revolutions have been the greatest, the most frequent, and the most distinguished of all those that have happened in the literary world. Its history, therefore, must, upon all accounts, be the most entertaining and the most instructive. Let us examine, therefore, all the different systems of nature, which, in these western parts of the world, the only parts of whose history we know anything, have successively been adopted by the learned and ingenious; and, without regarding their absurdity or probability, their agreement or inconsistency with truth and reality, let us consider them only in that particular point of view which belongs to our subject; and content ourselves with inquiring how far each of them was fitted to soothe the imagination, and to render the theatre of nature a more coherent, and therefore a more magnificent spectacle, than otherwise it would have appeared to be. According as they have failed or succeeded in this, they have constantly failed or succeeded in gaining reputation and renown to their authors; and this will be found to be the clue that is most capable of conducting us through all the labyrinths of philosophical history: for in the mean time, it will serve to confirm what has gone before, and to throw light upon what is to come after, that we observe, in general, that no system, how well soever in other respects supported, has ever been able to gain any general credit on the world, whose connecting principles were not such as were familiar to all mankind. Why has the chemical philosophy in all ages crept along in obscurity, and been so disregarded by the generality of mankind, while other systems, less useful, and not more agreeable to experience, have possessed universal admiration for whole centuries together? The connecting principles of the chemical philosophy are such as the generality of mankind know nothing about, have rarely seen, and have never been acquainted with; and which to them, therefore, are incapable of smoothing the passage of the imagination betwixt any two seemingly disjointed objects. Salts, sulphurs, and mercuries, acids and alkalis, are principles which can smooth things to those only who live about the furnace; but whose most common operations seem, to the bulk of mankind, as disjointed as any two events which the chemists would connect together by them. Those artists, however, naturally explained things to themselves by principles that were familiar to themselves. As Aristotle observes, that the early Pythagoreans, who first studied arithmetic, explained all things by the properties of numbers; and Cicero tells us, that Aristoxenus, the musician, found the nature of the soul to consist in harmony. In the same manner, a learned physician lately gave a system of moral philosophy upon the principles of his own art, in which

wisdom and virtue were the healthful state of the soul; the different vices and follies, the different diseases to which it was subject; in which the causes and symptoms of those diseases were ascertained; and, in the same medical strain, a proper method of cure prescribed. In the same manner also, others have written parallels of painting and poetry, of poetry and music, of music and architecture, of beauty and virtue, of all the fine arts; systems which have universally owed their origin to the lucubrations of those who were acquainted with the one art, but ignorant of the other; who therefore explained to themselves the phenomena, in that which was strange to them, by those in that which was familiar; and with whom, upon that account, the analogy, which in other writers gives occasion to a few ingenious similitudes, became the great hinge upon which every thing turned.

Sect. III:— Of the Origin of Philosophy.

Mankind, in the first ages of society, before the establishment of law, order, and security, have little curiosity to find out those hidden chains of events which bind together the seemingly disjointed appearances of nature. A savage, whose subsistence is precarious, whose life is every day exposed to the rudest dangers, has no inclination to amuse himself with searching out what, when discovered, seems to serve no other purpose than to render the theatre of nature a more connected spectacle to his imagination. Many of these smaller incoherences, which in the course of things perplex philosophers, entirely escape his attention. Those more magnificent irregularities, whose grandeur he cannot overlook, call forth his amazement. Comets, eclipses, thunder, lightning, and other meteors, by their greatness, naturally overawe him, and he views them with a reverence that approaches to fear. His inexperience and uncertainty with regard to every thing about them, how they came, how they are to go, what went before, what is to come after them, exasperate his sentiment into terror and consternation. But our passions, as Father Malbranche observes, all justify themselves; that is, suggest to us opinions which justify them. As those appearances terrify him, therefore, he is disposed to believe every thing about them which can render them still more the objects of his terror. That they proceed from some intelligent, though invisible causes, of whose vengeance and displeasure they are either the signs or the effects, is the notion of all others most capable of enhancing this passion, and is that, therefore, which he is most apt to entertain. To this, too, that cowardice and pusillanimity, so natural to man in his uncivilized state, still more disposes him; unprotected by the laws of society, exposed, defenceless, he feels his weakness upon all occasions; his strength and security upon none.

But all the irregularities of nature are not of this awful or terrible kind. Some of them are perfectly beautiful and agreeable. These, therefore, from the same impotence of mind, would be beheld with love and complacency, and even with transports of gratitude; for whatever is the cause of pleasure naturally excites our gratitude. A child caresses the fruit that is agreeable to it, as it beats the stone that hurts it. The notions of a savage are not very different. The ancient Athenians, who solemnly punished the axe which had accidentally been the cause of the death of a

man, erected altars, and offered sacrifices to the rainbow. Sentiments not unlike these, may sometimes, upon such occasions, begin to be felt even in the breasts of the most civilized, but are presently checked by the reflection, that the things are not their proper objects. But a savage, whose notions are guided altogether by wild nature and passion, waits for no other proof that a thing is the proper object of any sentiment, than that it excites it. The reverence and gratitude, with which some of the appearances of nature inspire him, convince him that they are the proper objects of reverence and gratitude, and therefore proceed from some intelligent beings, who take pleasure in the expressions of those sentiments. With him, therefore, every object of nature, which by its beauty or greatness, its utility or hurtfulness, is considerable enough to attract his attention, and whose operations are not perfectly regular, is supposed to act by the direction of some invisible and designing power. The sea is spread out into a calm, or heaved into a storm, according to the good pleasure of Neptune. Does the earth pour forth an exuberant harvest? It is owing to the indulgence of Ceres. Does the vine yield a plentiful vintage? It flows from the bounty of Bacchus. Do either refuse their presents? It is ascribed to the displeasure of those offended deities. The tree which now flourishes and now decays, is inhabited by a Dryad, upon whose health or sickness its various appearances depend. The fountain, which sometimes flows in a copious, and sometimes in a scanty stream, which appears sometimes clear and limpid, and at other times muddy and disturbed, is affected in all its changes by the Naiad who dwells within it. Hence the origin of Polytheism, and of that vulgar superstition which ascribes all the irregular events of nature to the favour or displeasure of intelligent, though invisible beings, to gods, demons, witches, genii, fairies. For it may be observed, that in all polytheistic religions, among savages, as well as in the early ages of heathen antiquity, it is the irregular events of nature only that are ascribed to the agency and power of their gods. Fire burns, and water refreshes; heavy bodies descend, and lighter substances fly upwards, by the necessity of their own nature; nor was the invisible hand of Jupiter ever apprehended to be employed in those matters. But thunder and lightning, storms and sunshine, those more irregular events, were ascribed to his favour, or his anger. Man, the only designing power with which they were acquainted, never acts but either to stop or to alter the course which natural events would take, if left to themselves. Those other intelligent beings, whom they imagined, but knew not, were naturally supposed to act in the same manner; not to employ themselves in supporting the ordinary course of

things, which went on of its own accord, but to stop, to thwart, and to disturb it. And thus, in the first ages of the world, the lowest and most pusillanimous superstition supplied the place of philosophy.

But when law has established order and security, and subsistence ceases to be precarious, the curiosity of mankind is increased, and their fears are diminished. The leisure which they then enjoy renders them more attentive to the appearances of nature, more observant of her smallest irregularities, and more desirous to know what is the chain which links them together. That some such chain subsists betwixt all her seemingly disjointed phenomena, they are necessarily led to conceive; and that magnanimity and cheerfulness which all generous natures acquire who are bred in civilized societies, where they have so few occasions to feel their weakness, and so many to be conscious of their strength and security, renders them less disposed to employ, for this connecting chain, those invisible beings whom the fear and ignorance of their rude forefathers had engendered. Those of liberal fortunes, whose attention is not much occupied either with business or with pleasure, can fill up the void of their imagination, which is thus disengaged from the ordinary affairs of life, no other way than by attending to that train of events which passes around them. While the great objects of nature thus pass in review before them, many things occur in an order to which they have not been accustomed. Their imagination, which accompanies with ease and delight the regular progress of nature, is stopped and embarrassed by those seeming incoherences; they excite their wonder, and seem to require some chain of intermediate events, which, by connecting them with something that has gone before, may thus render the whole course of the universe consistent and of a piece. Wonder, therefore, and not any expectation of advantage from its discoveries, is the first principle which prompts mankind to the study of Philosophy, of that science which pretends to lay open the concealed connections that unite the various appearances of nature; and they pursue this study for its own sake, as an original pleasure or good in itself, without regarding its tendency to procure them the means of many other pleasures.

Greece, and the Greek colonies in Sicily, Italy, and the Lesser Asia, were the first countries which, in these western parts of the world, arrived at a state of civilized society. It was in them, therefore, that the first philosophers, of whose doctrine we have any distinct account, appeared. Law and order seem indeed to have been established in the great monarchies of Asia and Egypt, long before they had any footing in Greece: yet, after all that has been said concerning the learning of the

Chaldeans and Egyptians, whether there ever was in those nations any thing which deserved the name of science, or whether that despotism which is more destructive of security and leisure than anarchy itself, and which prevailed over all the East, prevented the growth of Philosophy, is a question which, for want of monuments, cannot be determined with any degree of precision.

The Greek colonies having been settled amid nations either altogether barbarous, or altogether unwarlike, over whom, therefore, they soon acquired a very great authority, seem, upon that account, to have arrived at a considerable degree of empire and opulence before any state in the parent country had surmounted that extreme poverty, which, by leaving no room for any evident distinction of ranks, is necessarily attended with the confusion and misrule which flows from a want of all regular subordination. The Greek islands being secure from the invasion of land armies, or from naval forces, which were in those days but little known, seem, upon that account too, to have got before the continent in all sorts of civility and improvement. The first philosophers, therefore, as well as the first poets, seem all to have been natives, either of their colonies, or of their islands. It was from thence that Homer, Archilochus, Stefichorus, Simonides, Sappho, Anacreon, derived their birth. Thales and Pythagoras, the founders of the two earliest sects of philosophy, arose, the one in an Asiatic colony, the other in an island; and neither of them established his school in the mother country.

What was the particular system of either of those two philosophers, or whether their doctrine was so methodized as to deserve the name of a system, the imperfection, as well as the uncertainty of all the traditions that have come down to us concerning them, make it impossible to determine. The school of Pythagoras, however, seems to have advanced further in the study of the connecting principles of nature, than that of the Ionian philosopher. The accounts which are given of Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Archelaus, the successors of Thales, represent the doctrines of those sages as full of the most inextricable confusion. Something, however, that approaches to a composed and orderly system, may be traced in what is delivered down to us concerning the doctrine of Empedocles, of Archytas, of Timæus, and of Ocellus the Lucanian, the most renowned philosophers of the Italian school. The opinions of the two last coincide pretty much; the one, with those of Plato; the other, with those of Aristotle; nor do those of the two first seem to have been very different, of whom the one was the author of the doctrine of the Four Elements, the other the inventor of the Categories; who, therefore,

may be regarded as the founders, the one, of the ancient Physics; the other, of the ancient Dialectic; and, how closely these were connected will appear hereafter. It was in the school of Socrates, however, from Plato and Aristotle, that Philosophy first received that form, which introduced her, if one may say so, to the general acquaintance of the world. It is from them, therefore, that we shall begin to give her history in any detail. Whatever was valuable in the former systems, which was at all consistent with their general principles, they seem to have consolidated into their own. From the Ionian philosophy, I have not been able to discover that they derived anything. From the Pythagorean school, both Plato and Aristotle seem to have derived the fundamental principles of almost all their doctrines. Plato, too, appears to have borrowed something from two other sects of philosophers, whose extreme obscurity seems to have prevented them from acquiring themselves any extensive reputation; the one was that of Cratylus and Heraclitus; the other was Xenophanes, Parmenides, Melissus, and Zeno. To pretend to rescue the system of any of those ante-Socratic sages, from that oblivion which at present covers them all, would be a vain and useless attempt. What seems, however, to have been borrowed from them, shall sometimes be marked as we go along.

There was still another school of philosophy, earlier than Plato, from which, however, he was so far from borrowing any thing, that he seems to have bent the whole force of his reason to discredit and expose its principles. This was the philosophy of Leucippus, Democratus, and Protagoras, which accordingly seems to have submitted to his eloquence, to have lain dormant, and to have been almost forgotten for some generations, till it was afterwards more successfully revived by Epicurus.

Sec. IV:— The History of Astronomy.

Of all the phenomena of nature, the celestial appearances are, by their greatness and beauty, the most universal objects of the curiosity of mankind. Those who surveyed the heavens with the most careless attention, necessarily distinguished in them three different sorts of objects; the Sun, the Moon, and the Stars. These last, appearing always in the same situation, and at the same distance with regard to one another, and seeming to revolve every day round the earth in parallel circles, which widened gradually from the poles to the equator, were naturally thought to have all the marks of being fixed, like so many gems, in the concave side of the firmament, and of being carried round by the diurnal revolutions of that solid body: for the azure sky, in which the stars seem to float, was readily apprehended, upon account of the uniformity of their apparent motions, to be a solid body, the roof or outer wall of the universe, to whose inside all those little sparkling objects were attached.

The Sun and Moon, often changing their distance and situation, in regard to the other heavenly bodies, could not be apprehended to be attached to the same sphere with them. They assigned, therefore, to each of them, a sphere of its own; that is, supposed each of them to be attached to the concave side of a solid and transparent body, by whose revolutions they were carried round the earth. There was not, indeed, in this case, the same ground for the supposition of such sphere as in that of the Fixed Stars; for neither the Sun nor the Moon appear to keep always at the same distance with regard to any one of the other heavenly bodies. But as the motion of the Stars had been accounted for by an hypothesis of this kind, it rendered the theory of the heavens more uniform, to account for that of the Sun and Moon in the same manner. The sphere of the sun they placed above that of the Moon; as the Moon was evidently seen in eclipses to pass betwixt the Sun and the Earth. Each of them was supposed to revolve by a motion of its own, and at the same time to be affected by the motion of the Fixed Stars. Thus, the Sun was carried round from east to west by the communicated movement of this outer sphere, which produced his diurnal revolutions, and the vicissitudes of day and night; but at the same time he had a motion of his own, contrary to this, from west to east, which occasioned his annual revolution, and the continual shifting of his place with regard to the Fixed Stars. This

motion was more easy, they thought, when carried on edgeways, and not in direct opposition to the motion of the outer sphere, which occasioned the inclination of the axis of the sphere of the Sun, to that of the sphere of the Fixed Stars; this again produced the obliquity of the ecliptic, and the consequent changes of the seasons. The moon, being placed below the sphere of the Sun, had both a shorter course to finish, and was less obstructed by the contrary movement of the sphere of the Fixed Stars, from which she was farther removed. She finished her period, therefore, in a shorter time, and required but a month, instead of a year, to complete it.

The Stars, when more attentively surveyed, were some of them observed to be less constant and uniform in their motions than the rest, and to change their situations with regard to the other heavenly bodies; moving generally eastward, yet appearing sometimes to stand still, and sometimes even to move westwards. These, to the number of five, were distinguished by the name of Planets, or Wandering Stars, and marked with the particular appellations of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury. As, like the Sun and Moon, they seem to accompany the motion of the Fixed Stars from east to west, but at the same time to have a motion of their own, which is generally from west to east; they were each of them, as well as those two great lamps of heaven, apprehended to be attached to the inside of a solid concave and transparent sphere, which had a revolution of its own, that was almost directly contrary to the revolution of the outer heaven, but which, at the same time, was hurried along by the superior violence and greater rapidity of this last.

This is the system of concentric Spheres, the first regular system of Astronomy, which the world beheld, as it was taught in the Italian school before Aristotle, and his two contemporary philosophers, Eudoxus and Callippus, had given it all the perfection which it is capable of receiving. Though rude and inartificial, it is capable of connecting together, in the imagination, the grandest and the most seemingly disjointed appearances in the heavens. The motions of the most remarkable objects in the celestial regions, the Sun, the Moon, the Fixed Stars, are sufficiently connected with one another by this hypothesis. The eclipses of these two great luminaries are, though not so easily calculated, as easily explained, upon this ancient, as upon the modern system. When these early philosophers explained to their disciples the very simple causes of those dreadful phenomena, it was under the seal of the most sacred secrecy, that they might avoid the fury of the people, and not incur the imputation of impiety, when they thus took from the gods the direction of those

events, which were apprehended to be the most terrible tokens of their impending vengeance. The obliquity of the ecliptic, the consequent changes of the seasons, the vicissitudes of day and night, and the different lengths of both days and nights in the different seasons, correspond too, pretty exactly, with this ancient doctrine. And if there had been no other bodies discoverable in the heavens, besides the Sun, the Moon, and the Fixed Stars, this hypothesis might have stood the examinations of all ages and gone down triumphant to the remotest posterity.

If it gained the belief of mankind by its plausibility, it attracted their wonder and admiration; sentiments that still more confirmed their belief, by the novelty and beauty of that view of nature which it presented to the imagination. Before this system was taught in the world, the earth was regarded as, what it appears to the eye, a vast, rough, and irregular plain, the basis and foundation of the universe, surrounded on all sides by the ocean, and whose roots extended themselves through the whole of that infinite depth which is below it. The sky was considered as a solid hemisphere, which covered the earth, and united with the ocean at the extremity of the horizon. The Sun, the Moon, and all the heavenly bodies rose out of the eastern, climbed up the convex side of the heavens, and descended again into the western ocean, and from thence, by some subterraneous passages, returned to their first chambers in the east. Nor was this notion confined to the people, or to the poets who painted the opinions of the people; it was held by Xenophanes, founder of the Eleatic philosophy, after that of the Ionian and Italian schools, the earliest that appeared in Greece. Thales of Miletus too, who, according to Aristotle, represented the Earth as floating upon an immense ocean of water, may have been nearly of the same opinion; notwithstanding what we are told by Plutarch and Apuleius concerning his astronomical discoveries, all of which must plainly have been of a much later date. To those who had no other idea of nature, besides what they derived from so confused an account of things, how agreeable must that system have appeared, which represented the Earth as distinguished into land and water, self-balanced and suspended in the centre of the universe, surrounded by the elements of Air and Ether, and covered by eight polished and crystalline Spheres, each of which was distinguished by one or more beautiful and luminous bodies, and all of which revolved round their common centre, by varied, but by equable and proportionable motions. It seems to have been the beauty of this system that gave Plato the notion of something like an harmonic proportion, to be discovered in the motions and distances of

the heavenly bodies; and which suggested to the earlier Pythagoreans, the celebrated fancy of the Music of the Spheres; a wild and romantic idea, yet such as does not ill correspond with that admiration, which so beautiful a system, recommended too by the graces of novelty, is apt to inspire.

Whatever are the defects which this account of things labours under, they are such, as to the first observers of the heavens could not readily occur. If all the motions of the Five Planets cannot, the greater part of them may, be easily connected by it; they and all their motions are the least remarkable objects in the heavens; the greater part of mankind take no notice of them at all; and a system, whose only defect lies in the account which it gives of them, cannot thereby be much disgraced in their opinion. If some of the appearances too of the Sun and Moon, the sometimes accelerated and again retarded motions of those luminaries but ill correspond with it; these, too, are such as cannot be discovered but by the most attentive observation, and such as we cannot wonder that the imaginations of the first enquirers should slur over, if one may say so, and take little notice of.

It was, however, to remedy those defects, that Eudoxus, the friend and auditor of Plato, found it necessary to increase the number of the Celestial Spheres. Each Planet is sometimes observed to advance forward in that eastern course which is peculiar to itself, sometimes to retire backwards, and sometimes again to stand still. To suppose that the sphere of the planet should by its own motion, if one may say so, sometimes roll forwards, sometimes roll backwards, and sometimes do neither the one nor the other, is contrary to all the natural propensities of the imagination, which accompanies with ease and delight any regular and orderly motion, but feels itself perpetually stopped and interrupted, when it endeavours to attend to one so desultory and uncertain. It would pursue, naturally and of its own accord, the direct or progressive movement of the Sphere, but is every now and then shocked, if one may say so, and turned violently out of its natural career by the retrograde and stationary appearances of the Planet, betwixt which and its more usual motion, the fancy feels a want of connection, a gap or interval, which it cannot fill up, but by supposing some chain of intermediate events to join them. The hypothesis of a number of other spheres revolving in the heavens, besides those in which the luminous bodies themselves were infixed, was the chain with which Eudoxus endeavoured to supply it. He bestowed four of these Spheres upon each of the five Planets; one in which the luminous body itself revolved, and three others above it. Each

of these had a regular and constant, but a peculiar movement of its own, which it communicated to what was properly the Sphere of the Planet, and thus occasioned that diversity of motions observable in those bodies. One of these Spheres, for example, had an oscillatory motion, like the circular pendulum of a watch. As when you turn round a watch, like a Sphere upon its axis, the pendulum will, while turned round along with it, still continue to oscillate, and communicate to whatever body is comprehended within it, both its own oscillations and the circular motion of the watch; so this oscillating Sphere, being itself turned round by the motion of the Sphere above it, communicated to the Sphere below it, that circular, as well as its own oscillatory motions; produced by the one, the daily revolutions: by the other, the direct, stationary, and retrograde appearances of the Planet, which derived from a third Sphere that revolution by which it performed its annual period. The motions of all these Spheres were in themselves constant and equable, such as the imagination could easily attend to and pursue, and which connected together that otherwise incoherent diversity of movements observable in the Sphere of the Planet. The motions of the Sun and Moon being more regular than those of the Five Planets, by assigning three Spheres to each of them, Eudoxus imagined he could connect together all the diversity of movements discoverable in either. The motion of the Fixed Stars being perfectly regular, one Sphere he judged sufficient for them all. So that, according to this account, the whole number of Celestial Spheres amounted to twenty-seven. Callippus, though somewhat younger, the contemporary of Eudoxus, found that even this number was not enough to connect together the vast variety of movements which he discovered in those bodies, and therefore increased it to thirty-four. Aristotle, upon a yet more attentive observation, found that even all these Spheres would not be sufficient, and therefore added twenty-two more, which increased their number to fifty-six. Later observers discovered still new motions, and new inequalities, in the heavens. New Spheres were therefore still to be added to the system, and some of them to be placed even above that of the Fixed Stars. So that in the sixteenth century, when Fracostorio, smit with the eloquence of Plato and Aristotle, and with the regularity and harmony of their system, in itself perfectly beautiful, though it corresponds but inaccurately with the phenomena, endeavoured to revive this ancient Astronomy, which had long given place to that of Ptolemy and Hipparchus, he found it necessary to multiply the number of Celestial Spheres to seventy-two; neither were all these found to be enough.

This system had now become as intricate and complex as those appearances themselves, which it had been invented to render uniform and coherent. The imagination, therefore, found itself but little relieved from that embarrassment, into which those appearances had thrown it, by so perplexed an account of things. Another system, for this reason, not long after the days of Aristotle, was invented by Apollonius, which was afterwards perfected by Hipparchus, and has since been delivered down to us by Ptolemy, the more artificial system of Eccentric Spheres and Epicycles.

In this system, they first distinguished between the real and apparent motion of the heavenly bodies. These, they observed, upon account of their immense distance, must necessarily appear to revolve in circles concentric with the globe of the Earth, and with one another: but that we cannot, therefore, be certain that they really revolve in such circles, since, though they did not, they would still have the same appearance. By supposing, therefore, that the Sun and the other Planets revolved in circles, whose centres were very distant from the centre of the Earth; that consequently, in the progress of their revolution, they must sometimes approach nearer, and sometimes recede further from it, and must to its inhabitants appear to move faster in the one case, and slower in the other, those philosophers imagined they could account for the apparently unequal velocities of all those bodies.

By supposing, that in the solidity of the Sphere of each of the Five Planets there was formed another little Sphere, called an Epicycle, which revolved round its own centre, at the same time that it was carried round the centre of the Earth by the revolution of the great Sphere, betwixt whose concave and convex sides it was inclosed; in the same manner as we might suppose a little wheel inclosed within the outer circle of a great wheel, and which whirled about several times upon its own axis, while its centre was carried round the axis of the great wheel, they imagined they could account for the retrograde and stationary appearances of those most irregular objects in the heavens. The Planet, they supposed, was attached to the circumference, and whirled round the centre of this little Sphere, at the same time that it was carried round the earth by the movement of the great Sphere. The revolution of this little Sphere, or Epicycle, was such, that the Planet, when in the upper part of it; that is, when furthest off and least sensible to the eye; was carried round in the same direction with the centre of the Epicycle, or with the Sphere in which the Epicycle was inclosed: but when in the lower part, that is, when nearest and most sensible to the eye; it was carried round a

direction contrary to that of the centre of the Epicycle: in the same manner as every point in the upper part of the outer circle of a coach-wheel revolves forward in the same direction with the axis, while every point, in the lower part, revolves backwards in a contrary direction to the axis. The motions of the Planet, therefore, surveyed from the Earth, appeared direct, when in the upper part of the Epicycle, and retrograde, when in the lower. When again it either descended from the upper part to the lower, or ascended from the lower to the upper, it appeared stationary.

But, though, by the eccentricity of the great Sphere, they were thus able, in some measure, to connect together the unequal velocities of the heavenly bodies, and by the revolutions of the little Sphere, the direct, stationary, and retrograde appearances of the Planets, there was another difficulty that still remained. Neither the Moon, nor the three superior Planets, appear always in the same part of the heavens, when at their periods of most retarded motion, or when they are supposed to be at the greatest distance from the Earth. The apogeum therefore, or the point of greatest distance from the Earth, in the Spheres of each of those bodies, must have a movement of its own, which may carry it successively through all the different points of the Ecliptic. They supposed, therefore, that while the great eccentric Sphere revolved eastwards round its centre, that its centre too revolved westwards in a circle of its own, round the centre of the Earth, and thus carried its apogeum through all the different points of the Ecliptic.

But with all those combined and perplexed circles; though the patrons of this system were able to give some degree of uniformity to the real directions of the Planets, they found it impossible so to adjust the velocities of those supposed Spheres to the phenomena, as that the revolution of any one of them, when surveyed from its own centre, should appear perfectly equable and uniform. From that point, the only point in which the velocity of what moves in a circle can be truly judged of, they would still appear irregular and inconstant, and such as tended to embarrass and confound the imagination. They invented, therefore, for each of them, a new Circle, called the Equalizing Circle, from whose centre they should all appear perfectly equable: that is, they so adjusted the velocities of these Spheres, as that, though the revolution of each of them would appear irregular when surveyed from its own centre, there should, however, be a point comprehended within its circumference, from whence its motions should appear to cut off, in equal times, equal portions of the Circle, of which that point was supposed to be the centre.

Nothing can more evidently show how much the repose and tranquillity of the imagination is the ultimate end of philosophy, than the invention of this Equalizing Circle. The motions of the heavenly bodies had appeared inconstant and irregular, both in their velocities and in their directions. They were such, therefore, as tended to embarrass and confound the imagination, whenever it attempted to trace them. The invention of Eccentric Spheres, of Epicycles, and of the revolution of the centres of the Eccentric Spheres, tended to allay this confusion, to connect together those disjointed appearances, and to introduce harmony and order into the mind's conception of the movements of those bodies. It did this, however, but imperfectly; it introduced uniformity and coherence into their real directions. But their velocities, when surveyed from the only point in which the velocity of what moves in a Circle can be truly judged of, the centre of that Circle, still remained, in some measure, inconstant as before; and still, therefore, embarrassed the imagination. The mind found itself somewhat relieved from this embarrassment, when it conceived, that how irregular soever the motions of each of those Circles might appear, when surveyed from its own centre, there was, however, in each of them, a point, from whence its revolution would appear perfectly equable and uniform, and such as the imagination could easily follow. Those philosophers transported themselves, in fancy, to the centres of these imaginary Circles, and took pleasure in surveying from thence, all those fantastical motions, arranged, according to that harmony and order, which it had been the end of all their researches to bestow upon them. Here, at last, they enjoyed that tranquillity and repose which they had pursued through all the mazes of this intricate hypothesis; and here they beheld this, the most beautiful and magnificent part of the great theatre of nature, so disposed and constructed, that they could attend, with delight, to all the revolutions and changes that occurred in it.

These, the System of Concentric, and that of Eccentric Spheres, seem to have been the two Systems of Astronomy, that had most credit and reputation with that part of the ancient world, who applied themselves particularly to the study of the heavens. Cleanthes, however, and the other philosophers of the Stoical sect who came after him, appear to have had a system of their own, quite different from either. But though justly renowned for their skill in dialectic, and for the security and sublimity of their moral doctrines, those sages seem never to have had any high reputation for their knowledge of the heavens; neither is the name of any one of them ever counted in the catalogue of the great astronomers, and

studious observers of the Stars among the ancients. They rejected the doctrine of the Solid Spheres; and maintained, that the celestial regions were filled with a fluid ether, of too yielding a nature to carry along with it, by any motion of its own, bodies so immensely great as the Sun, Moon, and Five Planets. These, therefore, as well as the Fixed Stars, did not derive their motion from the circumambient body, but had each of them, in itself, and peculiar to itself, a vital principle of motion, which directed it to move with its own peculiar velocity, and its own peculiar direction. It was by this internal principle that the Fixed Stars revolved directly from east to west in circles parallel to the Equator, greater or less, according to their distance or nearness to the Poles, and with velocities so proportioned, that each of them finished its diurnal period in the same time, in something less than twenty-three hours and fifty-six minutes. It was, by a principle of the same kind, that the Sun moved westward, for they allowed of no eastward motion in the heavens, but with less velocity than the Fixed Stars, so as to finish his diurnal period in twenty-four hours, and, consequently, to fall every day behind them, by a space of the heavens nearly equal to that which he passes over in four minutes; that is, nearly equal to a degree. This revolution of the Sun, too, was neither directly westwards, nor exactly circular; but after the Summer Solstice, his motion began gradually to decline a little southwards, appearing in his meridian to-day, further south than yesterday; and to-morrow still further south than to-day; and thus continuing every day to describe a spiral line round the Earth, which carried him gradually further and further southwards, till he arrived at the Winter Solstice. Here this spiral line began to change its direction, and to bring him gradually, every day, further and further northwards, till it again restored him to the Summer Solstice. In the same manner they accounted for the motion of the Moon, and that of the Five Planets, by supposing that each of them revolved westwards, but with directions and velocities, that were both different from one another, and continually varying; generally, however, in spherical lines, and somewhat inclined to the Equator.

This system seems never to have had the vogue. The system of Concentric as well as that of Eccentric Spheres gives some sort of reason, both for the constancy and equability of the motion of the Fixed Stars, and for the variety and uncertainty of that of the Planets. Each of them bestows some sort of coherence upon those apparently disjointed phenomena. But this other system seems to leave them pretty much as it found them. Ask a Stoic, why all the Fixed Stars perform their daily

revolutions in circles parallel to each other, though of very different diameters, and with velocities so proportioned that they all finish their period at the same time, and through the whole course of it preserve the same distance and situation with regard to one another? He can give no other answer, but that the peculiar nature, or if one may say so, the caprice of each Star directs it to move in that peculiar manner. His system affords him no principle of connection, by which he can join together, in his imagination, so great a number of harmonious revolutions. But either of the other two systems, by the supposition of the solid firmament, affords this easily. He is equally at a loss to connect together the peculiarities that are observed in the motions of the other heavenly bodies; the spiral motion of them all; their alternate progression from north to south, and from south to north; the sometimes accelerated, and again retarded motions of the Sun and Moon; the direct retrograde and stationary appearances of the Planets. All these have, in his system, no bond of union, but remain as loose and incoherent in the fancy, as they at first appeared to the senses, before philosophy had attempted, by giving them a new arrangement, by placing them at different distances, by assigning to each some peculiar but regular principle of motion, to methodize and dispose them into an order that should enable the imagination to pass as smoothly, and with as little embarrassment, along them, as along the most regular, most familiar, and most coherent appearances of nature.

Such were the systems of Astronomy that, in the ancient world, appear to have been adopted by any considerable party. Of all of them, the system of Eccentric Spheres was that which corresponded most exactly with the appearances of the heavens. It was not invented till after those appearances had been observed, with some accuracy, for more than a century together; and it was not completely digested by Ptolemy till the reign of Antoninus, after a much longer course of observations. We cannot wonder, therefore, that it was adapted to a much greater number of the phenomena, than either of the other two systems, which had been formed before those phenomena were observed with any degree of attention, which, therefore, could connect them together only while they were thus regarded in the gross, but which, it could not be expected, should apply to them when they came to be considered in the detail. From the time of Hipparchus, therefore, this system seems to have been pretty generally received by all those who attended particularly to the study of the heavens. That astronomer first made a catalogue of the Fixed Stars; calculated, for six hundred years, the revolutions of the Sun,

Moon, and Five Planets; marked the places in the heavens, in which, during all that period, each of those bodies should appear; ascertained the times of the eclipses of the Sun and Moon, and the particular places of the Earth in which they should be visible. His calculations were founded upon this system, and as the events corresponded to his predictions, with a degree of accuracy which, though inferior to what Astronomy has since arrived at, was greatly superior to any thing which the world had then known, they ascertained, to all astronomers and mathematicians, the preference of his system, above all those which had been current before.

It was, however, to astronomers and mathematicians, only, that they ascertained this; for notwithstanding the evident superiority of this system, to all those with which the world was then acquainted, it was never adopted by one sect of philosophers.

Philosophers, long before the days of Hipparchus, seem to have abandoned the study of nature, to employ themselves chiefly in ethical, rhetorical, and dialectical questions. Each party of them too, had by this time completed their peculiar system or theory of the universe, and no human consideration could then have induced them to give up any part of it. That supercilious and ignorant contempt too, with which at this time they regarded all mathematicians, among whom they counted astronomers, seems even to have hindered them from enquiring so far into their doctrines as to know what opinions they held. Neither Cicero nor Seneca, who have so often occasion to mention the ancient systems of Astronomy, takes any notice of that of Hipparchus. His name is not to be found in the writings of Seneca. It is mentioned but once in those of Cicero, in a letter to Atticus, but without any note of approbation, as a geographer, and not as an astronomer. Plutarch, when he counts up, in his second book, concerning the opinions of philosophers, all the ancient systems of Astronomy, never mentions this, the only tolerable one which was known in his time. Those three authors, it seems, conversed only with the writings of philosophers. The elder Pliny, indeed, a man whose curiosity extended itself equally to every part of learning, describes the system of Hipparchus, and never mentions its author, which he has occasion to do often, without some note of that high admiration which he had so justly conceived for his merit. Such profound ignorance in those professed instructors of mankind, with regard to so important a part of the learning of their own times, is so very remarkable, that I thought it deserved to be taken notice of, even in this short account of the revolutions of the philosophy of the ancients.

Systems in many respects resemble machines. A machine is a little system, created to perform, as well as to connect together, in reality, those different movements and effects which the artist has occasion for. A system is an imaginary machine invented to connect together in the fancy those different movements and effects which are already in reality performed. The machines that are first invented to perform any particular movement are always the most complex, and succeeding artists generally discover that, with fewer wheels, with fewer principles of motion, than had originally been employed, the same effects may be more easily produced. The first systems, in the same manner, are always the most complex, and a particular connecting chain, or principle, is generally thought necessary to unite every two seemingly disjointed appearances: but it often happens, that one great connecting principle is afterwards found to be sufficient to bind together all the discordant phenomena that occur in a whole species of things. How many wheels are necessary to carry on the movements of this imaginary machine, the system of Eccentric Spheres! The westward diurnal revolution of the Firmament, whose rapidity carries all the other heavenly bodies along with it, requires one. The periodical eastward revolutions of the Sun, Moon, and Five Planets, require, for each of those bodies, another. Their differently accelerated and retarded motions require, that those wheels, or circles, should neither be concentric with the Firmament, nor with one another; which, more than any thing, seems to disturb the harmony of the universe. The retrograde and stationary appearance of the Five Planets, as well as the extreme inconstancy of the Moon’s motion, require, for each of them, an Epicycle, another little wheel attached to the circumference of the great wheel, which still more interrupts the uniformity of the system. The motion of the apogeum of each of those bodies requires, in each of them, still another wheel, to carry the centres of their Eccentric Spheres round the centre of the Earth. And thus, this imaginary machine, though, perhaps, more simple, and certainly better adapted to the phenomena than the Fifty-six Planetary Spheres of Aristotle, was still too intricate and complex for the imagination to rest in it with complete tranquillity and satisfaction.

It maintained its authority, however, without any diminution of reputation, as long as science was at all regarded in the ancient world. After the reign of Antoninus, and, indeed, after the age of Hipparchus, who lived almost three hundred years before Antoninus, the great reputation which the earlier philosophers had acquired, so imposed upon the imaginations of mankind, that they seem to have despaired of ever

equalling their renown. All human wisdom, they supposed, was comprehended in the writings of those elder sages. To abridge, to explain, and to comment upon them, and thus show themselves, at least, capable of understanding some of their sublime mysteries, became now the only road to reputation. Proclus and Theon wrote commentaries upon the system of Ptolemy; but, to have attempted to invent a new one, would then have been regarded, not only as presumption, but as impiety to the memory of their so much revered predecessors.

The ruin of the empire of the Romans, and, along with it, the subversion of all law and order, which happened a few centuries afterwards, produced the entire neglect of that study of the connecting principles of nature, to which leisure and security can alone give occasion. After the fall of those great conquerors and civilizers of mankind, the empire of the Caliphs seems to have been the first state under which the world enjoyed that degree of tranquillity which the cultivation of the sciences requires. It was under the protection of those generous and magnificent princes, that the ancient philosophy and astronomy of the Greeks were restored and established in the East; that tranquillity, which their mild, just, and religious government diffused over their vast empire, revived the curiosity of mankind, to inquire into the connecting principles of nature. The same of the Greek and Roman learning, which was then recent in the memories of men, made them desire to know, concerning these abstruse subjects, what were the doctrines of the so much renowned sages of those two nations.

They translated, therefore, into the Arabian language, and studied, with great eagerness, the works of many Greek philosophers, particularly of Aristotle, Ptolemy, Hippocrates, and Galen. The superiority which they easily discovered in them, above the rude essays which their own nation had yet had time to produce, and which were such, we may suppose, as arise every where in the first infancy of science, necessarily determined them to embrace their systems, particularly that of Astronomy: neither were they ever afterwards able to throw off their authority. For, though the munificence of the Abassides, the second race of the Caliphs, is said to have supplied the Arabian astronomers with larger and better instruments than any that were known to Ptolemy and Hipparchus, the study of the sciences seems, in that mighty empire, to have been either of too short, or too interrupted a continuance, to allow them to make any considerable correction in the doctrines of those old mathematicians. The imaginations of mankind had not yet got time to grow so familiar with the ancient systems, as to regard them without

some degree of that astonishment which their grandeur and novelty excited; a novelty of a peculiar kind, which had at once the grace of what was new, and the authority of what was ancient. They were still, therefore, too much enslaved to those systems, to dare to depart from them, when those confusions which shook, and at last overturned the peaceful throne of the Caliphs, banished the study of the sciences from that empire. They had, however, before this, made some considerable improvements: they had measured the obliquity of the Ecliptic, with more accuracy than had been done before. The tables of Ptolemy had, by the length of time, and by the inaccuracy of the observations upon which they were founded, become altogether wide of what was the real situation of the heavenly bodies, as he himself indeed had foretold they would do. It became necessary, therefore, to form new ones, which was accordingly executed by the orders of the Caliph Almamon, under whom, too, was made the first mensuration of the Earth that we know off, after the commencement of the Christian era, by two Arabian astronomers, who, in the plain of Sennaar, measured two degrees of its circumference.

The victorious arms of the Saracens carried into Spain the learning, as well as the gallantry, of the East; and along with it, the tables of Almamon, and the Arabian translations of Ptolemy and Aristotle; and thus Europe received a second time, from Babylon, the rudiments of the science of the heavens. The writings of Ptolemy were translated from Arabic into Latin; and the Peripatetic philosophy was studied in Averroes and Avicenna with as much eagerness and as much submission to its doctrines in the West, as it had been in the East.

The doctrine of the Solid Spheres had, originally, been invented, in order to give a physical account of the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, according to the system of Concentric Circles, to which that doctrine was very easily accommodated. Those mathematicians who invented the doctrine of Eccentric Circles and Epicycles, contented themselves with showing, how, by supposing the heavenly bodies to revolve in such orbits, the phenomena might be connected together, and some sort of uniformity and coherence be bestowed upon their real motions. The physical causes of those motions they left to the consideration of the philosophers; though, as appears from some passages of Ptolemy, they had some general apprehension, that they were to be explained by a like hypothesis. But, though the system of Hipparchus was adopted by all astronomers and mathematicians, it never was received, as we have already observed, by any one sect of

philosophers among the ancients. No attempt, therefore, seems to have been made amongst them, to accommodate to it any such hypothesis.

The schoolmen, who received, at once, from the Arabians, the philosophy of Aristotle, and the astronomy of Hipparchus, were necessarily obliged to reconcile them to one another, and to connect together the revolutions of the Eccentric Circles and Epicycles of the one, by the solid Spheres of the other. Many different attempts of this kind were made by many different philosophers: but, of them all, that of Purbach, in the fifteenth century, was the happiest and the most esteemed. Though his hypothesis is the simplest of any of them, it would be in vain to describe it without a scheme; neither is it easily intelligible with one; for, if the system of Eccentric Circles and Epicycles was before too perplexed and intricate for the imagination to rest in it with complete tranquillity and satisfaction, it became much more so, when this addition had been made to it. The world, justly indeed, applauded the ingenuity of that philosopher, who could unite, so happily, two such seemingly inconsistent systems. His labours, however, seem rather to have increased than to have diminished the causes of that dissatisfaction, which the learned soon began to feel with the system of Ptolemy. He, as well as all those who had worked upon the same plan before, by rendering this account of things more complex, rendered it more embarrassing than it had been before.

Neither was the complexness of this system the sole cause of the dissatisfaction, which the world in general began, soon after the days of Purbach, to express for it. The tables of Ptolemy having, upon account of the inaccuracy of the observations on which they were founded, become altogether wide of the real situation of the heavenly bodies, those of Almamon, in the ninth century, were, upon the same hypothesis, composed to correct their deviations. These again, a few ages afterwards, became, for the same reason, equally useless. In the thirteenth century, Alphonsus, the philosophical King of Castile, found it necessary to give orders for the composition of those tables, which bear his name. It is he, who is so well known for the whimsical impiety of using to say, that, had he been consulted at the creation of the universe, he could have given good advice; an apophthegm which is supposed to have proceeded from his dislike to the intricate system of Ptolemy. In the fifteenth century, the deviation of the Alphonsine tables began to be as sensible, as those of Ptolemy and Almamon had been before. It appeared evident, therefore, that, though the system of Ptolemy might, in the main, be true, certain corrections were necessary to be made in it before it could be brought to

correspond with exact precision to the phenomena. For the revolution of his Eccentric Circles and Epicycles, supposing them to exist, could not, it was evident, be precisely such as he represented them; since the revolutions of the heavenly bodies deviated, in a short time, so widely from what the most exact calculations, that were founded upon his hypothesis, represented them. It had plainly, therefore, become necessary to correct, by more accurate observations, both the velocities and directions of all the wheels and circles of which his hypothesis is composed. This, accordingly, was begun by Purbach, and carried on by Regiomontanus, the disciple, the continuator, and the perfector of the system of Purbach; and one, whose untimely death, amidst innumerable projects for the recovery of old, and the invention and advancement of new sciences, is, even at this day, to be regretted.

When you have convinced the world, that an established system ought to be corrected, it is not very difficult to persuade them that it should be destroyed. Not long, therefore, after the death of Regiomontanus, Copernicus began to meditate a new system, which should connect together the new appearances, in a more simple as well as a more accurate manner, than that of Ptolemy.

The confusion, in which the old hypothesis represented the motions of the heavenly bodies, was, he tells us, what first suggested to him the design of forming a new system, that these, the noblest works of nature, might no longer appear devoid of that harmony and proportion which discover themselves in her meanest productions. What most of all dissatisfied him, was the notion of the Equalizing Circle, which, by representing the revolutions of the Celestial Spheres, as equable only, when surveyed from a point that was different from their centres, introduced a real inequality into their motions; contrary to that most natural, and indeed fundamental idea, with which all the authors of astronomical systems, Plato, Eudoxus, Aristotle, even Hipparchus and Ptolemy themselves, had hitherto set out, that the real motions of such beautiful and divine objects must necessarily be perfectly regular, and go on, in a manner, as agreeable to the imagination, as the objects themselves are to the senses. He began to consider, therefore, whether, by supposing the heavenly bodies to be arranged in a different order from that in which Aristotle and Hipparchus has placed them, this so much sought for uniformity might not be bestowed upon their motions. To discover this arrangement, he examined all the obscure traditions delivered down to us, concerning every other hypothesis which the ancients had invented, for the same purpose. He found, in Plutarch, that

some old Pythagoreans had represented the Earth as revolving in the centre of the universe, like a wheel round its own axis; and that others, of the same sect, had removed it from the centre, and represented it as revolving in the Ecliptic like a star round the central fire. By this central fire, he supposed they meant the Sun; and though in this he was very widely mistaken, it was, it seems, upon this interpretation, that he began to consider how such an hypothesis might be made to correspond to the appearances. The supposed authority of these old philosophers, if it did not originally suggest to him his system, seems, at least, to have confirmed him in an opinion, which, it is not improbable, that he had beforehand other reasons for embracing, notwithstanding what he himself would affirm to the contrary.

It then occurred to him, that, if the Earth was supposed to revolve every day round its axis, from west to east, all the heavenly bodies would appear to revolve, in a contrary direction, from east to west. The diurnal revolution of the heavens, upon this hypothesis, might be only apparent; the firmament, which has no other sensible motion, might be perfectly at rest; while the Sun, the Moon, and the Five Planets, might have no other movement beside that eastward revolution, which is peculiar to themselves. That, by supposing the Earth to revolve with the Planets, round the Sun, in an orbit, which comprehended within it the orbits of Venus and Mercury, but was comprehended within those of Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, he could, without the embarrassment of Epicycles, connect together the apparent annual revolutions of the Sun, and the direct, retrograde, and stationary appearances of the Planets: that while the Earth really revolved round the Sun on one side of the heavens, the Sun would appear to revolve round the Earth on the other; that while she really advanced in her annual course, he would appear to advance eastward in that movement which is peculiar to himself. That, by supposing the axis of the Earth to be always parallel to itself, not to be quite perpendicular, but somewhat inclined to the plane of her orbit, and consequently to present to the Sun, the one pole when on the one side of him, and the other when on the other, he would account for the obliquity of the Ecliptic; the Sun’s seemingly alternate progression from north to south, and from south to north, the consequent change of the seasons, and different lengths of the days and nights in the different seasons.

If this new hypothesis thus connected together all these appearances as happily as that of Ptolemy, there were others which it connected together much better. The three superior Planets, when nearly in conjunction with the Sun, appear always at the greatest distance from the

Earth, are smallest, and least sensible to the eye, and seem to revolve forward in their direct motion with the greatest rapidity. On the contrary, when in opposition to the Sun, that is, when in their meridian about midnight, they appear nearest the Earth, are largest, and most sensible to the eye, and seem to revolve backwards in their retrograde motion. To explain these appearances, the system of Ptolemy supposed each of these Planets to be at the upper part of their several Epicycles, in the one case; and at the lower, in the other. But it afforded no satisfactory principle of connection, which could lead the mind easily to conceive how the Epicycles of those Planets, whose spheres were so distant from the sphere of the Sun, should thus, if one may say so, keep time to his motion. The system of Copernicus afforded this easily, and like a more simple machine, without the assistance of Epicycles, connected together, by fewer movements, the complex appearances of the heavens. When the superior Planets appear nearly in conjunction with the Sun, they are then in the side of their orbits, which is almost opposite to, and most distant from the Earth, and therefore appear smallest, and least sensible to the eye. But, as they then revolve in a direction which is almost contrary to that of the Earth, they appear to advance forward with double velocity; as a ship, that sails in a contrary direction to another, appears from that other, to sail both with its own velocity, and the velocity of that from which it is seen. On the contrary, when those Planets are in opposition to the Sun, they are on the same side of the Sun with the Earth, are nearest it, most sensible to the eye, and revolve in the same direction with it; but, as their revolutions round the Sun are slower than that of the Earth, they are necessarily left behind by it, and therefore seem to revolve backwards; as a ship which sails slower than another, though it sails in the same direction, appears from that other to sail backwards. After the same manner, by the same annual revolution of the Earth, he connected together the direct and retrograde motions of the two inferior Planets, as well as the stationary appearances of all the Five.

There are some other particular phenomena of the two inferior Planets, which correspond still better to this system, and still worse to that of Ptolemy. Venus and Mercury seem to attend constantly upon the motion of the Sun, appearing, sometimes on the one side, and sometimes on the other, of that great luminary; Mercury being almost always buried in his rays, and Venus never receding above forty-eight degrees from him, contrary to what is observed in the other three Planets, which are often seen in the opposite side of the heavens, at the greatest possible distance from the Sun. The system of Ptolemy accounted for this, by

supposing that the centres of the Epicycles of these two Planets were always in the same line with those of the Sun and the Earth; that they appeared therefore in conjunction with the Sun, when either in the upper or lower part of their Epicycles, and at the greatest distance from him, when in the sides of them. It assigned, however, no reason why the Epicycles of these two Planets should observe so different a rule from that which takes place in those of the other three, nor for the enormous Epicycle of Venus, whose sides must have been forty-eight degrees distant from the Sun, while its centre was in conjunction with him, and whose diameter must have covered more than a quadrant of the Great Circle. But how easily all these appearances coincide with the hypothesis, which represents those two inferior Planets revolving round the Sun in orbits comprehended within the orbit of the Earth, is too obvious to require an explanation.

Thus far did this new account of things render the appearances of the heavens more completely coherent than had been done by any of the former systems. It did this, too, by a more simple and intelligible, as well as more beautiful machinery. It represented the Sun, the great enlightener of the universe, whose body was alone larger than all the Planets taken together, as established immovable in the centre, shedding light and heat on all the worlds that circulated around him in one uniform direction, but in longer or shorter periods, according to their different distances. It took away the diurnal revolution of the firmament, whose rapidity, upon the old hypothesis, was beyond what even thought could conceive. It not only delivered the imagination from the embarrassment of Epicycles, but from the difficulty of conceiving these two opposite motions going on at the same time, which the system of Ptolemy and Aristotle bestowed upon all the Planets; I mean, their diurnal westward, and periodical eastward revolutions. The Earth’s revolution round its own axis took away the necessity for supposing the first, and the second was easily conceived when by itself. The Five Planets, which seem, upon all other systems, to be objects of a species by themselves, unlike to every thing to which the imagination has been accustomed, when supposed to revolve along with the Earth round the Sun, were naturally apprehended to be objects of the same kind with the Earth, habitable, opaque, and enlightened only by the rays of the Sun. And thus this hypothesis, by classing them in the same species of things, with an object that is of all others the most familiar to us, took off that wonder and that uncertainty which the strangeness and singularity of their appearance had excited; and thus far, too, better answered the great end of Philosophy.

Neither did the beauty and simplicity of this system alone recommend it to the imagination; the novelty and unexpectedness of that view of nature, which it opened to the fancy, excited more wonder and surprise than the strangest of those appearances, which it had been invented to render natural and familiar, and these sentiments still more endeared it. For, though it is the end of Philosophy, to allay that wonder, which either the unusual or seemingly disjointed appearances of nature excite, yet she never triumphs so much, as when, in order to connect together a few, in themselves, perhaps, inconsiderable objects, she has, if I may say so, created another constitution of things, more natural, indeed, and such as the imagination can more easily attend to, but more new, more contrary to common opinion and expectation, than any of those appearances themselves. As, in the instance before us, in order to connect together some seeming irregularities in the motions of the Planets, the most inconsiderable objects in the heavens, and of which the greater part of mankind have no occasion to take any notice during the whole course of their lives, she has, to talk in the hyperbolical language of Tycho-Brahe, moved the Earth from its foundations, stopped the revolution of the Firmament, made the Sun stand still, and subverted the whole order of the Universe.

Such were the advantages of this new hypothesis, as they appeared to its author, when he first invented it. But, though that love of paradox, so natural to the learned, and that pleasure, which they are so apt to take in exciting, by the novelties of their supposed discoveries, the amazement of mankind, may, notwithstanding what one of his disciples tells us to the contrary, have had its weight in prompting Copernicus to adopt this system; yet, when he had completed his Treatise of Revolutions, and began coolly to consider what a strange doctrine he was about to offer to the world, he so much dreaded the prejudice of mankind against it, that, by a species of continence, of all others the most difficult to a philosopher, he detained it in his closet for thirty years together. At last, in the extremity of old age, he allowed it to be extorted from him, but he died as soon as it was printed, and before it was published to the world.

When it appeared in the world, it was almost universally disapproved of, by the learned as well as by the ignorant. The natural prejudices of sense, confirmed by education, prevailed too much with both, to allow them to give it a fair examination. A few disciples only, whom he himself had instructed in his doctrine, received it with esteem and admiration. One of them, Reinholdus, formed, upon this hypothesis, larger and more accurate astronomical tables, than what accompanied the

Treatise of Revolutions, in which Copernicus had been guilty of some errors in calculation. It soon appeared, that these Prutenic Tables, as they were called, corresponded more exactly with the heavens, than the Tables of Alphonsus. This ought naturally to have formed a prejudice in favour of the diligence and accuracy of Copernicus in observing the heavens. But it ought to have formed none in favour of his hypothesis; since the same observations, and the result of the same calculations, might have been accommodated to the system of Ptolemy, without making any greater alteration in that system than what Ptolemy had foreseen, and had even foretold should be made. It formed, however, a prejudice in favour of both, and the learned began to examine, with some attention, an hypothesis which afforded the easiest methods of calculation, and upon which the most exact predictions had been made. The superior degree of coherence, which it bestowed upon the celestial appearances, the simplicity and uniformity which it introduced into the real directions and velocities of the Planets, soon disposed many astronomers, first to favour, and at last to embrace a system, which thus connected together so happily, the most disjointed of those objects that chiefly occupied their thoughts. Nor can any thing more evidently demonstrate, how easily the learned give up the evidence of their senses to preserve the coherence of the ideas of their imagination, than the readiness with which this, the most violent paradox in all philosophy, was adopted by many ingenious astronomers, notwithstanding its inconsistency with every system of physics then known in the world, and notwithstanding the great number of other more real objections, to which, as Copernicus left it, this account of things was most justly exposed.

It was adopted, however, nor can this be wondered at, by astronomers only. The learned in all other sciences, continued to regard it with the same contempt as the vulgar. Even astronomers were divided about its merit; and many of them rejected a doctrine, which not only contradicted the established system of Natural Philosophy, but which, considered astronomically only, seemed, to them, to labour under several difficulties.

Some of the objections against the motion of the Earth, that were drawn from the prejudices of sense, the patrons of this system, indeed, easily enough got over. They represented, that the Earth might really be in motion, though, to its inhabitants, it seemed to be at rest; and that the Sun and Fixed Stars might really be at rest, though from the Earth they seemed to be in motion; in the same manner as a ship, which sails

through a smooth sea, seems to those who are in it, to be at rest, though really in motion; while the objects which she passes along, seem to be in motion, though really at rest.

But there were some other objections, which, though grounded upon the same natural prejudices, they found it more difficult to get over. The earth had always presented itself to the senses, not only as at rest, but as inert, ponderous, and even averse to motion. The imagination had always been accustomed to conceive it as such, and suffered the greatest violence, when obliged to pursue, and attend it, in that rapid motion which the system of Copernicus bestowed upon it. To enforce their objection, the adversaries of this hypothesis were at pains to calculate the extreme rapidity of this motion. They represented, that the circumference of the Earth had been computed to be above twenty-thousand miles: if the Earth, therefore, was supposed to revolve every day round its axis, every point of it near the equator would pass over above twenty-three thousand miles in a day; and consequently, near a thousand miles in an hour, and about sixteen miles in a minute; a motion more rapid than that of a cannon ball, or even than the swifter progress of sound. The rapidity of its periodical revolution was yet more violent than that of its diurnal rotation. How, therefore, could the imagination ever conceive so ponderous a body to be naturally endowed with so dreadful a movement? The Peripatetic Philosophy, the only philosophy then known in the world, still further confirmed this prejudice. That philosophy, by a very natural, though, perhaps, groundless distinction, divided all motion into Natural and Violent. Natural motion was that which flowed from an innate tendency in the body, as when a stone fell downwards: Violent motion, that which arose from external force, and which was, in some measure, contrary to the natural tendency of the body, as when a stone was thrown upwards, or horizontally. No violent motion could be lasting; for, being constantly weakened by the natural tendency of the body, it would soon be destroyed. The natural motion of the Earth, as was evident in all its parts, was downwards, in a straight line to the centre; as that of fire and air was upwards, in a straight line from the centre. It was the heavens only that revolved naturally in a circle. Neither, therefore, the supposed revolution of the Earth round its own centre, nor that round the Sun, could be natural motions; they must therefore be violent, and consequently could be of no long continuance. It was in vain that Copernicus replied, that gravity was, probably, nothing else besides a tendency in the different parts of the same Planet, to unite themselves to one another; that this tendency took place, probably, in the parts of the

other Planets, as well as in those of the Earth; that it could very well be united with a circular motion; that it might be equally natural to the whole body of the Planet, and to every part of it; that his adversaries themselves allowed, that a circular motion was natural to the heavens, whose diurnal revolution was infinitely more rapid than even that motion which he had bestowed upon the Earth; that though a like motion was natural to the Earth, it would still appear to be at rest to its inhabitants, and all the parts of it to tend in a straight line to the centre, in the same manner as at present. But this answer, how satisfactory soever it may appear to be now, neither did nor could appear to be satisfactory then. By admitting the distinction betwixt natural and violent motions, it was founded upon the same ignorance of mechanical principles with the objection. The systems of Aristotle and Hipparchus supposed, indeed, the diurnal motion of the heavenly bodies to be infinitely more rapid than even that dreadful movement which Copernicus bestowed upon the Earth. But they supposed, at the same time, that those bodies were objects of a quite different species, from any we are acquainted with, near the surface of the Earth, and to which, therefore, it was less difficult to conceive that any sort of motion might be natural. Those objects, besides, had never presented themselves to the senses, as moving otherwise, or with less rapidity, than these systems represented them. The imagination, therefore, could feel no difficulty in following a representation which the senses had rendered quite familiar to it. But when the Planets came to be regarded as so many Earths, the case was quite altered. The imagination had been accustomed to conceive such objects as tending rather to rest than motion; and this idea of their natural inertness, encumbered, if one may say so, and clogged its flight whenever it endeavoured to pursue them in their periodical courses, and to conceive them as continually rushing through the celestial spaces, with such violent and unremitting rapidity.

Nor were the first followers of Copernicus more fortunate in their answers to some other objections, which were founded indeed in the same ignorance of the laws of motion, but which, at the same time, were necessarily connected with that way of conceiving things, which then prevailed universally in the learned world.

If the earth, it was said, revolved so rapidly from west to east, a perpetual wind would set in from east to west, more violent than what blows in the greatest hurricanes; a stone, thrown westwards would fly to a much greater distance than one thrown with the same force eastwards; as what moved in a direction, contrary to the motion of the Earth, would

necessarily pass over a greater portion of its surface, than what, with the same velocity, moved along with it. A ball, it was said, dropped from the mast of a ship under sail, does not fall precisely at the foot of the mast, but behind it; and in the same manner, a stone dropped from a high tower would not, upon the supposition of the Earth's motion, fall precisely at the bottom of the tower, but west of it, the Earth being, in the mean time, carried away eastward from below it. It is amusing to observe, by what subtile and metaphysical evasions the followers of Copernicus endeavoured to elude this objection, which before the doctrine of the Composition of Motion had been explained by Galileo, was altogether unanswerable. They allowed, that a ball dropped from the mast of a ship under sail would not fall at the foot of the mast, but behind it; because the ball, they said, was no part of the ship, and because the motion of the ship was natural neither to itself nor to the ball. But the stone was a part of the earth, and the diurnal and annual revolutions of the Earth were natural to the whole, and to every part of it, and therefore to the stone. The stone, therefore, having naturally the same motion with the Earth, fell precisely at the bottom of the tower. But this answer could not satisfy the imagination, which still found it difficult to conceive how these motions could be natural to the earth; or how a body, which had always presented itself to the senses as inert, ponderous, and averse to motion, should naturally be continually wheeling about both its own axis and the Sun, with such violent rapidity. It was, besides, argued by Tycho Brahe, upon the principles of the same philosophy which had afforded both the objection and the answer, that even upon the supposition, that any such motion was natural to the whole body of the Earth, yet the stone, which was separated from it, could no longer be actuated by that motion. The limb, which is cut off from an animal, loses those animal motions which were natural to the whole. The branch, which is cut off from the trunk, loses that vegetative motion which is natural to the whole tree. Even the metals, minerals, and stones, which were dug out from the bosom of the Earth, lose those motions which occasioned their production and increase, and which were natural to them in their original state. Though the diurnal and annual motion of the Earth, therefore, had been natural to them while they were contained in its bosom, it could no longer be so when they were separated from it.

Tycho Brahe, the great restorer of the science of the heavens, who had spent his life, and wasted his fortune upon the advancement of Astronomy, whose observations were both more numerous and more accurate than those of all the astronomers who had gone before him, was

himself so much affected by the force of this objection, that, though he had never mentioned the system of Copernicus without some note of high admiration he had conceived for its author, he could never himself be induced to embrace it; yet all his astronomical observations tended to confirm it. They demonstrated, that Venus and Mercury were sometimes above, and sometimes below the Sun; and that, consequently, the Sun, and not the Earth, was the centre of their periodical revolutions. They showed, that Mars, when in his meridian at midnight, was nearer to the Earth than the Earth is to the Sun; though, when in conjunction with the Sun, he was much more remote from the Earth than that luminary; a discovery which was absolutely inconsistent with the system of Ptolemy, which proved, that the Sun, and not the Earth, was the centre of the periodical revolutions of Mars, as well as of Venus and Mercury; and which demonstrated that the Earth was placed betwixt the orbits of Mars and Venus. They made the same thing probable with regard to Jupiter and Saturn; that they, too, revolved round the Sun; and that, therefore, the Sun, if not the centre of the universe, was at least, that of the planetary system. They proved that Comets were superior to the Moon, and moved through the heavens in all possible directions; an observation incompatible with the Solid Spheres of Aristotle and Purbach, and which, therefore, overturned the physical part, at least, of the established systems of Astronomy.

All these observations, joined to his aversion to the system, and perhaps, notwithstanding the generosity of his character, some little jealousy for the fame of Copernicus, suggested to Tycho the idea of a new hypothesis, in which the Earth continued to be, as in the old account, the immovable centre of the universe, round which the firmament revolved every day from east to west, and, by some secret virtue, carried the Sun, the Moon, and the Five Planets along with it, notwithstanding their immense distance, and notwithstanding that there was nothing betwixt it and them but the most fluid ether. But, although all these seven bodies thus obeyed the diurnal revolution of the Firmament, they had each of them, as in the old system, too, a contrary periodical eastward revolution of their own, which made them appear to be every day, more or less, left behind by the Firmament. The Sun was the centre of the periodical revolutions of the Five Planets; the Earth, that of the Sun and Moon. The Five Planets followed the Sun in his periodical revolution round the Earth, as they did the Firmament in its diurnal rotation. The three superior Planets comprehended the Earth within the orbit in which they revolved round the Sun, and had each of

them an Epicycle to connect together, in the same manner as in the system of Ptolemy, their direct, retrograde, and stationary appearances. As, notwithstanding their immense distance, they followed the Sun in his periodical revolution round the Earth, keeping always at an equal distance from him, they were necessarily brought much nearer to the Earth when in opposition to the Sun, than than when in conjunction with him. Mars, the nearest of them, when in his meridian at midnight, came within the orbit which the Sun described round the Earth, and consequently was then nearer to the Earth than the Earth was to the Sun. The appearances of the two inferior Planets were explained, in the same manner, as in the system of Copernicus, and consequently required no Epicycle to connect them. The circles in which the Five Planets performed their periodical revolutions round the Sun, as well as those in which the Sun and Moon performed theirs round the Earth, were, as both in the old and new hypothesis, Eccentric Circles, to connect together their differently accelerated and retarded motions.

Such was the system of Tycho Brahe, compounded, as is evident, out of these of Ptolemy and Copernicus; happier than that of Ptolemy, in the account which it gives of the motions of the two inferior Planets; more complex, by supposing the different revolutions of all the Five to be performed round two different centres; the diurnal round the Earth, the periodical round the Sun, but, in every respect, more complex and more incoherent than that of Copernicus. Such, however, was the difficulty that mankind felt in conceiving the motion of the Earth, that it long balanced the reputation of that otherwise more beautiful system. It may be said, that those who considered the heavens only, favoured the system of Copernicus, which connected so happily all the appearances which presented themselves there; but that those who looked upon the Earth, adopted the account of Tycho Brahe, which, leaving it at rest in the centre of the universe, did less violence to the usual habits of the imagination. The learned were, indeed, sensible of the intricacy, and of the many incoherences of that system; that it gave no account why the Sun, Moon, and Five Planets, should follow the revolution of the Firmament; or why the Five Planets, notwithstanding the immense distance of the three superior ones, should obey the periodical motion of the Sun; or why the Earth, though placed between the orbits of Mars and Venus, should remain immovable in the centre of the Firmament, and constantly resist the influence of whatever it was, which carried bodies that were so much larger than itself, and that were placed on all sides of it, periodically round the Sun. Tycho Brahe died before he had fully

explained his system. His great and merited renown disposed many of the learned to believe, that, had his life been longer, he would have connected together many of these incoherences, and knew methods of adapting his system to some other appearances, with which none of his followers could connect it.

The objection to the system of Copernicus, which was drawn from the nature of motion, and that was most insisted on by Tycho Brahe, was at last fully answered by Galileo; not, however, till about thirty years after the death of Tycho, and about a hundred after that of Copernicus. It was then that Galileo, by explaining the nature of the composition of motion, by showing, both from reason and experience, that a ball dropped from the mast of a ship under sail would fall precisely at the foot of the mast, and by rendering this doctrine, from a great number of other instances, quite familiar to the imagination, took off, perhaps, the principal objection which had been made to this hypothesis of the astronomers.

Several other astronomical difficulties, which encumbered this account of things, were removed by the same philosopher. Copernicus, after altering the centre of the world, and making the Earth, and all the Planets revolve round the Sun, was obliged to leave the Moon to revolve round the Earth as before. But no example of any such secondary Planet having then been discovered in the heavens, there seemed still to be this irregularity remaining in the system. Galileo, who first applied telescopes to Astronomy, discovered, by their assistance, the Satellites of Jupiter, which, revolving round that Planet, at the same time that they were carried along with it in its revolution, round either the Earth, or the Sun, made it seem less contrary to the analogy of nature, that the Moon should both revolve round the Earth, and accompany her in her revolution round the Sun.

It had been objected to Copernicus, that, if Venus and Mercury revolved round the Sun in an orbit comprehended within the orbit of the Earth, they would show all the same phases with the Moon; present, sometimes their darkened, and sometimes their enlightened sides to the Earth, and sometimes part of the one, and part of the other. He answered, that they undoubtedly did all this; but that their smallness and distance hindered us from perceiving it. This very bold assertion of Copernicus was confirmed by Galileo. His telescopes rendered the phases of Venus quite sensible, and thus demonstrated, more evidently than had been done, even by the observations of Tycho Brahe, the revolutions of these two Planets round the Sun, as well as so far destroyed the system of Ptolemy.

The mountains and seas, which, by the help of the same instrument, he discovered, or imagined he had discovered in the Moon, rendering that Planet, in every respect, similar to the Earth, made it seem less contrary to the analogy of nature, that, as the Moon revolved round the Earth, the Earth should revolve round the Sun.

The spots which, in the same manner, he discovered in the Sun, demonstrating, by their motion, the revolution of the Sun round his axis, made it seem less improbable that the Earth, a body so much smaller than the Sun, should likewise revolve round her axis in the same manner.

Succeeding telescopical observations, discovered, in each of the Five Planets, spots not unlike those which Galileo had observed in the Moon, and thereby seemed to demonstrate what Copernicus had only conjectured, that the Planets were naturally opaque, enlightened only by the rays of the Sun, habitable, diversified by seas and mountains, and, in every respect, bodies of the same kind with the earth; and thus added one other probability to this system. By discovering, too, that each of the Planets revolved round its own axis, at the same time that it was carried round either the Earth or the Sun, they made it seem quite agreeable to the analogy of nature, that the Earth, which, in every other respect, resembled the Planets, should, like them too, revolve round its own axis, and at the same time perform its periodical motion round the Sun.

While, in Italy, the unfortunate Galileo was adding so many probabilities to the system of Copernicus, there was another philosopher employing himself in Germany, to ascertain, correct, and improve it; Kepler, with great genius, but without the taste, or the order and method of Galileo, possessed, like all his other countrymen, the most laborious industry, joined to that passion for discovering proportions and resemblances betwixt the different parts of nature, which, though common to all philosophers, seems, in him, to have been excessive. He had been instructed, by Mæstlinus, in the system of Copernicus; and his first curiosity was, as he tells us, to find out, why the Planets, the Earth being counted for one, were Six in number; why they were placed at such irregular distances from the Sun; and whether there was any uniform proportion betwixt their several distances, and the times employed in their periodical revolutions. Till some reason, or proportion of this kind, could be discovered, the system did not appear to him to be completely coherent. He endeavoured, first, to find it in the proportions of numbers, and plain figures; afterwards, in those of the regular solids; and, last of all, in those of the musical divisions of the Octave. Whatever was the science which Kepler was studying, he seems constantly to have

pleased himself with finding some analogy betwixt it and the system of the universe; and thus, arithmetic and music, plane and solid geometry, came all of them by turns to illustrate the doctrine of the Sphere, in the explaining of which he was, by his profession, principally employed. Tycho Brahe, to whom he had presented one of his books, though he could not but disapprove of his system, was pleased, however, with his genius, and with his indefatigable diligence in making the most laborious calculations. That generous and magnificent Dane invited the obscure and indigent Kepler to come and live with him, and communicated to him, as soon as he arrived, his observations upon Mars, in the arranging and methodizing of which his disciples were at that time employed. Kepler, upon comparing them with one another, found, that the orbit of Mars was not a perfect circle; that one of its diameters was somewhat longer than the other; and that it approached to an oval, or an ellipse, which had the Sun placed in one of its foci. He found, too, that the motion of the Planet was not equable; that it was swiftest when nearest the Sun, and slowest when furthest from him; and that its velocity gradually increased, or diminished, according as it approached or receded from him. The observations of the same astronomer discovered to him, though not so evidently, that the same things were true of all the other Planets; that their orbits were elliptical, and that their motions were swiftest when nearest the Sun, and slowest when furthest from him. They showed the same things, too, of the Sun, if supposed to revolve round the Earth; and consequently of the Earth, if it also was supposed to revolve round the Sun.

That the motions of all the heavenly bodies were perfectly circular, had been the fundamental idea upon which every astronomical hypothesis, except the irregular one of the Stoics, had been built. A circle, as the degree of its curvature is every where the same, is of all curve lines the simplest and the most easily conceived. Since it was evident, therefore, that the heavenly bodies did not move in straight lines, the indolent imagination found, that it could most easily attend to their motions if they were supposed to revolve in perfect circles. It had, upon this account, determined that a circular motion was the most perfect of all motions, and that none but the most perfect motion could be worthy of such beautiful and divine objects; and it had upon this account, so often, in vain, endeavoured to adjust to the appearances, so many different systems, which all supposed them to revolve in this perfect manner.

The equality of their motions was another fundamental idea, which, in the same manner, and for the same reason, was supposed by all the founders of astronomical systems. For an equal motion can be more easily attended to, than one that is continually either accelerated or retarded. All inconsistency, therefore, was declared to be unworthy those bodies which revolved in the celestial regions, and to be fit only for inferior and sublunary things. The calculations of Kepler overturned, with regard to the Planets, both these natural prejudices of the imagination; destroyed their circular orbits; and introduced into their real motions, such an equality as no equalizing circle would remedy. It was, however, to render their motion perfectly equable, without even the assistance of a equalizing circle, that Copernicus, as he himself assures us, had originally invented his system. Since the calculations of Kepler, therefore, overturned what Copernicus had principally in view in establishing his system, we cannot wonder that they should at first seem rather to embarrass than improve it.

It is true, by these elliptical orbits and unequal motions, Kepler disengaged the system from the embarrassment of those small Epicycles, which Copernicus, in order to connect the seemingly accelerated and retarded movements of the Planets, with their supposed real equality, had been obliged to leave in it. For it is remarkable, that though Copernicus had delivered the orbits of the Planets from the enormous Epicycles of Hipparchus, that though in this consisted the great superiority of his system above that of the ancient astronomers, he was yet obliged, himself, to abandon, in some measure, this advantage, and to make use of some small Epicycles, to join together those seeming irregularities. His Epicycles indeed, like the irregularities for whose sake they were introduced, were but small ones, and the imaginations of his first followers seem, accordingly, either to have slurred them over altogether, or scarcely to have observed them. Neither Galileo, nor Gassendi, the two most eloquent of his defenders, take any notice of them. Nor does it seem to have been generally attended to, that there was any such thing as Epicycles in the system of Copernicus, till Kepler, in order to vindicate his own elliptical orbits, insisted, that even, according to Copernicus, the body of the Planet was to be found but at two different places in the circumference of that circle which the centre of its Epicycle described.

It is true, too, that an ellipse is, of all curve lines after a circle, the simplest and most easily conceived; and it is true, besides all this, that, while Kepler took from the motion of the Planets the easiest of all proportions, that of equality, he did not leave them absolutely without

one, but ascertained the rule by which their velocities continually varied; for a genius so fond of analogies, when he had taken away one, would be sure to substitute another in its room. Notwithstanding all this, notwithstanding that his system was better supported by observations than any system had ever been before, yet, such was the attachment to the equal motions and circular orbits of the Planets, that it seems, for some time, to have been in general but little attended to by the learned, to have been altogether neglected by philosophers, and not much regarded even by astronomers.

Gassendi, who began to figure in the world about the latter days of Kepler, and who was himself no mean astronomer, seems indeed to have conceived a good deal of esteem for his diligence and accuracy in accommodating the observations of Tycho Brahe to the system of Copernicus. But Gassendi appears to have had no comprehension of the importance of those alterations which Kepler had made in that system, as is evident from his scarcely ever mentioning them in the whole course of his voluminous writings upon Astronomy. Des Cartes, the contemporary and rival of Gassendi, seems to have paid no attention to them at all, but to have built his Theory of the Heavens, without any regard to them. Even those astronomers, whom a serious attention had convinced of the justness of his corrections, were still so enamoured with the circular orbits and equal motion, that they endeavoured to compound his system with those ancient but natural prejudices. Thus, Ward endeavoured to show that, though the Planets moved in elliptical orbits, which had the Sun in one of their foci, and though their velocities in the elliptical line were continually varying, yet, if a ray was supposed to be extended from the centre of any one of them to the other focus, and to be carried along by the periodical motion of the Planet, it would make equal angles in equal times, and consequently cut off equal portions of the circle of which that other focus was the centre. To one, therefore, placed in that focus, the motion of the Planet would appear to be perfectly circular and perfectly equable, in the same manner as in the Equalizing Circles of Ptolemy and Hipparchus. Thus Bouillaud, who censured this hypothesis of Ward, invented another of the same kind, infinitely more whimsical and capricious. The Planets, according to that astronomer, always revolve in circles; for that being the most perfect figure, it is impossible they should revolve in any other. No one of them, however, continues to move in any one circle, but is perpetually passing from one to another, through an infinite number of circles, in the course of each revolution; for an ellipse, said he, is an oblique section of a cone, and in a cone,

betwixt the two vortices of the ellipse there is an infinite number of circles, out of the infinitely small portions of which the elliptical line is compounded. The Planet, therefore which moves in this line, is, in every point of it, moving in an infinitely small portion of a certain circle. The motion of each Planet, too, according to him, was necessarily, for the same reason, perfectly equable. An equable motion being the most perfect of all motions. It was not, however, in the elliptical line, that it was equable, but in any one of the circles that were parallel to the base of that cone, by whose section this elliptical line had been formed: for, if a ray was extended from the Planet to any one of those circles, and carried along by its periodical motion, it would cut off equal portions of that circle in equal times; another most fantastical equalising circle, supported by no other foundation besides the frivolous connection between a cone and an ellipse, and recommended by nothing but the natural passion for circular orbits and equable motions. It may be regarded as the last effort of this passion, and may serve to show the force of that principle which could thus oblige this accurate observer, and great improver of the Theory of the Heavens, to adopt so strange an hypothesis. Such was the difficulty and hesitation with which the followers of Copernicus adopted the corrections of Kepler.

The rule, indeed, which Kepler ascertained for determining the gradual acceleration or retardation in the movement of the Planets, was intricate, and difficult to be comprehended; it could therefore but little facilitate the progress of the imagination in tracing those revolutions which were supposed to be conducted by it. According to that astronomer, if a straight line was drawn from the centre of each Planet to the Sun, and carried along by the periodical motion of the Planet, it would describe equal areas in equal times, though the Planet did not pass over equal spaces; and the same rule he found, took place nearly with regard to the Moon. The imagination, when acquainted with the law by which any motion is accelerated or retarded, can follow and attend to it more easily, than when at a loss, and, as it were, wandering in uncertainty with regard to the proportion which regulates its varieties; the discovery of this analogy therefore, no doubt, rendered the system of Kepler more agreeable to the natural taste of mankind: it, was, however, an analogy too difficult to be followed, or comprehended, to render it completely so.

Kepler, besides this, introduced another new analogy into the system, and first discovered, that there was one uniform relation observed betwixt the distances of the Planets from the Sun, and the times

employed in their periodical motions. He found, that their periodical times were greater than in proportion to their distances, and less than in proportion to the squares of those distances; but, that they were nearly as the mean proportionals betwixt their distances and the squares of their distances; or, in other words, that the squares of their periodical times were nearly as the cubes of their distances; an analogy, which, though, like all others, it no doubt rendered the system somewhat more distinct and comprehensible, was, however, as well as the former, of too intricate a nature to facilitate very much the effort of the imagination in conceiving it.

The truth of both these analogies, intricate as they were, was at last fully established by the observations of Cassini. That astronomer first discovered, that the secondary Planets of Jupiter and Saturn revolved round their primary ones, according to the same laws which Kepler had observed in the revolutions of the primary ones round the Sun, and that of the Moon round the earth; that each of them described equal areas in equal times, and that the squares of their periodic times were as the cubes of their distances. When these two last abstruse analogies, which, when Kepler at first observed them, were but little regarded, had been thus found to take place in the revolutions of the Four Satellites of Jupiter, and in those of the Five of Saturn, they were now thought not only to confirm the doctrine of Kepler, but to add a new probability to the Copernican hypothesis. The observations of Cassini seem to establish it as a law of the system, that, when one body revolved round another, it described equal areas in equal times; and that, when several revolved round the same body, the squares of their periodic times were as the cubes of their distances. If the Earth and the Five Planets were supposed to revolve round the Sun, these laws, it was said, would take place universally. But if, according to the system of Ptolemy, the Sun, Moon, and Five Planets were supposed to revolve round the Earth, the periodical motions of the Sun and Moon, would, indeed, observe the first of these laws, would each of them describe equal areas in equal times; but they would not observe the second, the squares of their periodic times would not be as the cubes of their distances: and the revolutions of the Five Planets would observe neither the one law nor the other. Or if, according to the system of Tycho Brahe, the Five Planets were supposed to revolve round the Sun, while the Sun and Moon revolved round the Earth, the revolutions of the Five Planets round the Sun, would, indeed, observe both these laws; but those of the Sun and Moon round the Earth would observe only the first of them. The analogy of nature, therefore,

could be preserved completely, according to no other system but that of Copernicus, which, upon that account, must be the true one. This argument is regarded by Voltaire, and the Cardinal of Polignac, as an irrefragable demonstration; even M'Laurin, who was more capable of judging, nay, Newton himself, seems to mention it as one of the principal evidences for the truth of that hypothesis. Yet, an analogy of this kind, it would seem, far from a demonstration, could afford, at most, but the shadow of a probability.

It is true, that though Cassini supposed the Planets to revolve in an oblong curve, it was in a curve somewhat different from that of Kepler. In the ellipse, the sum of the two lines which are drawn from any one point in the circumference to the two foci, is always equal to that of those which are drawn from any other point in the circumference to the same foci. In the curve of Cassini, it is not the sum of the lines, but the rectangles which are contained under the lines, that are always equal. As this, however, was a proportion more difficult to be comprehended by astronomers than the other, the curve of Cassini has never had the vogue.

Nothing now embarrassed the system of Copernicus, but the difficulty which the imagination felt in conceiving bodies so immensely ponderous as the Earth and the other Planets revolving round the Sun with such incredible rapidity. It was in vain that Copernicus pretended, that, notwithstanding the prejudices of sense, this circular motion might be as natural to the Planets, as it is to a stone to fall to the ground. The imagination had been accustomed to conceive such objects as tending rather to rest than motion. This habitual idea of their natural inertness was incompatible with that of their natural motion. It was in vain that Kepler, in order to assist the fancy in connecting together this natural inertness with their astonishing velocities, talked of some vital and immaterial virtue, which was shed by the Sun into the surrounding spaces, which was whirled about with his revolution round his own axis, and which, taking hold of the Planets, forced them, in spite of their ponderousness and strong propensity to rest, thus to whirl about the centre of the system. The imagination had no hold of this immaterial virtue, and could form no determinate idea of what it consisted in. The imagination, indeed, felt a gap, or interval, betwixt the constant motion and the supposed inertness of the Planets, and had in this, as in all other cases, some general idea or apprehension that there must be a connecting chain of intermediate objects to link together these discordant qualities. Wherein this connecting chain consisted, it was, indeed, at a loss to conceive; nor did the doctrine of Kepler lend it any assistance in this

respect. That doctrine, like almost all those of the philosophy in fashion during his time, bestowed a name upon this invisible chain, called it an immaterial virtue, but afforded no determinate idea of what was its nature.

Des Cartes was the first who attempted to ascertain, precisely, wherein this invisible chain consisted, and to afford the imagination a train of intermediate events, which, succeeding each other in an order that was of all others the most familiar to it, should unite those incoherent qualities, the rapid motion, and the natural inertness of the Planets. Des Cartes was the first who explained wherein consisted the real inertness of matter; that it was not in an aversion to motion, or in a propensity to rest, but in a power of continuing indifferently either at rest or in motion, and of resisting, with a certain force, whatever endeavoured to change its state from the one to the other. According to that ingenious and fanciful philosopher, the whole of infinite space was full of matter, for with him matter and extension were the same, and consequently there could be no void. This immensity of matter, he supposed to be divided into an infinite number of very small cubes; all of which, being whirled about upon their own centres, necessarily gave occasion to the production of two different elements. The first consisted of those angular parts, which, having been necessarily rubbed off, and grinded yet smaller by their mutual friction, constituted the most subtle and movable part of matter. The second consisted of those little globules that were formed by the rubbing off of the first. The interstices betwixt these globules of the second element was filled up by the particles of the first. But in the infinite collisions, which must occur in an infinite space filled with matter, and all in motion, it must necessarily happen that many of the globules of the second element should be broken and grinded down into the first. The quantity of the first element having been thus increased beyond what was sufficient to fill up the interstices of the second, it must, in many places, have been heaped up together, without any mixture of the second along with it. Such, according to Des Cartes, was the original division of matter. Upon this infinitude of matter thus divided, a certain quantity of motion was originally impressed by the Creator of all things, and the laws of motion were so adjusted as always to preserve the same quantity in it, without increase, and without diminution. Whatever motion was lost by one part of matter, was communicated to some other; and whatever was acquired by one part of matter, was derived from some other: and thus, through an eternal revolution, from rest to motion, and

from motion to rest, in every part of the universe, the quantity of motion in the whole was always the same.

But, as there was no void, no one part of matter could be moved without thrusting some other out of its place, nor that without thrusting some other, and so on. To avoid, therefore, an infinite progress, he supposed that the matter which any body pushed before it, rolled immediately backwards, to supply the place of that matter which flowed in behind it; and as we may observe in the swimming of a fish, that the water which it pushes before it, immediately rolls backward, to supply the place of what flows in behind it, and thus forms a small circle or vortex round the body of the fish. It was, in the same manner, that the motion originally impressed by the Creator upon the infinitude of matter, necessarily produced in it an infinity of greater and smaller vortices, or circular streams: and the law of motion being so adjusted as always to preserve the same quantity of motion in the universe, those vortices either continued for ever, or by their dissolution gave birth to others of the same kind. There was, thus, at all times, an infinite number of greater and smaller vortices, or circular streams, revolving in the universe.

But, whatever moves in a circle, is constantly endeavouring to fly off from the centre of its revolution. For the natural motion of all bodies is in a straight line. All the particles of matter, therefore, in each of those greater vortices, were continually pressing from the centre to the circumference, with more or less force, according to the different degrees of their bulk and solidity. The larger and more solid globules of the second element forced themselves upwards to the circumference, while the smaller, more yielding, and more active particles of the first, which could flow, even through the interstices of the second, were forced downwards to the centre. They were forced downwards to the centre, notwithstanding their natural tendency was upwards to the circumference; for the same reason that a piece of wood, when plunged in water, is forced upwards to the surface, notwithstanding its natural tendency is downwards to the bottom; because its tendency downwards is less strong than that of the particles of water, which, therefore, if one may say so, press in before it, and thus force it upwards. But there being a greater quantity of the first element than what was necessary to fill up the interstices of the second, it was necessarily accumulated in the centre of each of these great circular streams, and formed there the fiery and active substance of the Sun. For, according to that philosopher, the Solar Systems were infinite in number, each Fixed Star being the centre of one: and he is among the first of the moderns, who thus took away the

boundaries of the Universe; even Copernicus and Kepler, themselves, having confined it within, what they supposed, to be the vault of the Firmament.

The centre of each vortex being thus occupied by the most active and movable parts of matter, there was necessarily among them, a more violent agitation than in any other part of the vortex, and this violent agitation of the centre cherished and supported the movement of the whole. But, among the particles of the first element, which fill up the interstices of the second, there are many, which, from the pressure of the globules on all sides of them, necessarily receive an angular form, and thus constitute a third element of particles less fit for motion than those of the other two. As the particles, however, of this third element were formed in the interstices of the second, they are necessarily smaller than those of the second, and are, therefore, along with those of the first, urged down towards the centre, where, when a number of them happen to take hold of one another, they form such spots upon the surface of the accumulated particles of the first element, as are often discovered by telescopes upon the face of that Sun which enlightens and animates our particular system. Those spots are often broken and dispelled, by the violent agitation of the particles of the first element, as has hitherto happily been the case with those which have successively been formed upon the face of our Sun. Sometimes, however, they encrust the whole surface of that fire which is accumulated in the centre; and the communication betwixt the most active and the most inert parts of the vortex being thus interrupted, the rapidity of its motion immediately begins to languish, and can no longer defend it from being swallowed up and carried away by the superior violence of some other like circular stream; and in this manner, what was once a Sun, becomes a Planet. Thus, the time was, according to this system, when the Moon was a body of the same kind with the Sun, the fiery centre of a circular stream of ether, which flowed continually round her; but her face having been crusted over by a congeries of angular particles, the motion of this circular stream began to languish, and could no longer defend itself from being absorbed by the more violent vortex of the Earth, which was then, too, a Sun, and which chanced to be placed in its neighbourhood. The Moon, therefore, became a Planet, and revolved round the Earth. In process of time, the same fortune, which had thus befallen the Moon, befell also the Earth; its face was encrusted by a gross and inactive substance; the motion of its vortex began to languish, and it was absorbed by the greater vortex of the Sun: but though the vortex of the

Earth had thus become languid, it still had force enough to occasion both the diurnal revolution of the Earth, and the monthly motion of the Moon. For a small circular stream may easily be conceived as flowing round the body of the Earth, at the same time that it is carried along by that great ocean of ether which is continually revolving round the Sun; in the same manner, as in a great whirlpool of water, one may often see several small whirlpools, which revolve round centres of their own, and at the same time are carried round the centre of the great one. Such was the cause of the original formation and consequent motions of the Planetary System. When a solid body is turned round its centre, those parts of it, which are nearest, and those which are remotest from the centre, complete their revolutions in one and the same time. But it is otherwise with the revolutions of a fluid; the parts of it which are nearest the centre complete their revolutions in a shorter time, than those which are remoter. The Planets, therefore, all floating, in that immense tide of ether which is continually setting in from west to east round the body of the Sun, complete their revolutions in a longer or a shorter time, according to their nearness or distance from him. There was, however, according to Des Cartes, no very exact proportion observed betwixt the times of their revolutions and their distances from the centre. For that nice analogy, which Kepler had discovered betwixt them, having not yet been confirmed by the observations of Cassini, was, as I before took notice, entirely disregarded by Des Cartes. According to him, too, their orbits might not be perfectly circular, but be longer the one way than the other, and thus approach to an Ellipse. Nor yet was it necessary to suppose, that they described this figure with geometrical accuracy, or even that they described always precisely the same figure. It rarely happens, that nature can be mathematically exact with regard to the figure of the objects she produces, upon account of the infinite combinations of impulses, which must conspire to the production of each of her effects. No two Planets, no two animals of the same kind, have exactly the same figure, nor is that of any one of them perfectly regular. It was in vain, therefore, that astronomers laboured to find that perfect constancy and regularity in the motions of the heavenly bodies, which is to be found in no other parts of nature. These motions, like all others, must either languish or be accelerated, according as the cause which produces them, the revolution of the vortex of the Sun, either languishes, or is accelerated; and there are innumerable events which may occasion either the one or the other of those changes.

It was thus, that Des Cartes endeavoured to render familiar to the imagination, the greatest difficulty in the Copernican system, the rapid motion of the enormous bodies of the Planets. When the fancy had thus been taught to conceive them as floating in an immense ocean of ether, it was quite agreeable to its usual habits to conceive, that they should follow the stream of this ocean, how rapid soever. This was an order of succession to which it had been long accustomed, and with which it was, therefore, quite familiar. This account, too, of the motions of the Heavens, was connected with a vast, an immense system, which joined together a greater number of the most discordant phenomena of nature, than had been united by any other hypothesis; a system in which the principles of connection, though perhaps equally imaginary, were, however, more distinct and determinate, than any that had been known before; and which attempted to trace to the imagination, not only the order of succession by which the heavenly bodies were moved, but that by which they, and almost all other natural objects, had originally been produced. — The Cartesian philosophy begins now to be almost universally rejected, whilst the Copernican system continues to be universally received. Yet it is not easy to imagine, how much probability and coherence this admired system was long supposed to derive from that exploded hypothesis. Till Des Cartes had published his principles, the disjointed and incoherent system of Tycho Brahe, though it was embraced heartily and completely by scarce any body, was yet constantly talked of by all the learned, as, in point of probability, upon a level with Copernicus. They took notice, indeed, of its inferiority with regard to coherence and connection, expressing hopes, however, that these defects might be remedied by some future improvements. But when the world beheld that complete, and almost perfect coherence, which the philosophy of Des Cartes bestowed upon the system of Copernicus, the imaginations of mankind could no longer refuse themselves the pleasure of going along with so harmonious an account of things. The system of Tycho Brahe was every day less and less talked of, till at last it was forgotten altogether.

The system of Des Cartes, however, though it connected together the real motions of the heavenly bodies according to the system of Copernicus, more happily than had been done before, did so only when they were considered in the gross; but did not apply to them, when they were regarded in the detail. Des Cartes, as was said before, had never himself observed the Heavens with any particular application. Though he was not ignorant, therefore, of any of the observations which had been

made before his time, he seems to have paid them no great degree of attention; which, probably, proceeded from his own inexperience in the study of Astronomy. So far, therefore, from accommodating his system to all the minute irregularities, which Kepler had ascertained in the movements of the Planets; or from showing, particularly, how these irregularities, and no other, should arise from it, he contented himself with observing, that perfect uniformity could not be expected in their motions, from the nature of the causes which produced them; that certain irregularities might take place in them, for a great number of successive revolutions, and afterwards gave way to others of a different kind: a remark which, happily, relieved him from the necessity of applying his system to the observations of Kepler, and the other Astronomers.

But when the observations of Cassini had established the authority of those laws, which Kepler had first discovered in the system, the philosophy of Des Cartes, which could afford no reason why such particular laws should be observed, might continue to amuse the learned in other sciences, but could no longer satisfy those that were skilled in Astronomy. Sir Isaac Newton first attempted to give a physical account of the motions of the Planets, which should accommodate itself to all the constant irregularities which astronomers had ever observed in their motions. The physical connection, by which Des Cartes had endeavoured to bind together the movements of the Planets, was the laws of impulse; of all the orders of succession, those which are most familiar to the imagination; as they all flow from the inertness of matter. After this quality, there is no other with which we are so well acquainted as that of gravity. We never act upon matter, but we have occasion to observe it. The superior genius and sagacity of Sir Isaac Newton, therefore, made the most happy, and, we may now say, the greatest and most admirable improvement that was ever made in philosophy, when he discovered, that he could join together the movements of the Planets by so familiar a principle of connection, which completely removed all the difficulties the imagination had hitherto felt in attending to them. He demonstrated, that, if the Planets were supposed to gravitate towards the Sun, and to one another, and at the same time to have had a projecting force originally impressed upon them, the primary ones might all describe ellipses in one of the foci of which that great luminary was placed; and the secondary ones might describe figures of the same kind round their respective primaries, without being disturbed by the continual motion of the centres of their revolutions. That if the force, which retained each of them in their orbits, was like that of gravity, and directed towards the

Sun, they would, each of them, describe equal areas in equal times. That if this attractive power of the Sun, like all other qualities which are diffused in rays from a centre, diminished in the same proportion as the squares of the distances increased, their motions would be swiftest when nearest the Sun, and slowest when farthest off from him, in the same proportion in which, by observation, they are discovered to be; and that upon the same supposition, of this gradual diminution of their respective gravities, their periodic times would bear the same proportion to their distances, which Kepler and Cassini had established betwixt them. Having thus shown, that gravity might be the connecting principle which joined together the movements of the Planets, he endeavoured next to prove that it really was so. Experience shows us, what is the power of gravity near the surface of the Earth. That it is such as to make a body fall, in the first second of its descent, through about fifteen Parisian feet. The Moon is about sixty semidiameters of the Earth distant from its surface. If gravity, therefore, was supposed to diminish, as the squares of the distance increase, a body, at the Moon, would fall towards the Earth in a minute; that is, in sixty seconds, through the same space, which it falls near its surface in one second. But the arch which the Moon describes in a minute, falls, by observation, about fifteen Parisian feet below the tangent drawn at the beginning of it. So far, therefore, the Moon may be conceived as constantly falling towards the Earth.

The system of Sir Isaac Newton corresponded to many other irregularities which Astronomers had observed in the Heavens. It assigned a reason, why the centres of the revolutions of the Planets were not precisely in the centre of the Sun, but in the common centre of gravity of the Sun and the Planets. From the mutual attraction of the Planets, it gave a reason for some other irregularities in their motions; irregularities, which are quite sensible in those of Jupiter and Saturn, when those Planets are nearly in conjunction with one another. But of all the irregularities in the Heavens, those of the Moon had hitherto given the greatest perplexity to Astronomers; and the system of Sir Isaac Newton corresponded, if possible, yet more accurately with them than with any of the other Planets. The Moon, when either in conjunction, or in opposition to the Sun, appears furthest from the Earth, and nearest to it when in her quarters. According to the system of that philosopher, when she is in conjunction with the Sun, she is nearer the Sun than the Earth is; consequently, more attracted to him, and, therefore, more separated from the Earth. On the contrary, when in opposition to the Sun, she is further from the Sun than the Earth. The Earth, therefore, is more attracted to the

Sun: and consequently, in this case, too, further separated from the Moon. But, on the other hand, when the Moon is in her quarters, the Earth and the Moon, being both at equal distance from the Sun, are equally attracted to him. They would not, upon this account alone, therefore, be brought nearer to one another. As it is not in parallel lines however that they are attracted towards the Sun, but in lines which meet in his centre, they are, thereby, still further approached to one another. Sir Isaac Newton computed the difference of the forces with which the Moon and the Earth ought, in all those different situations, according to his theory, to be impelled towards one another; and found, that the different degrees of their approaches, as they had been observed by Astronomers, corresponded exactly to his computations. As the attraction of the Sun, in the conjunctions and oppositions, diminishes the gravity of the Moon towards the Earth, and, consequently, makes her necessarily extend her orbit, and, therefore, require a longer periodical time to finish it. But, when the Moon and the Earth are in that part of the orbit which is nearest the Sun, this attraction of the Sun will be the greatest; consequently, the gravity of the Moon towards the Earth will there be most diminished; her orbit be most extended; and her periodic time be, therefore, the longest. This is, also, agreeable to experience, and in the very same proportion, in which, by computation, from these principles, it might be expected.

The orbit of the Moon is not precisely in the same Plane with that of the Earth; but makes a very small angle with it. The points of intersection with those two Planes, are called, the Nodes of the Moon. These Nodes of the Moon are in continual motion, and in eighteen or nineteen years, revolve backwards, from east to west, through all the different points of the Ecliptic. For the Moon, after having finished her periodical revolution, generally intersects the orbit of the Earth somewhat behind the point where she had intersected it before. But, though the motion of the Nodes is thus generally retrograde, it is not always so, but is sometimes direct, and sometimes they appear even stationary; the Moon generally intersects the Plane of the Earth’s orbit behind the point where she had intersected it in her former revolution; but she sometimes intersects it before that point, and sometimes in the very same point. It is the situation of those Nodes which determines the times of Eclipses, and their motions had, upon this account, at all times, been particularly attended to by Astronomers. Nothing, however, had perplexed them more, than to account for these so inconsistent motions, and, at the same time, preserve their so much sought-for regularity in the revolutions of

the Moon. For they had no other means of connecting the appearances together than by supposing the motions which produced them, to be, in reality, perfectly regular and equable. The history of Astronomy, therefore, gives an account of a greater number of theories invented for connecting together the motions of the Moon, than for connecting together those of all the other heavenly bodies taken together. The theory of gravity, connected together, in the most accurate manner, by the different actions of the Sun and the Earth, all those irregular motions; and it appears, by calculation, that the time, the quantity, and the duration of those direct and retrograde motions of the Nodes, as well as of their stationary appearances, might be expected to be exactly such, as the observations of Astronomers have determined them.

The same principle, the attraction of the Sun, which thus accounts for the motions of the Nodes, connects, too, another very perplexing irregularity in the appearances of the Moon; the perpetual variation in the inclination of her orbit to that of the Earth.

As the Moon revolves in an ellipse, which has the centre of the Earth in one of its foci, the longer axis of its orbit is called the Line of its Apsides. This line is found, by observation, not to be always directed towards the same points of the Firmament, but to revolve forwards from west to east, so as to pass through all the points of the Ecliptic, and to complete its period in about nine years; another irregularity, which had very much perplexed Astronomers, but which the theory of gravity sufficiently accounted for.

The Earth had hitherto been regarded as perfectly globular, probably for the same reason which had made men imagine, that the orbits of the Planets must necessarily be perfectly circular. But Sir Isaac Newton, from mechanical principles, concluded, that, as the parts of the Earth must be more agitated by her diurnal revolution at the Equator, than at the Poles, they must necessarily be somewhat elevated at the first, and flattened at the second. The observation, that the oscillations of pendulums were slower at the Equator than at the Poles, seeming to demonstrate, that gravity was stronger at the Poles, and weaker at the Equator, proved, he thought, that the Equator was further from the centre than the Poles. All the measures, however, which had hitherto been made of the Earth, seemed to show the contrary, that it was drawn out towards the Poles, and flattened towards the Equator. Newton, however, preferred his mechanical computations to the former measures of Geographers and Astronomers; and in this he was confirmed by the observations of Astronomers on the figure of Jupiter, whose diameter at the Pole seems

to be to his diameter at the Equator, as twelve to thirteen; a much greater inequality than could be supposed to take place betwixt the correspondent diameters of the Earth, but which was exactly proportioned to the superior bulk of Jupiter, and the superior rapidity with which he performs his diurnal revolutions. The observations of Astronomers at Lapland and Peru have fully confirmed Sir Isaac's system, and have not only demonstrated, that the figure of the Earth is, in general, such as he supposed it; but that the proportion of its axis to the diameter of its Equator is almost precisely such as he had computed it. And of all the proofs that have ever been adduced of the diurnal revolution of the Earth, this perhaps is the most solid and most satisfactory.

Hipparchus, by comparing his own observations with those of some former Astronomers, had found that the equinoctial points were not always opposite to the same part of the Heavens, but that they advanced gradually eastward by so slow a motion, as to be scarce sensible in one hundred years, and which would require thirty-six thousand to make a complete revolution of the Equinoxes, and to carry them successively through all the different points of the Ecliptic. More accurate observations discovered that this procession of the Equinoxes was not so slow as Hipparchus had imagined it, and that it required somewhat less than twenty-six thousand years to give them a complete revolution. While the ancient system of Astronomy, which represented the Earth as the immovable centre of the universe, took place, this appearance was necessarily accounted for, by supposing that the Firmament, besides its rapid diurnal revolution round the poles of the Equator, had likewise a slow periodical one round those of the Ecliptic. And when the system of Hipparchus was by the schoolmen united with the solid Spheres of Aristotle, they placed a new crystalline Sphere above the Firmament, in order to join this motion to the rest. In the Copernican system, this appearance had hitherto been connected with the other parts of that hypothesis, by supposing a small revolution in the Earth's axis from east to west. Sir Isaac Newton connected this motion by the same principle of gravity, by which he had united all the others, and showed, how the elevation of the parts of the Earth at the Equator must, by the attraction of the Sun, produce the same retrograde motion of the Nodes of the Ecliptic, which it produced of the Nodes of the Moon. He computed the quantity of motion which could arise from this action of the Sun, and his calculations here too corresponded with the observations of Astronomers.

Comets have hitherto, of all the appearances in the Heavens, been the least attended to by Astronomers. The rarity and inconstancy of their appearance, seemed to separate them entirely from the constant, regular, and uniform objects in the Heavens, and to make them resemble more the inconstant, transitory, and accidental phenomena of those regions that are in the neighbourhood of the Earth. Aristotle, Eudoxus, Hipparchus, Ptolemy, and Purbach, therefore, had all degraded them below the Moon, and ranked them among the meteors of the upper regions of the air. The observations of Tycho Brahe demonstrated, that they ascended into the celestial regions, and were often higher than Venus or the Sun. Des Cartes, at random, supposed them to be always higher than even the orbit of Saturn; and seems, by the superior elevation he thus bestowed upon them, to have been willing to compensate that unjust degradation which they had suffered for so many ages before. The observations of some later Astronomers demonstrated, that they too revolved about the Sun, and might therefore be parts of the Solar System. Newton accordingly applied his mechanical principle of gravity to explain the motions of these bodies. That they described equal areas in equal times, had been discovered by the observations of some later Astronomers; and Newton endeavoured to show how from this principle, and those observations, the nature and position of their several orbits might be ascertained, and their periodic times determined. His followers have, from his principles, ventured even to predict the returns of several of them, particularly of one which is to make its appearance in 1758.* We must wait for that time before we can determine, whether his philosophy corresponds as happily to this part of the system as to all the others. In the meantime, however, the ductility of this principle, which applied itself so happily to these, the most irregular of all the celestial appearances, and which has introduced such complete coherence into the motions of all the Heavenly Bodies, has served not a little to recommend it to the imaginations of mankind.

But of all the attempts of the Newtonian philosophy, that which would appear to be the most above the reach of human reason and experience, is the attempt to compute the weights and densities of the Sun, and of the several Planets. An attempt, however, which was indispensably necessary to complete the coherence of the Newtonian system. The power of attraction which, according to the theory of gravity, each body possesses, is in proportion to the quantity of matter contained in that body. But the periodic time in which one body, at a given distance, revolves round another that attracts it, is shorter in proportion as this

power is greater, and consequently as the quantity of matter in the attracting body. If the densities of Jupiter and Saturn were the same with that of the Earth, the periodic times of their several Satellites would be shorter than by observation they are found to be. Because the quantity of matter, and consequently the attracting power of each of them, would be as the cubes of their diameters. By comparing the bulks of those Planets, and the periodic times of their Satellites, it is found that, upon the hypothesis of gravity, the density of Jupiter must be greater than that of Saturn, and the density of the Earth greater than that of Jupiter. This seems to establish it as a law in the system, that the nearer the several Planets approach to the Sun, the density of their matter is the greater: a constitution of things which seems to be the most advantageous of any that could have been established; as water of the same density with that of our Earth, would freeze under the Equator of Saturn, and boil under that of Mercury.

Such is the system of Sir Isaac Newton, a system whose parts are all more strictly connected together, than those of any other philosophical hypothesis. Allow his principle, the universality of gravity, and that it decreases as the squares of the distance increase, and all the appearances, which he joins together by it, necessarily follow. Neither is their connection merely a general and loose connection, as that of most other systems, in which either these appearances, or some such like appearances, might indifferently have been expected. It is everywhere the most precise and particular that can be imagined, and ascertains the time, the place, the quantity, the duration of each individual phenomenon, to be exactly such as, by observation, they have been determined to be. Neither are the principles of union, which it employs, such as the imagination can find any difficulty in going along with. The gravity of matter is, of all its qualities, after its inertness, that which is most familiar to us. We never act upon it without having occasion to observe this property. The law too, by which it is supposed to diminish as it recedes from its centre, is the same which takes place in all other qualities which are propagated in rays from a centre, in light, and in every thing else of the same kind. It is such, that we not only find that it does take place in all such qualities, but we are necessarily determined to conceive that, from the nature of the thing, it must take place. The opposition which was made in France, and in some other foreign nations, to the prevalence of this system, did not arise from any difficulty which mankind naturally felt in conceiving gravity as an original and primary mover in the constitution of the universe. The Cartesian system, which

had prevailed so generally before it, had accustomed mankind to conceive motion as never beginning, but in consequence of impulse, and had connected the descent of heavy bodies, near the surface of the Earth, and the other Planets, by this more general bond of union; and it was the attachment the world had conceived for this account of things, which indisposed them to that of Sir Isaac Newton. His system, however, now prevails over all opposition, and has advanced to the acquisition of the most universal empire that was ever established in philosophy. His principles, it must be acknowledged, have a degree of firmness and solidity that we should in vain look for in any other system. The most sceptical cannot avoid feeling this. They not only connect together most perfectly all the phenomena of the Heavens, which had been observed before his time; but those also which the persevering industry and more perfect instruments of later Astronomers have made known to us have been either easily and immediately explained by the application of his principles, or have been explained in consequence of more laborious and accurate calculations from these principles, than had been instituted before. And even we, while we have been endeavouring to represent all philosophical systems as mere inventions of the imagination, to connect together the otherwise disjointed and discordant phenomena of Nature, have insensibly been drawn in, to make use of language expressing the connecting principles of this one, as if they were the real chains which Nature makes use of to bind together her several operations. Can we wonder then, that it should have gained the general and complete approbation of mankind, and that it should now be considered, not as an attempt to connect in the imagination the phenomena of the Heavens, but as the greatest discovery that ever was made by man, the discovery of an immense chain of the most important and sublime truths, all closely connected together, by one capital fact, of the reality of which we have daily experience.

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NOTE BY THE EDITORS.

The Author, at the end of this Essay, left some Notes and Memorandums, from which it appears, that he considered this last part of his History of Astronomy as imperfect, and needing several additions. The Editors, however, chose rather to publish than suppress it. It must be viewed, not as a History or Account of Sir Isaac Newton’s Astronomy,

but chiefly as an additional illustration of those Principles in the Human Mind which Mr. Smith has pointed out to be the universal motives of Philosophical Researches.

THE PRINCIPLES WHICH LEAD AND DIRECT PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRIES; ILLUSTRATED BY THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT PHYSICS.

From arranging and methodizing the System of the Heavens, Philosophy descended to the consideration of the inferior parts of Nature, of the Earth, and of the bodies which immediately surround it. If the objects, which were here presented to its view, were inferior in greatness or beauty, and therefore less apt to attract the attention of the mind, they were more apt, when they came to be attended to, to embarrass and perplex it, by the variety of their species, and by the intricacy and seeming irregularity of the laws or orders of their succession. The species of objects in the Heavens are few in number; the Sun, the Moon, the Planets, and the Fixed Stars, are all which those philosophers could distinguish. All the changes too, which are ever observed in these bodies, evidently arise from some difference in the velocity and direction of their several motions; but the variety of meteors in the air, of clouds, rainbows, thunder, lightning, winds, rain, hail, snow, is vastly greater; and the order of their succession seems to be still more irregular and inconstant. The species of fossils, minerals, plants, animals, which are found in the Waters, and near the surface of the Earth, are still more intricately diversified; and if we regard the different manners of their production, their mutual influence in altering, destroying, supporting one another, the orders of their succession seem to admit of an almost infinite variety. If the imagination, therefore, when it considered the appearances in the Heavens, was often perplexed, and driven out of its natural career, it would be much more exposed to the same embarrassment, when it directed its attention to the objects which the Earth presented to it, and when it endeavoured to trace their progress and successive revolutions.

To introduce order and coherence into the mind’s conception of this seeming chaos of dissimilar and disjointed appearances, it was necessary to deduce all their qualities, operations, and laws of succession, from those of some particular things, with which it was perfectly acquainted and familiar, and along which its imagination could glide smoothly and easily, and without interruption. But as we would in vain attempt to deduce the heat of a stove from that of an open chimney, unless we could

show that the same fire which was exposed in the one, lay concealed in the other; so it was impossible to deduce the qualities and laws of succession, observed in the more uncommon appearances of Nature, from those of such as were more familiar, if those customary objects were not supposed, however disguised in their appearance, to enter into the composition of those rarer and more singular phenomena. To render, therefore, this lower part of the great theatre of nature a coherent spectacle to the imagination, it became necessary to suppose, first, That all the strange objects of which it consisted were made up out of a few, with which the mind was extremely familiar: and secondly, That all their qualities, operations and rules of succession, were no more than different diversifications of those to which it had long been accustomed, in these primary and elementary objects.

Of all the bodies of which these inferior parts of the universe seem to be composed, those with which we are most familiar, are the Earth, which we tread upon; the Water, which we every day use; the Air, which we constantly breathe; and the Fire, whose benign influence is not only required for preparing the common necessaries of life, but for the continual support of that vital principle which actuates both plants and animals. These therefore, were by Empedocles, and the other philosophers of the Italian school, supposed to be the elements, out of which, at least, all the inferior parts of nature were composed. The familiarity of those bodies to the mind, naturally disposed it to look for some resemblance to them in whatever else was presented to its consideration. The discovery of some such resemblance united the new object to an assortment of things, with which the imagination was perfectly acquainted. And if any analogy could be observed betwixt the operations and laws of succession of the compound, and those of the simple objects, the movement of the fancy, in tracing their progress, became quite smooth, and natural, and easy. This natural anticipation, too, was still more confirmed by such a slight and inaccurate analysis of things, as could be expected in the infancy of science, when the curiosity of mankind, grasping at an account of all things before it had got full satisfaction with regard to any one, hurried on to build, in imagination, the immense fabric of the universe. The heat, observed in both plants and animals, seemed to demonstrate, that Fire made a part of their composition. Air was not less necessary for the subsistence of both, and seemed, too, to enter into the fabric of animals by respiration, and into that of plants by some other means. The juices which circulated through them showed how much of their texture was owing to Water. And their

resolution into Earth by putrefaction discovered that this element had not been left out in their original formation. A similar analysis seemed to show the same principles in most of the other compound bodies.

The vast extent of those bodies seemed to render them, upon another account, proper to be the great stores out of which nature compounded all the other species of things. Earth and Water divide almost the whole of the terrestrial globe between them. The thin transparent covering of the Air surrounds it to an immense height upon all sides. Fire, with its attendant, light, seems to descend from the celestial regions, and might, therefore, either be supposed to be diffused through the whole of those etherial spaces, as well as to be condensed and conglobated in those luminous bodies, which sparkle across them, as by the Stoics; or, to be placed immediately under the sphere of the Moon, in the region next below them, as by the Peripatetics, who could not reconcile the devouring nature of Fire with the supposed unchangeable essence of their solid and crystalline spheres.

The qualities, too, by which we are chiefly accustomed to characterize and distinguish natural bodies, are all of them found, in the highest degree in those Four Elements. The great divisions of the objects, near the surface of the Earth, are those into hot and cold, moist and dry, light and heavy. These are the most remarkable properties of bodies; and it is upon them that many of their other most sensible qualities and powers seem to depend. Of these, heat and cold were naturally enough regarded by those first enquirers into nature, as the active, moisture and dryness, as the passive qualities of matter. It was the temperature of heat and cold which seemed to occasion the growth and dissolution of plants and animals; as appeared evident from the effects of the change of the seasons upon both. A proper degree of moisture and dryness was not less necessary for these purposes; as was evident from the different effects and productions of wet and dry seasons and soils. It was the heat and cold, however, which actuated and determined those two otherwise inert qualities of things, to a state either of rest or motion. Gravity and levity were regarded as the two principles of motion, which directed all sublunary things to their proper place: and all those six qualities, taken together, were, upon such an inattentive view of nature, as must be expected in the beginnings of philosophy, readily enough apprehended to be capable of connecting together the most remarkable revolutions, which occur in these inferior parts of the universe. Heat and dryness were the qualities which characterized the element of Fire; heat and moisture that of Air; moisture and cold that of Water; cold and dryness

that of Earth. The natural motion of two of these elements, Earth and Water, was downwards, upon account of their gravity. This tendency, however, was stronger in the one than in the other, upon account of the superior gravity of Earth. The natural motion of the two other elements, Fire and Air, was upwards, upon account of their levity; and this tendency, too, was stronger in the one than in the other, upon account of the superior levity of Fire. Let us not despise those ancient philosophers, for thus supposing, that these two elements had a positive levity, or a real tendency upwards. Let us remember, that this notion has an appearance of being confirmed by the most obvious observations; that those facts and experiments, which demonstrate the weight of the Air, and which no superior sagacity, but chance alone, presented to the moderns, were altogether unknown to them; and that, what might, in some measure, have supplied the place of those experiments, the reasonings concerning the causes of the ascent of bodies, in fluids specifically heavier than themselves, seem to have been unknown in the ancient world, till Archimedes discovered them, long after their system of physics was completed, and had acquired an established reputation: that those reasonings are far from being obvious, and that by their inventor, they seem to have been thought applicable only to the ascent of Solids in Water, and not even to that of Solids in Air, much less to that of one fluid in another. But it is this last only which could explain the ascent of flame, vapours, and fiery exhalations, without the supposition of a specific levity.

Thus, each of those Four Elements had, in the system of the Universe, a place which was peculiarly allotted to it, and to which it naturally tended. Earth and Water rolled down to the centre; the Air spread itself above them; while the Fire soared aloft, either to the celestial region, or to that which was immediately below it. When each of those simple bodies had thus obtained its proper sphere, there was nothing in the nature of any one of them to make it pass into the place of the other, to make the Fire descend into the Air, the Air into the Water, or the Water into the Earth; or, on the contrary, to bring up the Earth into the place of the Water, the Water into that of the Air, or the Air into that of the Fire. All sublunary things, therefore, if left to themselves, would have remained in an eternal repose. The revolution of the heavens, those of the Sun, Moon, and Five Planets, by producing the vicissitudes of Day and Night, and of the Seasons, prevented this torpor and inactivity from reigning through the inferior parts of nature; inflamed by the rapidity of their circumvolutions, the element of Fire, and forced it violently

downwards into the Air, into the Water, and into the Earth, and thereby produced those mixtures of the different elements which kept up the motion and circulation of the lower parts of Nature; occasioned, sometimes, the entire transmutation of one element into another, and sometimes the production of forms and species different from them all, and in which, though the qualities of them all might be found, they were so altered and attempered by the mixture, as scarce to be distinguishable.

Thus, if a small quantity of Fire was mixed with a great quantity of Air, the moisture and moderate warmth of the one entirely surmounted and changed into their own essence the intense heat and dryness of the other; and the whole aggregate became Air. The contrary of which happened, if a small quantity of Air was mixed with a great quantity of Fire: the whole, in this case, became Fire. In the same manner, if a small quantity of Fire was mixed with a great quantity of Water, then, either the moisture and cold of the Water might surmount the heat and dryness of the Fire, so that the whole should become Water; or, the moisture of the Water might surmount the dryness of the Fire, while, in its turn, the heat of the Fire surmounted the coldness of the Water, so as that the whole aggregate, its qualities being heat and moisture, should become Air, which was regarded as the more natural and easy metamorphosis of the two. In the same manner they explained how like changes were produced by the different mixtures of Fire and Earth, Earth and Water, Water and Air, Air and Earth; and thus they connected together the successive transmutations of the elements into one another.

Every mixture of the Elements, however, did not produce an entire transmutation. They were sometimes so blended together, that the qualities of the one, not being able to destroy, served only to attemper those of the other. Thus Fire, when mixed with Water, produced sometimes a watery vapour, whose qualities were heat and moisture; which partook at once of the levity of the Fire, and of the gravity of the Water, and which was elevated by the first into the Air, but retained by the last from ascending into the region of Fire. The relative cold, which they supposed prevailed in the middle region of the Air, upon account of its equal distance, both from the region of Fire, and from the rays that are reflected by the surface of the Earth, condensed this vapour into Water; the Fire escaped it, and flew upwards, and the Water fell down in rain, or, according to the different degrees of cold that prevailed in the different seasons, was sometimes congealed into snow, and sometimes into hail. In the same manner, Fire, when mixed with Earth, produced sometimes a fiery exhalation, whose qualities were heat and dryness, which being

elevated by the levity of the first into the Air condensed by the cold, so as to take fire, and being at the same time surrounded by watery vapours, burst forth into thunder and lightning, and other fiery meteors. Thus they connected together the different appearances in the Air, by the qualities of their Four Elements; and from them, too, in the same manner, they endeavoured to deduce all the other qualities in the other homogeneous bodies, that are near the surface of the Earth. Thus, to give an example, with regard to the hardness and softness of bodies; heat and moisture, they observed, were the great softeners of matter. Whatever was hard, therefore, owed that quality either to the absence of heat, or to the absence of moisture. Ice, crystal, lead, gold, and almost all metals, owed their hardness to the absence of heat, and were, therefore, dissolvable by Fire. Rock-salt, nitre, alum, and hard clay, owed that quality to the absence of moisture, and were therefore, dissolvable in water. And, in the same manner, they endeavoured to connect together most of the other tangible qualities of matter. Their principles of union, indeed, were often such as had no real existence, and were always vague and undetermined in the highest degree; they were such, however, as might be expected in the beginnings of science, and such as, with all their imperfections, could enable mankind both to think and to talk, with more coherence, concerning those general subjects, than without them they would have been capable of doing. Neither was their system entirely devoid either of beauty or magnificence. Each of the Four Elements having a particular region allotted to it, had a place of rest, to which it naturally tended, by its motion, either up or down, in a straight line, and where, when it had arrived, it naturally ceased to move. Earth descended, till it arrived at the place of Earth; Water, till it arrived at that of Water; and Air, till it arrived at that of Air; and there each of them tended to a state of eternal repose and inaction. The Spheres consisted of a Fifth Element, which was neither light nor heavy, and whose natural motion made it tend, neither to the centre, nor from the centre, but revolve round it in a circle. As, by this motion, they could never change their situation with regard to the centre, they had no place of repose, no place to which they naturally tended more than to any other, but revolved round and round for ever. This Fifth Element was subject neither to generation nor corruption, nor alteration of any kind; for whatever changes may happen in the Heavens, the senses can scarce perceive them, and their appearance is the same in one age as in another. The beauty, too, of their supposed crystalline spheres seemed still more to entitle them to this distinction of unchangeable immortality. It was the motion of those Spheres, which

occasioned the mixtures of the Elements, and from thence, the production of all the forms and species, that diversify the world. It was the approach of the Sun and of the other Planets, to the different parts of the Earth, which, by forcing down the element of Fire, occasioned the generation of those forms. It was the recess of those bodies, which, by allowing each Element to escape to its proper sphere, brought about, in an equal time, their corruption. It was the periods of those great lights of Heaven, which measured out to all sublunary things, the term of their duration, of their growth, and of their decay, either in one, or in a number of seasons, according as the Elements of which they were composed, were either imperfectly or accurately blended and mixed with one another. Immortality, they could bestow upon no individual form, because the principles out of which it was formed, all tending to disengage themselves, and to return to their proper spheres, necessarily, at last, brought about its dissolution. But, though all individuals were thus perishable, and constantly decaying, every species was immortal, because the subject-matter out of which they were made, and the revolution of the Heavens, the cause of their successive generations, continued to be always the same.

In the first ages of the world, the seeming incoherence of the appearances of nature, so confounded mankind, that they despaired of discovering in her operations any regular system. Their ignorance, and confusion of thought, necessarily gave birth to that pusillanimous superstition, which ascribes almost every unexpected event, to the arbitrary will of some designing, though invisible beings, who produced it for some private and particular purpose. The idea of an universal mind, of a God of all, who originally formed the whole, and who governs the whole by general laws, directed to the conservation and prosperity of the whole, without regard to that of any private individual, was a notion to which they were utterly strangers. Their gods, though they were apprehended to interpose, upon some particular occasions, were so far from being regarded as the creators of the world, that their origin was apprehended to be posterior to that of the world. The Earth, according to Hesiod, was the first production of the chaos. The Heavens arose out of the Earth, and from both together, all the gods, who afterwards inhabited them. Nor was this notion confined to the vulgar, and to those poets who seem to have recorded the vulgar theology. Of all the philosophers of the Ionian school, Anaxagoras, it is well known, was the first who supposed that mind and understanding were requisite to account for the first origin of the world, and who, therefore, compared with the other philosophers

of his time, talked, as Aristotle observes, like a sober man among drunkards; but whose opinion was, at the time, so remarkable, that he seems to have got a sirname from it. The same notion, of the spontaneous origin of the world, was embraced, too, as the same author tells, by the early Pythagoreans, a sect, which, in the ancient world, was never regarded as irreligious. Mind, and understanding, and consequently Deity, being the most perfect, were necessarily, according to them, the last productions of Nature. For in all other things, what was most perfect, they observed, always came last. As in plants and animals, it is not the seed that is most perfect, but the complete animal, with all its members, in the one; and the complete plant, with all its branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, in the other. This notion, which could take place only while Nature was still considered as, in some measure, disorderly and inconsistent in her operations, was necessarily renounced by those philosophers, when, upon a more attentive survey, they discovered, or imagined they had discovered, more distinctly, the chain which bound all her different parts to one another. As soon as the Universe was regarded as a complete machine, as a coherent system, governed by general laws, and directed to general ends, viz. its own preservation and prosperity, and that of all the species that are in it; the resemblance which it evidently bore to those machines which are produced by human art, necessarily impressed those sages with a belief, that in the original formation of the world there must have been employed an art resembling the human art, but as much superior to it, as the world is superior to the machines which that art produces. The unity of the system, which, according to this ancient philosophy, is most perfect, suggested the idea of the unity of that principle, by whose art it was formed; and thus, as ignorance begot superstition, science gave birth to the first theism that arose among those nations, who were not enlightened by divine Revelation. According to Timæus, who was followed by Plato, that intelligent Being who formed the world endowed it with a principle of life and understanding, which extends from its centre to its remotest circumference, which is conscious of all its changes, and which governs and directs all its motions to the great end of its formation. This soul of the world was itself a God, the greatest of all the inferior, and created deities; of an essence that was indissoluble, by any power but by that of him who made it, and which was united to the body of the world, so as to be inseparable by every force, but his who joined them, from the exertion of which his goodness secured them. The beauty of the celestial spheres attracting the admiration of mankind, the constancy and regularity of

their motions seeming to manifest peculiar wisdom and understanding, they were each of them supposed to be animated by an Intelligence of a nature that was, in the same manner, indissoluble and immortal, and inseparably united to that sphere which it inhabited. All the mortal and changeable beings which people the surface of the earth were formed by those inferior deities; for the revolutions of the heavenly bodies seemed plainly to influence the generation and growth of both plants and animals, whose frail and fading forms bore the too evident marks of the weakness of those inferior causes, which joined their different parts to one another. According to Plato and Timæus, neither the Universe, nor even those inferior deities who govern the Universe, were eternal, but were formed in time, by the great Author of all things, out of that matter which had existed from all eternity. This at least their words seemed to import, and thus they are understood by Cicero, and by all the other writers of earlier antiquity, though some of the later Platonists have interpreted them differently.

According to Aristotle, who seems to have followed the doctrine of Ocellus, the world was eternal; the eternal effect of an eternal cause. He found it difficult, it would seem, to conceive what could hinder the First Cause from exerting his divine energy from all eternity. At whatever time he began to exert it, he must have been at rest during all the infinite ages of that eternity which had passed before it. To what obstruction, from within or from without, could this be owing? or how could this obstruction, if it ever had subsisted, have ever been removed? His idea of the nature and manner of existence of this First Cause, as it is expressed in the last book of his Physics, and the five last chapters of his Metaphysics, is indeed obscure and unintelligible in the highest degree, and has perplexed his commentators more than any other parts of his writings. Thus far, however, he seems to express himself plainly enough: that the First Heavens, that of the Fixed Stars, from which are derived the motions of all the rest, is revolved by an eternal, immovable, unchangeable, unextended being, whose essence consists in intelligence, as that of a body consists in solidity and extension; and which is therefore necessarily and always intelligent, as a body is necessarily and always extended: that this Being was the first and supreme mover of the Universe: that the inferior Planetary Spheres derived each of them its peculiar revolution from an inferior being of the same kind; eternal, immovable, unextended, and necessarily intelligent: that the sole object of the intelligences of those beings was their own essence, and the revolution of their own spheres; all other inferior things being unworthy

of their consideration; and that therefore whatever was below the Moon was abandoned by the gods to the direction of Nature, and Chance, and Necessity. For though those celestial beings were, by the revolutions of their several Spheres, the original causes of the generation and corruption of all sublunary forms, they were causes who neither knew nor intended the effects which they produced. This renowned philosopher seems, in his theological notions, to have been directed by prejudices which, though extremely natural, are not very philosophical. The revolutions of the Heavens, by their grandeur and constancy, excited his admiration, and seemed, upon that account, to be effects not unworthy a Divine Intelligence. Whereas the meanness of many things, the disorder and confusion of all things below, exciting no such agreeable emotion, seemed to have no marks of being directed by that Supreme Understanding. Yet, though this opinion saps the foundations of human worship, and must have the same effects upon society as Atheism itself, one may easily trace, in the Metaphysics upon which it is grounded, the origin of many of the notions, or rather of many of the expressions, in the scholastic theology, to which no notions can be annexed.

The Stoics, the most religious of all the ancient sects of philosophers, seem in this, as in most other things, to have altered and refined upon the doctrine of Plato. The order, harmony, and coherence which this philosophy bestowed upon the Universal System, struck them with awe and veneration. As, in the rude ages of the world, whatever particular part of Nature excited the admiration of mankind, was apprehended to be animated by some particular divinity; so the whole of Nature having, by their reasonings, become equally the object of admiration, was equally apprehended to be animated by a Universal Deity, to be itself a Divinity, an Animal; a term which to our ears seems by no means synonymous with the foregoing; whose body was the solid and sensible parts of Nature, and whose soul was that etherial Fire, which penetrated and actuated the whole. For of all the four elements, out of which all things were composed, Fire or Ether seemed to be that which bore the greatest resemblance to the Vital Principle which informs both plants and animals, and therefore most likely to be the Vital Principle which animated the Universe. This infinite and unbounded Ether, which extended itself from the centre beyond the remotest circumference of Nature, and was endowed with the most consummate reason and intelligence, or rather was itself the very essence of reason and intelligence, had originally formed the world, and had communicated a portion, or ray, of its own essence to whatever was endowed with life and

sensation, which, upon the dissolution of those forms, either immediately or some time after, was again absorbed into that ocean of Deity from whence it had originally been detached. In this system the Sun, the Moon, the Planets, and the Fixed Stars, were each of them also inferior divinities, animated by a detached portion of that etherial essence which was the soul of the world. In the system of Plato, the Intelligence which animated the world was different from that which originally formed it. Neither were these which animated the celestial spheres, nor those which informed inferior terrestrial animals, regarded as portions of this plastic soul of the world. Upon the dissolution of animals, therefore, their souls were not absorbed in the soul of the world, but had a separate and eternal existence, which gave birth to the notion of the transmigration of souls. Neither did it seem unnatural, that, as the same matter which had composed one animal body might be employed to compose another, that the same intelligence which had animated one such being should again animate another. But in the system of the Stoics, the intelligence which originally formed, and that which animated the world, were one and the same, all inferior intelligences were detached portions of the great one; and therefore, in a longer, or in a shorter time, were all of them, even the gods themselves, who animated the celestial bodies, to be at last resolved into the infinite essence of this almighty Jupiter, who, at a distant period, should, by an universal conflagration, wrap up all things, in that etherial and fiery nature, out of which they had originally been deduced, again to bring forth a new Heaven and a new Earth, new animals, new men, new deities; all of which would again, at a fated time, be swallowed up in a like conflagration, again to be re-produced, and again to be re-destroyed, and so on without end.

THE PRINCIPLES WHICH LEAD AND DIRECT PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRIES; ILLUSTRATED BY THE HISTORY OF THE ANCIENT LOGICS AND METAPHYSICS.

In every transmutation, either of one element into another, or of one compound body either into the elements out of which it was composed, or into another compound body, it seemed evident, that both in the old and in the new species, there was something that was the same, and something that was different. When Fire was changed into Air, or Water into Earth, the Stuff, or Subject-matter of this Air and this Earth, was evidently the same with that of the former Fire or Water; but the Nature or Species of those new bodies was entirely different. When, in the same manner, a number of fresh, green, and odoriferous flowers were thrown together in a heap, they, in a short time, entirely changed their nature, became putrid and loathsome, and dissolved into a confused mass of ordure, which bore no resemblance, either in sensible qualities or in its effects, to their former beautiful appearance. But how different soever the species, the subject-matter of the flowers, and of the ordure, was, in this case too, evidently the same. In every body therefore, whether simple or mixed, there were evidently two principles, whose combination constituted the whole nature of that particular body. The first was the Stuff, or Subject-matter, out of which it was made; the second was the Species, the Specific Essence, the Essential, or, as the schoolmen have called it, the Substantial Form of the Body. The first seemed to be the same in all bodies, and to have neither qualities nor powers of any kind, but to be altogether inert and imperceptible by any of the senses, till it was qualified and rendered sensible by its union with some species or essential form. All the qualities and powers of bodies seemed to depend upon their species or essential forms. It was not the stuff or matter of Fire, or Air, or Earth, or Water, which enabled those elements to produce their several effects, but that essential form which was peculiar to each of them. For it seemed evident that Fire must produce the effects of Fire, by that which rendered it Fire; Air, by that which rendered it Air; and that in the same manner all other simple and mixed bodies must produce their several effects, by that which constituted them such or such bodies; that is, by their Specific Essence or

essential forms. But it is from the effects of bodies upon one another, that all the changes and revolutions in the material world arise. Since these, therefore, depend upon the specific essences of those bodies, it must be the business of philosophy, that science which endeavours to connect together all the different changes that occur in the world, to determine wherein the Specific Essence of each object consists, in order to foresee what changes or revolutions may be expected from it. But the Specific Essence of each individual object is not that which is peculiar to it as an individual, but that which is common to it, with all other objects of the same kind. Thus the Specific Essence of the Water, which now stands before me, does not consist in its being heated by the Fire, or cooled by the Air, in such a particular degree; in its being contained in a vessel of such a form, or of such dimensions. These are all accidental circumstances, which are altogether extraneous to its general nature, and upon which none of its effects as Water depend. Philosophy, therefore, in considering the general nature of Water, takes no notice of those particularities which are peculiar to this water, but confines itself to those things which are common to all Water. If, in the progress of its inquiries, it should descend to consider the nature of Water that is modified by such particular accidents, it still would not confine its consideration to this water contained in this vessel, and thus heated at this fire, but would extend its views to Water in general contained in such kind of vessels, and heated to such a degree at such a fire. In every case, therefore, Species, or Universals, and not Individuals, are the objects of Philosophy. Because whatever effects are produced by individuals, whatever changes can flow from them, must all proceed from some universal nature that is contained in them. As it was the business of Physics, or Natural Philosophy, to determine wherein consisted the Nature and Essence of every particular Species of things, in order to connect together all the different events that occur in the material world; so there were two other sciences, which, though they had originally arisen out of that system of Natural Philosophy I have just been describing, were, however, apprehended to go before it, in the order in which the knowledge of Nature ought to be communicated. The first of these, Metaphysics, considered the general nature of Universals, and the different sorts or species into which they might be divided. The second of these, Logics, was built upon this doctrine of Metaphysics; and from the general nature of Universals, and of the sorts into which they were divided, endeavoured to ascertain the general rules by which we might distribute all particular objects into general classes, and determine to

what class each individual object belonged; for in this, they justly enough apprehended, consisted the whole art of philosophical reasoning. As the first of these two sciences, Metaphysics, is altogether subordinate to the second, Logic, they seem, before the time of Aristotle, to have been regarded as one, and to have made up between them that ancient Dialectic of which we hear so much, and of which we understand so little: neither does this separation seem to have been much attended to, either by his own followers, the ancient Peripatetics, or by any other of the old sects of philosophers. The later schoolmen, indeed, have distinguished between Ontology and Logic; but their Ontology contains but a small part of what is the subject of the metaphysical books of Aristotle, the greater part of which, the doctrines of Universals, and everything that is preparatory to the arts of defining and dividing, has, since the days of Porphery, been inserted into their Logic.

According to Plato and Timæus, the principles out of which the Deity formed the World, and which were themselves eternal, were three in number. The Subject-matter of things, the Species, or Specific Essences of things, and what was made out of these, the sensible objects themselves. These last had no proper or durable existence, but were in perpetual flux and succession. For as Heraclitus had said that no man ever passed the same river twice, because the water which he had passed over once was gone before he could pass over it a second time; so, in the same manner, no man ever saw, or heard, or touched the same sensible object twice. When I look at the window, for example, the visible species, which strikes my eyes this moment, though resembling, is different from that which struck my eyes the immediately preceding moment. When I ring the bell, the sound, or audible species, which I hear this moment, though resembling in the same manner, is different, however, from that which I heard the moment before. When I lay my hand on the table, the tangible species which I feel this moment, though resembling, in the same manner, is numerically different too from that which I felt the moment before. Our sensations, therefore, never properly exist or endure one moment; but, in the very instant of their generation, perish and are annihilated for ever. Nor are the causes of those sensations more permanent. No corporeal substance is ever exactly the same, either in whole or in any assignable part, during two successive, moments, but by the perpetual addition of new parts, as well as loss of old ones, is in continual flux and succession. Things of so fleeting a nature can never be the objects of science, or of any steady or permanent judgment. While we look at them, in order to consider them, they are changed and gone,

and annihilated for ever. The objects of science, and of all the steady judgments of the understanding, must be permanent, unchangeable, always existent, and liable neither to generation nor corruption, nor alteration of any kind. Such are the species or specific essences of things. Man is perpetually changing every particle of his body; and every thought of his mind is in continual flux and succession. But humanity, or human nature, is always existent, is always the same, is never generated, and is never corrupted. This, therefore, is the object of science, reason, and understanding, as man is the object of sense, and of those inconstant opinions which are founded upon sense. As the objects of sense were apprehended to have an external existence, independent of the act of sensation, so these objects of the understanding were much more supposed to have an external existence independent of the act of understanding. Those external essences were, according to Plato, the exemplars, according to which the Deity formed the world, and all the sensible objects that are in it. The Deity comprehended within his infinite essence, all these species, or external exemplars, in the same manner as he comprehended all sensible objects.

Plato, however, seems to have regarded the first of those as equally distinct with the second from what we would now call the Ideas or Thoughts of the Divine Mind,* and even to have supposed, that they had a particular place of existence, beyond the sphere of the visible corporeal world; though this has been much controverted, both by the later Platonists, and by some very judicious modern critics, who have followed the interpretation of the later Platonists, as what did most honour to the judgment of that renowned philosopher. All the objects in this world, continued he, are particular and individual. Here, therefore, the human mind has no opportunity of seeing any Species, or Universal Nature. Whatever ideas it has, therefore, of such beings, for it plainly has them, it must derive from the memory of what it has seen, in some former period of its existence, when it had an opportunity of visiting the place or Sphere of Universals. For some time after it is immersed in the body, during its infancy, its childhood, and a great part of its youth, the violence of those passions which it derives from the body, and which are all directed to the particular and individual objects of this world, hinder it from turning its attention to those Universal Natures, with which it had been conversant in the world from whence it came. The Ideas, of these, therefore, seem, in this first period of its existence here, to be overwhelmed in the confusion of those turbulent emotions, and to be almost entirely wiped out of its remembrance. During the continuance of

this state, it is incapable of Reasoning, Science and Philosophy, which are conversant about Universals. Its whole attention is turned towards particular objects, concerning which, being directed by no general notions, it forms many vain and false opinions, and is filled with error, perplexity, and confusion. But, when age has abated the violence of its passions, and composed the confusion of its thoughts, it then becomes more capable of reflection, and of turning its attention to those almost forgotten ideas of things with which it had been conversant in the former state of its existence. All the particular objects in this sensible world, being formed after the eternal exemplars in that intellectual world, awaken, upon account of their resemblance, insensibly, and by slow degrees, the almost obliterated ideas of these last. The beauty, which is shared in different degrees among terrestrial objects, revives the same idea of that Universal Nature of beauty which exists in the intellectual world: particular acts of justice, of the universal nature of justice; particular reasonings, and particular sciences, of the universal nature of science and reasoning; particular roundnesses, of the universal nature of roundness; particular squares, of the universal nature of squareness. Thus science, which is conversant about Universals, is derived from memory; and to instruct any person concerning the general nature of any subject, is no more than to awaken in him the remembrance of what he formerly knew about it. This both Plato and Socrates imagined they could still further confirm, by the fallacious experiment, which showed, that a person might be led to discover himself, without any information, any general truth, of which he was before ignorant, merely by being asked a number of properly arranged and connected questions concerning it.

The more the soul was accustomed to the consideration of those Universal Natures, the less it was attached to any particular and individual objects; it approached the nearer to the original perfection of its nature, from which, according to this philosophy, it had fallen. Philosophy, which accustoms it to consider the general Essence of things only, and to abstract from all their particular and sensible circumstances, was, upon this account, regarded as the great purifier of the soul. As death separated the soul from the body, and from the bodily senses and passions, it restored it to that intellectual world, from whence it had originally descended, where no sensible Species called off its attention from those general Essences of things. Philosophy, in this life, habituating it to the same considerations, brings it, in some degree, to that state of happiness and perfection, to which death restores the souls of just men in a life to come.

Such was the doctrine of Plato concerning the Species or Specific Essence of things. This, at least, is what his words seem to import, and thus he is understood by Aristotle, the most intelligent and the most renowned of all his disciples. It is a doctrine, which, like many of the other doctrines of abstract Philosophy, is more coherent in the expression than in the idea; and which seems to have arisen, more from the nature of language, than from the nature of things. With all its imperfections it was excusable, in the beginnings of philosophy, and is not a great deal more remote from the truth, than many others which have since been substituted in its room by some of the greatest pretenders to accuracy and precision. Mankind have had, at all times, a strong propensity to realize their own abstractions, of which we shall immediately see an example, in the notions of that very philosopher who first exposed the ill-grounded foundation of those Ideas, or Universals, of Plato and Timæus. To explain the nature, and to account for the origin of general Ideas, is, even at this day, the greatest difficulty in abstract philosophy. How the human mind, when it reasons concerning the general nature of triangles, should either conceive, as Mr. Locke imagines it does, the idea of a triangle, which is neither obtusangular, nor rectangular, nor acutangular; but which was at once both none and of all those together; or should, as Malbranche thinks necessary for this purpose, comprehend at once, within its finite capacity, all possible triangles of all possible forms and dimensions, which are infinite in number, is a question, to which it is surely not easy to give a satisfactory answer. Malbranche, to solve it, had recourse to the enthusiastic and unintelligible notion of the intimate union of the human mind with the divine, in whose infinite essence the immensity of such species could alone be comprehended; and in which alone, therefore, all finite intelligences could have an opportunity of viewing them. If, after more than two thousand years reasoning about this subject, this ingenious and sublime philosopher was forced to have recourse to so strange a fancy, in order to explain it, can we wonder that Plato, in the very first dawnings of science, should, for the same purpose, adopt an hypothesis, which has been thought, without much reason, indeed, to have some affinity to that of Malbranche, and which is not more out of the way?

What seems to have misled those early philosophers, was, the notion, which appears, at first, natural enough, that those things, out of which any object is composed, must exist antecedent to that object. But the things out of which all particular objects seem to be composed, are the stuff or matter of those objects, and the form or specific Essence, which

determines them to be of this or that class of things. These, therefore, it was thought, must have existed antecedent to the object which was made up between them. Plato, who held, that the sensible world, which, according to him, is the world of individuals, was made in time, necessarily conceived, that both the universal matter, the object of spurious reason, and the specific essence, the object of proper reason and philosophy out of which it was composed, must have had a separate existence from all eternity. This intellectual world, very different from the intellectual world of Cudworth, though much of the language of the one has been borrowed from that of the other, was necessarily and always existent; whereas the sensible world owed its origin to the free will and bounty of its author.

A notion of this kind, as long as it is expressed in very general language; as long as it is not much rested upon, nor attempted to be very particularly and distinctly explained, passes easily enough, through the indolent imagination, accustomed to substitute words in the room of ideas; and if the words seem to hang easily together, requiring no great precision in the ideas. It vanishes, indeed; is discovered to be altogether incomprehensible, and eludes the grasp of the imagination, upon an attentive consideration. It requires, however, an attentive consideration; and if it had been as fortunate as many other opinions of the same kind, and about the same subject, it might, without examination, have continued to be the current philosophy for a century or two. Aristotle, however, seems immediately to have discovered, that it was impossible to conceive, as actually existent, either that general matter, which was not determined by any particular species, or those species which were not embodied, if one may say so, in some particular portion of matter. Aristotle, too, held, as we have already observed the eternity of the sensible world. Though he held, therefore, that all sensible objects were made up of two principles, both of which, he calls, equally, substances, the matter and the specific essence, he was not obliged to hold, like Plato, that those principles existed prior in the order of time to the objects which they afterwards composed. They were prior, he said, in nature, but not in time, according to a distinction which was of use to him upon some other occasion. He distinguished, too, betwixt actual and potential existence. By the first, he seems to have understood what is commonly meant by existence or reality; by the second, the bare possibility of existence. His meaning, I say, seems to amount to this; though he does not explain it precisely in this manner. Neither the material Essence of body could, according to him, exist actually without

being determined by some Specific Essence, to some particular class of things, nor any Specific Essence without being embodied in some particular portion of matter. Each of these two principles, however, could exist potentially in this separate state. That matter existed potentially, which, being endowed with a particular form, could be brought into actual existence; and that form, which, by being embodied in a particular portion of matter, could, in the same manner, be called forth into the class of complete realities. This potential existence of matter and form, he sometimes talks of, in expressions which resemble those of Plato, to whose notion of separate Essence it bears a very great affinity.

Aristotle, who seems in many things original, and who endeavoured to seem to be so in all things, added the principle of privation to those of matter and form, which he had derived from the ancient Pythagorean school. When Water is changed into Air, the transmutation is brought about by the material principle of those two elements being deprived of the form of Water, and then assuming the form of Air. Privation, therefore, was a third principle opposite to form, which entered into the generation of every Species, which was always from some other Species. It was a principle of generation, but not of composition, as is most obvious.

The Stoics, whose opinions were, in all the different parts of philosophy, either the same with, or very nearly allied to those of Aristotle and Plato, though often disguised in very different language, held, that all things, even the elements themselves, were compounded of two principles, upon one of which depended all the active, and upon the other all the passive, powers of these bodies. The last of these, they called Matter; the first, the Cause, by which they meant the very same thing which Aristotle and Plato understood, by their specific Essences. Matter, according to the Stoics, could have no existence separate from the cause or efficient principle which determined it to some particular class of things. Neither could the efficient principle exist separately from the material, in which it was always necessarily embodied. Their opinion, therefore, so far coincided with that of the old Peripatetics. The efficient principle, they said, was the Deity. By which they meant, that it was a detached portion of the etherial and divine nature, which penetrated all things, that constituted what Plato would have called the Specific Essence of each individual object; and so far their opinion coincides pretty nearly with that of the latter Platonists, who held, that the Specific Essences of all things were detached portions of their created deity, the soul of the world; and with that of some of the Arabian

and Scholastic Commentators of Aristotle, who held that the substantial forms of all things descended from those Divine Essences which animated the Celestial Spheres. Such was the doctrine of the four principal Sects of the ancient Philosophers, concerning the Specific Essences of things, of the old Pythagoreans, of the Academical, the Peripatetic, and the Stoical Sects.

As this doctrine of Specific Essences seems naturally enough to have arisen from that ancient system of Physics, which I have above described, and which is, by no means, devoid of probability, so many of the doctrines of that system, which seems to us, who have been long accustomed to another, the most incomprehensible, necessarily flow from this metaphysical notion. Such are those of generation, corruption, and alteration; of mixture, condensation, and rarefaction. A body was generated or corrupted, when it changed its Specific Essence, and passed from one denomination to another. It was altered when it changed only some of its qualities, but still retained the same Specific Essence, and the same denomination. Thus, when a flower was withered, it was not corrupted; though some of its qualities were changed, it still retained the Specific Essence, and therefore justly passed under the denomination of a flower. But, when, in the further progress of its decay, it crumbled into earth, it was corrupted; it lost the Specific Essence, or substantial form of the flower, and assumed that of the earth, and therefore justly changed its denomination.

The Specific Essence, or universal nature that was lodged in each particular class of bodies, was not itself the object of any of our senses, but could be perceived only by the understanding. It was by the sensible qualities, however, that we judged of the Specific Essence of each object. Some of these sensible qualities, therefore, we regarded as essential, or such as showed, by their presence or absence, the presence or absence of that essential form from which they necessarily flowed. Others were accidental, or such whose presence or absence had no such necessary consequences. The first of these two sorts of qualities was called Properties; the second, Accidents.

In the Specific Essence of each object itself, they distinguished two parts; one of which was peculiar and characteristical of the one class of things of which that particular object was an individual, the other was common to it with some other higher classes of things. These two parts were, to the Specific Essence, pretty much what the Matter and the Specific Essence were to each individual body. The one, which was called the Genus, was modified and determined by the other, which was

called the Specific Difference, pretty much in the same manner as the universal matter contained in each body was modified and determined by the Specific Essence of that particular class of bodies. These four, with the Specific Essence or Species itself, made up the number of the Five Universals, so well known in the schools by the names of Genus, Species, Differentia, Proprium, and Accidens.

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OF THE NATURE OF THAT IMITATION WHICH TAKES PLACE IN WHAT ARE CALLED THE IMITATIVE ARTS.

PART I.

The most perfect imitation of an object of any kind must in all cases, it is evident, be another object of the same kind, made as exactly as possible after the same model. What, for example, would be the most perfect imitation of the carpet which now lies before me? — Another carpet, certainly, wrought as exactly as possible after the same pattern. But, whatever might be the merit or beauty of this second carpet, it would not be supposed to derive any from the circumstance of its having been made in imitation of the first. This circumstance of its being not an original, but a copy, would even be considered as some diminution of that merit; a greater or smaller, in proportion as the object was of a nature to lay claim to a greater or smaller degree of admiration. It would not much diminish the merit of a common carpet, because in such trifling objects, which at best can lay claim to so little beauty or merit of any kind, we do not always think it worth while to affect originality: it would diminish a good deal that of a carpet of very exquisite workmanship. In objects of still greater importance, this exact, or, as it would be called, this servile imitation, would be considered as the most unpardonable blemish. To build another St. Peter’s or St. Paul’s church, of exactly the same dimensions, proportions, and ornaments with the present buildings at Rome or London, would be supposed to argue such a miserable barrenness of genius and invention in the architect as would disgrace the most expensive magnificence.

The exact resemblance of the correspondent parts of the same object is frequently considered as a beauty, and the want of it as a deformity; as in the correspondent members of the human body, in the opposite wings of the same building, in the opposite trees of the same alley, in the correspondent compartments of the same piece of carpet-work, or of the same flower-garden, in the chairs or tables which stand in the correspondent parts of the same room, etc. But in objects of the same kind, which in other respects are regarded as altogether separate and unconnected, this exact resemblance is seldom considered as a beauty, nor the want of it as a deformity. A man, and in the same manner a horse, is handsome or ugly, each of them, on account of his own intrinsic beauty or deformity, without any regard to their resembling or not resembling, the one, another man, or the other, another horse. A set of coach-horses, indeed, is supposed to be handsomer when they are all

exactly matched; but each horse is, in this case, considered not as a separated and unconnected object, or as a whole by himself, but as a part of another whole, to the other parts of which he ought to bear a certain correspondence: separated from the set, he derives neither beauty from his resemblance, nor deformity from his unlikeness to the other horses which compose it.

Even in the correspondent parts of the same object, we frequently require no more than a resemblance in the general outline. If the inferior members of those correspondent parts are too minute to be seen distinctly, without a separate and distinct examination of each part by itself, as a separate and unconnected object, we should sometimes even be displeased if the resemblance was carried beyond this general outline. In the correspondent parts of a room we frequently hang pictures of the same size; those pictures, however, resemble one another in nothing but the frame, or, perhaps, in the general character of the subject; if the one is a landscape, the other is a landscape too; if the one represents a religious or a bacchanalian subject, its companion represents another of the same kind. Nobody ever thought of repeating the same picture in each correspondent frame. The frame, and the general character of two or three pictures, is as much as the eye can comprehend at one view, or from one station. Each picture, in order to be seen distinctly, and understood thoroughly, must be viewed from a particular station, and examined by itself as a separate and unconnected object. In a hall or portico, adorned with statues, the niches, or perhaps the pedestals, may exactly resemble one another, but the statues are always different. Even the masks which are sometimes carried upon the different key-stones of the same arcade, or of the correspondent doors and windows of the same front, though they may all resemble one another in the general outline, yet each of them has always its own peculiar features, and a grimace of its own. There are some Gothic buildings in which the correspondent windows resemble one another only in the general outline, and not in the smaller ornaments and subdivisions. These are different in each, and the architect had considered them as too minute to be seen distinctly, without a particular and separate examination of each window by itself, as a separate and unconnected object. A variety of this sort, however, I think, is not agreeable. In objects which are susceptible only of a certain inferior order of beauty, such as the frames of pictures, the niches or the pedestals of statues, &c., there seems frequently to be affectation in the study of variety, of which the merit is scarcely ever sufficient to compensate the want of that perspicuity and distinctness, of that easiness

to be comprehended and remembered, which is the natural effect of exact uniformity. In a portico of the Corinthian or Ionic order, each column resembles every other, not only in the general outline, but in all the minutest ornaments; though some of them, in order to be seen distinctly, may require a separate and distinct examination in each column, and in the entablature of each intercolumnation. In the inlaid tables, which, according to the present fashion, are sometimes fixed in the correspondent parts of the same room, the pictures only are different in each. All the other more frivolous and fanciful ornaments are commonly, so far at least as I have observed the fashion, the same in them all. Those ornaments, however, in order to be seen distinctly, require a distinct examination of each table.

The extraordinary resemblance of two natural objects, of twins, for example, is regarded as a curious circumstance; which, though it does not increase, yet does not diminish the beauty of either, considered as a separate and unconnected object. But the exact resemblance of two productions of art, seems to be always considered as some diminution of the merit of at least one of them; as it seems to prove, that one of them, at least, is a copy either of the other, or of some other original. One may say, even of the copy of a picture, that it derives its merit, not so much from its resemblance to the original, as from its resemblance to the object which the original was meant to resemble. The owner of the copy, so far from setting any high value upon its resemblance to the original, is often anxious to destroy any value or merit which it might derive from this circumstance. He is often anxious to persuade both himself and other people that it is not a copy, but an original, of which what passes for the original is only a copy. But, whatever merit a copy may derive from its resemblance to the original, an original can derive none from the resemblance of its copy.

But though a production of art seldom derives any merit from its resemblance to another object of the same kind, it frequently derives a great deal from its resemblance to an object of a different kind, whether that object be a production of art or of nature. A painted cloth, the work of some laborious Dutch artist, so curiously shaded and coloured as to represent the pile and softness of a woollen one, might derive some merit from its resemblance even to the sorry carpet which now lies before me. The copy might, and probably would, in this case, be of much greater value than the original. But if this carpet was represented as spread, either upon a floor or upon a table, and projecting from the background

of the picture, with exact observation of perspective, and of light and shade, the merit of the imitation would be still even greater.

In Painting, a plain surface of one kind is made to resemble, not only a plain surface of another, but all the three dimensions of a solid substance. In Statuary and Sculpture, a solid substance of one kind, is made to resemble a solid substance of another. The disparity between the object imitating, and the object imitated, is much greater in the one art than in the other; and the pleasure arising from the imitation seems greater in proportion as this disparity is greater.

In Painting, the imitation frequently pleases, though the original object be indifferent, or even offensive. In Statuary and Sculpture it is otherwise. The imitation seldom pleases, unless the original object be in a very high degree either great, or beautiful, or interesting. A butcher's-stall, or a kitchen-dresser, with the objects which they commonly present, are not certainly the happiest subjects, even for Painting. They have, however, been represented with so much care and success by some Dutch masters, that it is impossible to view the pictures without some degree of pleasure. They would be most absurd subjects for Statuary or Sculpture, which are, however, capable of representing them. The picture of a very ugly or deformed man, such as *Æsop*, or Scarron, might not make a disagreeable piece of furniture. The statue certainly would. Even a vulgar ordinary man or woman, engaged in a vulgar ordinary action, like what we see with so much pleasure in the pictures of Rembrandt, would be too mean a subject for Statuary. Jupiter, Hercules, and Apollo, Venus and Diana, the Nymphs and the Graces, Bacchus, Mercury, Antinous, and Meleager, the miserable death of Laocoon, the melancholy fate of the children of Niobe, the Wrestlers, the fighting, the dying gladiator, the figures of gods and goddesses, of heroes and heroines, the most perfect forms of the human body, placed either in the noblest attitudes, or in the most interesting situations which the human imagination is capable of conceiving, are the proper, and therefore have always been the favourite, subjects of Statuary: that art cannot, without degrading itself, stoop to represent any thing that is offensive, or mean, or even indifferent. Painting is not so disdainful; and, though capable of representing the noblest objects, it can, without forfeiting its title to please, submit to imitate those of a much more humble nature. The merit of the imitation alone, and without any merit in the imitated object, is capable of supporting the dignity of Painting: it cannot support that of Statuary. There would seem, therefore, to be more merit in the one species of imitation than in the other.

In Statuary, scarcely any drapery is agreeable. The best of the ancient statues were either altogether naked or almost naked; and those of which any considerable part of the body is covered, are represented as clothed in wet linen — a species of clothing which most certainly never was agreeable to the fashion of any country. This drapery too is drawn so tight, as to express beneath its narrow foldings the exact form and outline of any limb, and almost of every muscle of the body. The clothing which thus approached the nearest to no clothing at all, had, it seems, in the judgment of the great artists of antiquity, been that which was most suitable to Statuary. A great painter of the Roman school, who had formed his manner almost entirely upon the study of the ancient statues, imitated at first their drapery in his pictures; but he soon found that in Painting it had the air of meanness and poverty, as if the persons who wore it could scarce afford clothes enough to cover them; and that larger folds, and a looser and more flowing drapery, were more suitable to the nature of his art. In Painting, the imitation of so very inferior an object as a suit of clothes is capable of pleasing; and, in order to give this object all the magnificence of which it is capable, it is necessary that the folds should be large, loose, and flowing. It is not necessary in Painting that the exact form and outline of every limb, and almost of every muscle of the body, should be expressed beneath the folds of the drapery; it is sufficient if these are so disposed as to indicate in general the situation and attitude of the principal limbs. Painting, by the mere force and merit of its imitation, can venture, without the hazard of displeasing, to substitute, upon many occasions, the inferior in the room of the superior object, by making the one, in this manner, cover and entirely conceal a great part of the other. Statuary can seldom venture to do this, but with the utmost reserve and caution; and the same drapery, which is noble and magnificent in the one art, appears clumsy and awkward in the other. Some modern artists, however, have attempted to introduce into Statuary the drapery which is peculiar to Painting. It may not, perhaps, upon every occasion, be quite so ridiculous as the marble periwigs in Westminster Abbey: but if it does not always appear clumsy and awkward, it is at best always insipid and uninteresting.

It is not the want of colouring which hinders many things from pleasing in Statuary which please in Painting; it is the want of that degree of disparity between the imitating and the imitated object, which is necessary, in order to render interesting the imitation of an object which is itself not interesting. Colouring, when added to Statuary, so far

from increasing, destroys almost entirely the pleasure which we receive from the imitation; because it takes away the great source of that pleasure, the disparity between the imitating and the imitated object. That one solid and coloured object should exactly resemble another solid and coloured object, seems to be a matter of no great wonder or admiration. A painted statue, though it may resemble a human figure much more exactly than any statue which is not painted, is generally acknowledged to be a disagreeable and even an offensive object; and so far are we from being pleased with this superior likeness, that we are never satisfied with it; and, after viewing it again and again, we always find that it is not equal to what we are disposed to imagine it might have been: though it should seem to want scarce any thing but the life, we could not pardon it for thus wanting what it is altogether impossible it should have. The works of Mrs. Wright, a self-taught artist of great merit, are perhaps more perfect in this way than any thing I have ever seen. They do admirably well to be seen now and then as a show; but the best of them we shall find, if brought home to our own house, and placed in a situation where it was to come often into view, would make, instead of an ornamental, a most offensive piece of household furniture. Painted statues, accordingly, are universally reprobated, and we scarce ever meet with them. To colour the eyes of statues is not altogether so uncommon: even this, however, is disapproved by all good judges. ‘I cannot bear it,’ (a gentleman used to say, of great knowledge and judgment in this art), ‘I cannot bear it; I always want them to speak to me.’

Artificial fruits and flowers sometimes imitate so exactly the natural objects which they represent, that they frequently deceive us. We soon grow weary of them, however; and, though they seem to want nothing but the freshness and the flavour of natural fruits and flowers, we cannot pardon them, in the same manner, for thus wanting what it is altogether impossible they should have. But we do not grow weary of a good flower and fruit painting. We do not grow weary of the foliage of the Corinthian capital, or of the flowers which sometimes ornament the frieze of that order. Such imitations, however, never deceive us; their resemblance to the original objects is always much inferior to that of artificial fruits and flowers. Such as it is, however, we are contented with it; and, where there is such disparity between the imitating and the imitated objects, we find that it is as great as it can be, or as we expect that it should be. Paint that foliage and those flowers with the natural colours, and, instead of pleasing more, they will please much less. The resemblance, however, will be much greater; but the disparity between the imitating and the

imitated objects will be so much less, that even this superior resemblance will not satisfy us. Where the disparity is so very great, on the contrary, we are often contented with the most imperfect resemblance; with the very imperfect resemblance, for example, both as to the figure and the colour, of fruits and flowers in shell-work.

It may be observed, however, that, though in Sculpture the imitation of flowers and foliage pleases as an ornament of architecture, as a part of the dress which is to set off the beauty of a different and a more important object, it would not please alone, or as a separate and unconnected object, in the same manner as a fruit and flower painting pleases. Flowers and foliage, how elegant and beautiful soever, are not sufficiently interesting; they have not dignity enough, if I may say so, to be proper subjects for a piece of Sculpture, which is to please alone, and not to appear as the ornamental appendage of some other object.

In Tapestry and Needle-work, in the same manner as in Painting, a plain surface is sometimes made to represent all the three dimensions of a solid substance. But both the shuttle of the weaver, and the needle of the embroiderer, are instruments of imitation so much inferior to the pencil of the painter, that we are not surprised to find a proportionable inferiority in their productions. We have all more or less experience that they usually are much inferior: and, in appreciating a piece of Tapestry or Needle-work, we never compare the imitation of either with that of a good picture, for it never could stand that comparison, but with that of other pieces of Tapestry or Needle-work. We take into consideration, not only the disparity between the imitating and the imitated object, but the awkwardness of the instruments of imitation; and if it is as well as any thing that can be expected from these, if it is better than the greater part of what actually comes from them, we are often not only contented but highly pleased.

A good painter will often execute in a few days a subject which would employ the best tapestry-weaver for many years; though, in proportion to his time, therefore, the latter is always much worse paid than the former, yet his work in the end comes commonly much dearer to market. The great expense of good Tapestry, the circumstance which confines it to the palaces of princes and of great lords, gives it, in the eyes of the greater part of the people, an air of riches and magnificence, which contributes still further to compensate the imperfection of its imitation. In arts which address themselves, not to the prudent and the wise, but to the rich and the great, to the proud and the vain, we ought not to wonder if the appearances of great expense, of being what few people can purchase, of

being one of the surest characteristics of great fortune, should often stand in the place of exquisite beauty, and contribute equally to recommend their productions. As the idea of expense seems often to embellish, so that of cheapness seems as frequently to tarnish the lustre even of very agreeable objects. The difference between real and false jewels is what even the experienced eye of a jeweller can sometimes with difficulty distinguish. Let an unknown lady, however, come into a public assembly, with a head-dress which appears to be very richly adorned with diamonds, and let a jeweller only whisper in our ear that they are false stones, not only the lady will immediately sink in our imagination from the rank of a princess to that of a very ordinary woman, but the head-dress, from being an object of the most splendid magnificence, will at once become an impertinent piece of tawdry and tinsel finery.

It was some years ago the fashion to ornament a garden with yew and holly trees, clipped into the artificial shapes of pyramids, and columns, and vases, and obelisks. It is now the fashion to ridicule this taste as unnatural. The figure of a pyramid or obelisk, however, is not more unnatural to a yew-tree than to a block of porphyry or marble. When the yew-tree is presented to the eye in this artificial shape, the gardener does not mean that it should be understood to have grown in that shape: he means, first, to give it the same beauty of regular figure, which pleases so much in porphyry and marble; and, secondly, to imitate in a growing tree the ornaments of those precious materials: he means to make an object of one kind resembling another object of a very different kind; and to the original beauty of figure to join the relative beauty of imitation: but the disparity between the imitating and the imitated object is the foundation of the beauty of imitation. It is because the one object does not naturally resemble the other, that we are so much pleased with it, when by art it is made to do so. The shears of the gardener, it may be said, indeed, are very clumsy instruments of Sculpture. They are so, no doubt, when employed to imitate the figures of men, or even of animals. But in the simple and regular forms of pyramids, vases, and obelisks, even the shears of the gardener do well enough. Some allowance, too, is naturally made for the necessary imperfection of the instrument, in the same manner as in Tapestry and Needle-work. In short, the next time you have an opportunity of surveying those out-of-fashion ornaments, endeavour only to let yourself alone, and to restrain for a few minutes the foolish passion for playing the critic, and you will be sensible that they are not without some degree of beauty; that they give the air of neatness and correct culture at least to the whole garden; and that they are not

unlike what the ‘retired leisure, that’ (as Milton says) ‘in trim gardens ‘takes his pleasure,’ might be amused with. What then, it may be said, has brought them into such universal disrepute among us? In a pyramid or obelisk of marble, we know that the materials are expensive, and that the labour which wrought them into that shape must have been still more so. In a pyramid or obelisk of yew, we know that the materials could cost very little, and the labour still less. The former are ennobled by their expense; the latter degraded by their cheapness. In the cabbage-garden of a tallow-chandler we may sometimes perhaps have seen as many columns and vases and other ornaments in yew, as there are in marble and porphyry at Versailles: it is this vulgarity which has disgraced them. The rich and the great, the proud and the vain will not admit into their gardens an ornament which the meanest of the people can have as well as they. The taste for these ornaments came originally from France; where, notwithstanding that inconstancy of fashion with which we sometimes reproach the natives of that country, it still continues in good repute. In France, the condition of the inferior ranks of people is seldom so happy as it frequently is in England; and you will there seldom find even pyramids and obelisks of yew in the garden of a tallow-chandler. Such ornaments, not having in that country been degraded by their vulgarity, have not yet been excluded from the gardens of princes and lords.

The works of the great masters in Statuary and Painting, it is to be observed, never produce their effect by deception. They never are, and it never is intended that they should be, mistaken for the real objects which they represent. Painted Statuary may sometimes deceive an inattentive eye: proper Statuary never does. The little pieces of perspective in Painting, which it is intended should please by deception, represent always some very simple, as well as insignificant, objects: a roll of paper, for example, or the steps of a staircase, in the dark corner of some passage or gallery. They are generally the works too of some very inferior artists. After being seen once, and producing the little surprise which it is meant they should excite, together with the mirth which commonly accompanies it, they never please more, but appear to be ever after insipid and tiresome.

The proper pleasure which we derive from those two imitative arts, so far from being the effect of deception, is altogether incompatible with it. That pleasure is founded altogether upon our wonder at seeing an object of one kind represent so well an object of a very different kind, and upon our admiration of the art which surmounts so happily that disparity which Nature had established between them. The nobler works of

Statuary and Painting appear to us a sort of wonderful phenomena, differing in this respect from the wonderful phenomena of Nature, that they carry, as it were, their own explication along with them, and demonstrate, even to the eye, the way and manner in which they are produced. The eye, even of an unskilful spectator, immediately discerns, in some measure, how it is that a certain modification of figure in Statuary, and of brighter and darker colours in Painting, can represent, with so much truth and vivacity, the actions, passions, and behaviour of men, as well as a great variety of other objects. The pleasing wonder of ignorance is accompanied with the still more pleasing satisfaction of science. We wonder and are amazed at the effect; and we are pleased ourselves, and happy to find that we can comprehend, in some measure, how that wonderful effect is produced upon us.

A good looking-glass represents the objects which are set before it with much more truth and vivacity than either Statuary or Painting. But, though the science of optics may explain to the understanding, the looking-glass itself does not at all demonstrate to the eye how this effect is brought about. It may excite the wonder of ignorance; and in a clown, who had never beheld a looking-glass before, I have seen that wonder rise almost to rapture and extasy; but it cannot give the satisfaction of science. In all looking-glasses the effects are produced by the same means, applied exactly in the same manner. In every different statue and picture the effects are produced, though by similar, yet not by the same means; and those means too are applied in a different manner in each. Every good statue and picture is a fresh wonder, which at the same time carries, in some measure, its own explication along with it. After a little use and experience, all looking-glasses cease to be wonders altogether; and even the ignorant become so familiar with them, as not to think that their effects require any explication. A looking-glass, besides, can represent only present objects; and, when the wonder is once fairly over, we choose, in all cases, rather to contemplate the substance than to gaze at the shadow. One’s own face becomes then the most agreeable object which a looking-glass can represent to us, and the only object which we do not soon grow weary with looking at; it is the only present object of which we can see only the shadow: whether handsome or ugly, whether old or young, it is the face of a friend always, of which the features correspond exactly with whatever sentiment, emotion, or passion we may happen at that moment to feel.

In Statuary, the means by which the wonderful effect is brought about appear more simple and obvious than in Painting; where the disparity

between the imitating and the imitated object being much greater, the art which can conquer that greater disparity appears evidently, and almost to the eye, to be founded upon a much deeper science, or upon principles much more abstruse and profound. Even in the meanest subjects we can often trace with pleasure the ingenious means by which Painting surmounts this disparity. But we cannot do this in Statuary, because the disparity not being so great, the means do not appear so ingenious. And it is upon this account, that in Painting we are often delighted with the representation of many things, which in Statuary would appear insipid, and not worth the looking at.

It ought to be observed, however, that though in Statuary the art of imitation appears, in many respects, inferior to what it is in Painting, yet, in a room ornamented with both statues and pictures of nearly equal merit, we shall generally find that the statues draw off our eye from the pictures. There is generally but one or little more than one, point of view from which a picture can be seen with advantage, and it always presents to the eye precisely the same object. There are many different points of view from which a statue may be seen with equal advantage, and from each it presents a different object. There is more variety in the pleasure which we receive from a good statue, than in that which we receive from a good picture; and one statue may frequently be the subject of many good pictures or drawings, all different from one another. The shadowy relief and projection of a picture, besides, is much flattened, and seems almost to vanish away altogether, when brought into comparison with the real and solid body which stands by it. How nearly soever these two arts may seem to be akin, they accord so very ill with one another, that their different productions ought, perhaps, scarce ever to be seen together.

PART II.

After the pleasures which arise from the gratification of the bodily appetites, there seem to be none more natural to man than Music and Dancing. In the progress of art and improvement they are, perhaps, the first and earliest pleasures of his own invention; for those which arise from the gratification of the bodily appetites cannot be said to be his own invention. No nation has yet been discovered so uncivilized as to be altogether without them. It seems even to be amongst the most barbarous nations that the use and practice of them is both most frequent and most universal, as among the negroes of Africa and the savage tribes of America. In civilized nations, the inferior ranks of people have very little leisure, and the superior ranks have many other amusements; neither the one nor the other, therefore, can spend much of their time in Music and Dancing. Among savage nations, the great body of the people have frequently great intervals of leisure, and they have scarce any other amusement; they naturally, therefore, spend a great part of their time in almost the only one they have.

What the ancients called Rhythmus, what we call Time or Measure, is the connecting principle of those two arts; Music consisting in a succession of a certain sort of sounds, and Dancing in a succession of a certain sort of steps, gestures, and motions, regulated according to time or measure, and thereby formed into a sort of whole or system; which in the one art is called a song or tune, and in the other a dance; the time or measure of the dance corresponding always exactly with that of the song or tune which accompanies and directs it.*

The human voice, as it is always the best, so it would naturally be the first and earliest of all musical instruments: in singing, or in its first attempts towards singing, it would naturally employ sounds as similar as possible to those which it had been accustomed to; that is, it would employ words of some kind or other, pronouncing them only in time and measure, and generally with a more melodious tone than had been usual in common conversation. Those words, however, might not, and probably would not, for a long time have any meaning, but might resemble the syllables which we make use of in fol-faing, or the derry-down-down of our common ballads; and serve only to assist the voice in forming sounds proper to be modulated into melody, and to be lengthened or shortened according to the time and measure of the tune.

This rude form of vocal Music, as it is by far the most simple and obvious, so it naturally would be the first and earliest.

In the succession of ages it could not fail to occur, that in room of those unmeaning or musical words, if I may call them so, might be substituted words which expressed some sense or meaning, and of which the pronunciation might coincide as exactly with the time and measure of the tune, as that of the musical words had done before. Hence the origin of Verse or Poetry. The Verse would for a long time be rude and imperfect. When the meaning words fell short of the measure required, they would frequently be eked out with the unmeaning ones, as is sometimes done in our common ballads. When the public ear came to be so refined as to reject, in all serious Poetry, the unmeaning words altogether, there would still be a liberty assumed of altering and corrupting, upon many occasions, the pronunciation of the meaning ones, for the sake of accommodating them to the measure. The syllables which composed them would, for this purpose, sometimes be improperly lengthened, and sometimes improperly shortened; and though no unmeaning words were made use of, yet an unmeaning syllable would sometimes be stuck to the beginning, to the end, or into the middle of a word. All these expedients we find frequently employed in the verses even of Chaucer, the father of the English Poetry. Many ages might pass away before verse was commonly composed with such correctness, that the usual and proper pronunciation of the words alone, and without any other artifice, subjected the voice to the observation of a time and measure, of the same kind with the time and measure of the science of Music.

The Verse would naturally express some sense which suited the grave or gay, the joyous or melancholy humour of the tune which it was sung to; being as it were blended and united with that tune, it would seem to give sense and meaning to what otherwise might not appear to have any, or at least any which could be clearly understood, without the accompaniment of such an explication.

A pantomime dance may frequently answer the same purpose, and, by representing some adventure in love or war, may seem to give sense and meaning to a Music, which might not otherwise appear to have any. It is more natural to mimic, by gestures and motions, the adventures of common life, than to express them in Verse or Poetry. The thought itself is more obvious, and the execution is much more easy. If this mimicry was accompanied by Music, it would of its own accord, and almost without any intention of doing so, accommodate, in some measure, its

different steps and movements to the time and measure of the tune; especially if the same person both sung the tune and performed the mimicry, as is said to be frequently the case among the savage nations of Africa and America. Pantomime Dancing might in this manner serve to give a distinct sense and meaning to Music many ages before the invention, or at least before the common use of Poetry. We hear little, accordingly, of the Poetry of the savage nations who inhabit Africa and America, but a great deal of their pantomime dances.

Poetry, however, is capable of expressing many things fully and distinctly, which Dancing either cannot represent at all, or can represent but obscurely and imperfectly; such as the reasonings and judgments of the understanding; the ideas, fancies, and suspicions of the imagination; the sentiments, emotions, and passions of the heart. In the power of expressing a meaning with clearness and distinctness, Dancing is superior to Music, and Poetry to Dancing.

Of those three Sister Arts, which originally, perhaps, went always together, and which at all times go frequently together, there are two which can subsist alone, and separate from their natural companions, and one which cannot. In the distinct observation of what the ancients called Rhythmus, of what we call Time and Measure, consists the essence both of Dancing and of Poetry or Verse; or the characteristical quality which distinguishes the former from all other motion and action, and the latter from all other discourse. But, concerning the proportion between those intervals and divisions of duration which constitute what is called time and measure, the ear, it would seem, can judge with much more precision than the eye; and Poetry, in the same manner as Music, addresses itself to the ear, whereas Dancing addresses itself to the eye. In Dancing, the rhythmus, the proper proportion, the time and measure of its motions, cannot distinctly be perceived, unless they are marked by the more distinct time and measure of Music. It is otherwise in Poetry; no accompaniment is necessary to mark the measure of good Verse. Music and Poetry, therefore, can each of them subsist alone; Dancing always requires the accompaniment of Music.

It is Instrumental Music which can best subsist apart, and separate from both Poetry and Dancing. Vocal Music, though it may, and frequently does, consist of notes which have no distinct sense or meaning, yet naturally calls for the support of Poetry. But, ‘Music, married to immortal Verse,’ as Milton says, or even to words of any kind which have a distinct sense or meaning, is necessarily and essentially imitative. Whatever be the meaning of those words, though, like many of

the songs of ancient Greece, as well as some of those of more modern times, they may express merely some maxims of prudence and morality, or may contain merely the simple narrative of some important event, yet even in such didactic and historical songs there will still be imitation; there will still be a thing of one kind, which by art is made to resemble a thing of a very different kind; there will still be Music imitating discourse; there will still be Rhythmus and Melody, shaped and fashioned into the form either of a good moral counsel, or of an amusing and interesting story.

In this first species of imitation, which being essential to, is therefore inseparable from, all such Vocal Music, there may be, and there commonly is, added a second. The words may, and commonly do, express the situation of some particular person, and all the sentiments and passions which he feels from that situation. It is a joyous companion who gives vent to the gaiety and mirth with which wine, festivity, and good company inspire him. It is a lover who complains, or hopes, or fears, or despairs. It is a generous man who expresses either his gratitude for the favours, or his indignation at the injuries, which may have been done to him. It is a warrior who prepares himself to confront danger, and who provokes or desires his enemy. It is a person in prosperity who humbly returns thanks for the goodness, or one in affliction who with contrition implores the mercy and forgiveness of that invisible Power to whom he looks up as the Director of all the events of human life. The situation may comprehend, not only one, but two, three, or more persons; it may excite in them all either similar or opposite sentiments; what is a subject of sorrow to one, being an occasion of joy and triumph to another; and they may all express, sometimes separately and sometimes together, the particular way in which each of them is affected, as in a duo, trio, or a chorus.

All this it may, and it frequently has been said is unnatural; nothing being more so, than to sing when we are anxious to persuade, or in earnest to express any very serious purpose. But it should be remembered, that to make a thing of one kind resemble another thing of a very different kind, is the very circumstance which, in all the Imitative Arts, constitutes the merits of imitation; and that to shape, and as it were to bend, the measure and the melody of Music, so as to imitate the tone and the language of counsel and conversation, the accent and the style of emotion and passion, is to make a thing of one kind resemble another thing of a very different kind.

The tone and the movements of Music, though naturally very different from those of conversation and passion, may, however, be so managed as to seem to resemble them. On account of the great disparity between the imitating and the imitated object, the mind in this, as in the other cases, cannot only be contented, but delighted, and even charmed and transported, with such an imperfect resemblance as can be had. Such imitative Music, therefore, when sung to words which explain and determine its meaning, may frequently appear to be a very perfect imitation. It is upon this account, that even the incomplete Music of a recitative seems to express sometimes all the sedateness and composure of serious but calm discourse, and sometimes all the exquisite sensibility of the most interesting passion. The more complete Music of an air is still superior, and, in the imitation of the more animated passions, has one great advantage over every sort of discourse, whether Prose or Poetry, which is not sung to Music. In a person who is either much depressed by grief or enlivened by joy, who is strongly affected either with love or hatred, with gratitude or resentment, with admiration or contempt, there is commonly one thought or idea which dwells upon his mind, which continually haunts him, which, when he has chased it away, immediately returns upon him, and which in company makes him absent and inattentive. He can think but of one object, and he cannot repeat to them that object so frequently as it recurs upon him. He takes refuge in solitude, where he can with freedom either indulge the extasy or give way to the agony of the agreeable or disagreeable passion which agitates him; and where he can repeat to himself, which he does sometimes mentally, and sometimes even aloud, and almost always in the same words, the particular thought which either delights or distresses him. Neither Prose nor Poetry can venture to imitate those almost endless repetitions of passion. They may describe them as I do now, but they dare not imitate them; they would become most insufferably tiresome if they did. The Music of a passionate air, not only may, but frequently does, imitate them; and it never makes its way so directly or so irresistibly to the heart as when it does so. It is upon this account that the words of an air, especially of a passionate one, though they are seldom very long, yet are scarce ever sung straight on to the end, like those of a recitative; but are almost always broken into parts, which are transposed and repeated again and again, according to the fancy or judgment of the composer. It is by means of such repetitions only, that Music can exert those peculiar powers of imitation which distinguish it, and in which it excels all the other Imitative Arts. Poetry and Eloquence, it has

accordingly been often observed, produce their effect always by a connected variety and succession of different thoughts and ideas: but Music frequently produces its effects by a repetition of the same idea; and the same sense expressed in the same, or nearly the same, combination of sounds, though at first perhaps it may make scarce any impression upon us, yet, by being repeated again and again, it comes at last gradually, and by little and little, to move, to agitate, and to transport us.

To these powers of imitating, Music naturally, or rather necessarily, joins the happiest choice in the objects of its imitation. The sentiments and passions which Music can best imitate are those which unite and bind men together in society; the social, the decent, the virtuous, the interesting and affecting, the amiable and agreeable, the awful and respectable, the noble, elevating, and commanding passions. Grief and distress are interesting and affecting; humanity and compassion, joy and admiration, are amiable and agreeable; devotion is awful and respectable; the generous contempt of danger, the honourable indignation at injustice, are noble, elevating, and commanding. But it is these and such like passions which Music is fittest for imitating, and which it in fact most frequently imitates. They are, if I may say so, all Musical Passions; their natural tones are all clear, distinct, and almost melodious; and they naturally express themselves in a language which is distinguished by pauses at regular, and almost equal, intervals; and which, upon that account, can more easily be adapted to the regular returns of the correspondent periods of a tune. The passions, on the contrary, which drive men from one another, the unsocial, the hateful, the indecent, the vicious passions, cannot easily be imitated by Music. The voice of furious anger, for example, is harsh and discordant; its periods are all irregular, sometimes very long and sometimes very short, and distinguished by no regular pauses. The obscure and almost inarticulate grumblings of black malice and envy, the screaming outcries of dastardly fear, the hideous growlings of brutal and implacable revenge, are all equally discordant. It is with difficulty that Music can imitate any of those passions, and the Music which does imitate them is not the most agreeable. A whole entertainment may consist, without any impropriety, of the imitation of the social and amiable passions. It would be a strange entertainment which consisted altogether in the imitation of the odious and the vicious. A single song expresses almost always some social, agreeable, or interesting passion. In an opera the unsocial and disagreeable are sometimes introduced, but it is rarely, and as discords

are introduced into harmony, to set off by their contrast the superior beauty of the opposite passions. What Plato said of Virtue, that it was of all beauties the brightest, may with some sort of truth be said of the proper and natural objects of musical imitation. They are either the sentiments and passions, in the exercise of which consist both the glory and the happiness of human life, or they are those from which it derives its most delicious pleasures, and most enlivening joys; or, at the worst and the lowest, they are those by which it calls upon our indulgence and compassionate assistance to its unavoidable weaknesses, distresses, and misfortunes.

To the merit of its imitation and to that of its happy choice in the objects which it imitates, the great merits of Statuary and Painting, Music joins another peculiar and exquisite merit of its own. Statuary and Painting cannot be said to add any new beauties of their own to the beauties of Nature which they imitate; they may assemble a greater number of those beauties, and group them in a more agreeable manner than they are commonly, or perhaps ever, to be found in Nature. It may perhaps be true, what the artists are so very fond of telling us, that no woman ever equalled, in all the parts of her body, the beauty of the Venus of Medicis, nor any man that of the Apollo of Belvidere. But they must allow, surely, that there is no particular beauty in any part or feature of those two famous statues, which is not at least equalled, if not much excelled, by what is to be found in many living subjects. But Music, by arranging, and as it were bending to its own time and measure, whatever sentiments and passions it expresses, not only assembles and groups, as well as Statuary and Painting, the different beauties of Nature which it imitates, but it clothes them, besides, with a new and an exquisite beauty of its own; it clothes them with melody and harmony, which, like a transparent mantle, far from concealing any beauty, serve only to give a brighter colour, a more enlivening lustre and a more engaging grace to every beauty which they infold.

To these two different sorts of imitation, — to that general one, by which Music is made to resemble discourse, and to that particular one, by which it is made to express the sentiments and feelings with which a particular situation inspires a particular person, — there is frequently joined a third. The person who sings may join to this double imitation of the singer the additional imitation of the actor; and express, not only by the modulation and cadence of his voice, but by his countenance, by his attitudes, by his gestures, and by his motions, the sentiments and feelings of the person whose situation is painted in the song. Even in private

company, though a song may sometimes perhaps be said to be well sung, it can never be said to be well performed, unless the singer does something of this kind; and there is no comparison between the effect of what is sung coldly from a music-book at the end of a harpsichord, and of what is not only sung, but acted with proper freedom, animation, and boldness. An opera actor does no more than this; and an imitation which is so pleasing, and which appears even so natural, in private society, ought not to appear forced, unnatural, or disagreeable upon the stage.

In a good opera actor, not only the modulations and pauses of his voice, but every motion and gesture, every variation, either in the air of his head, or in the attitude of his body, correspond to the time and measure of Music: they correspond to the expression of the sentiment or passion which the Music imitates, and that expression necessarily corresponds to this time and measure. Music is as it were the soul which animates him, which informs every feature of his countenance, and even directs every movement of his eyes. Like the musical expression of a song, his action adds to the natural grace of the sentiment or action which it imitates, a new and peculiar grace of its own; the exquisite and engaging grace of those gestures and motions, of those airs and attitudes which are directed by the movement, by the time and measure of Music; this grace heightens and enlivens that expression. Nothing can be more deeply affecting than the interesting scenes of the serious opera, when to good Poetry and good Music, to the Poetry of Metastasio and the Music of Pergolese, is added the execution of a good actor. In the serious opera, indeed, the action is too often sacrificed to the Music; the castrati, who perform the principal parts, being always the most insipid and miserable actors. The sprightly airs of the comic opera are, in the same manner, in the highest degree enlivening and diverting. Though they do not make us laugh so loud as we sometimes do at the scenes of the common comedy, they make us smile more frequently; and the agreeable gaiety, the temperate joy, if I may call it so, with which they inspire us, is not only an elegant, but a most delicious pleasure. The deep distress and the great passions of tragedy are capable of producing some effect, though it should be but indifferently acted. It is not so with the lighter misfortunes and less affecting situations of comedy: unless it is at least tolerably acted, it is altogether insupportable. But the castrati are scarce ever tolerable actors; they are accordingly seldom admitted to play in the comic opera; which, being upon that account commonly better performed than the serious, appears to many people the better entertainment of the two.

The imitative powers of Instrumental are much inferior to those of Vocal Music; its melodious but unmeaning and inarticulated sounds cannot, like the articulations of the human voice, relate distinctly the circumstances of any particular story, or describe the different situations which those circumstances produced; or even express clearly, and so as to be understood by every hearer, the various sentiments and passions which the parties concerned felt from these situations: even its imitation of other sounds, the objects which it can certainly best imitate, is commonly so indistinct, that alone, and without any explication, it might not readily suggest to us what was the imitated object. The rocking of a cradle is supposed to be imitated in that concerto of Correlli, which is said to have been composed for the Nativity: but unless we were told beforehand, it might not readily occur to us what it meant to imitate, or whether it meant to imitate any thing at all; and this imitation (which, though perhaps as successful as any other, is by no means the distinguished beauty of that admired composition) might only appear to us a singular and odd passage in Music. The ringing of bells and the singing of the lark and nightingale are imitated in the symphony of Instrumental Music which Mr. Handel has composed for the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton: these are not only sounds but musical sounds, and may therefore be supposed to be more within the compass of the powers of musical imitation. It is accordingly universally acknowledged, that in these imitations this great master has been remarkably successful; and yet, unless the verses of Milton explained the meaning of the Music, it might not even in this case readily occur to us what it meant to imitate, or whether it meant to imitate any thing at all. With the explication of the words, indeed, the imitation appears, what it certainly is, a very fine one; but without that explication it might perhaps appear only a singular passage, which had less connexion either with what went before or with what came after it, than any other in the Music.

Instrumental Music is said sometimes to imitate motion; but in reality it only either imitates the particular sounds which accompany certain motions, or it produces sounds of which the time and measure bear some correspondence to the variations, to the pauses and interruptions, to the successive accelerations and retardations of the motion which it means to imitate: it is in this way that it sometimes attempts to express the march and array of an army, the confusion and hurry of a battle, &c. In all these cases, however, its imitation is so very indistinct, that without the accompaniment of some other art, to explain and interpret its meaning, it would be almost always unintelligible; and we could scarce ever know

with certainty, either what it meant to imitate, or whether it meant to imitate any thing at all.

In the imitative arts, though it is by no means necessary that the imitating should so exactly resemble the imitated object, that the one should sometimes be mistaken for the other, it is, however, necessary that they should resemble at least so far, that the one should always readily suggest the other. It would be a strange picture which required an inscription at the foot to tell us, not only what particular person it meant to represent, but whether it meant to represent a man or a horse, or whether it meant to be a picture at all, and to represent any thing. The imitations of instrumental Music may, in some respects, be said to resemble such pictures. There is, however, this very essential difference between them, that the picture would not be much mended by the inscription; whereas, by what may be considered as very little more than such an inscription, instrumental Music, though it cannot always even then, perhaps, be said properly to imitate, may, however, produce all the effects of the finest and most perfect imitation. In order to explain how this is brought about, it will not be necessary to descend into any great depth of philosophical speculation.

That train of thoughts and ideas which is continually passing through the mind does not always move on with the same pace, if I may say so, or with the same order and connection. When we are gay and cheerful, its motion is brisker and more lively, our thoughts succeed one another more rapidly, and those which immediately follow one another seem frequently either to have but little connection, or to be connected rather by their opposition than by their mutual resemblance. As in this wanton and playful disposition of mind we hate to dwell long upon the same thought, so we do not much care to pursue resembling thoughts; and the variety of contrast is more agreeable to us than the sameness of resemblance. It is quite otherwise when we are melancholy and desponding; we then frequently find ourselves haunted, as it were, by some thought which we would gladly chase away, but which constantly pursues us, and which admits no followers, attendants, or companions, but such as are of its own kindred and complexion. A slow succession of resembling or closely connected thoughts is the characteristic of this disposition of mind; a quick succession of thoughts, frequently contrasted and in general very slightly connected, is the characteristic of the other. What may be called the natural state of the mind, the state in which we are neither elated nor dejected, the state of sedateness, tranquillity, and composure, holds a sort of middle place between those

two opposite extremes; our thoughts may succeed one another more slowly, and with a more distinct connection, than in the one; but more quickly and with a greater variety, than in the other.

Acute sounds are naturally gay, sprightly, and enlivening; grave sounds solemn, awful, and melancholy. There seems too to be some natural connection between acuteness in tune and quickness in time or succession, as well as between gravity and slowness: an acute sound seems to fly off more quickly than a grave one: the treble is more cheerful than the bass; its notes likewise commonly succeed one another more rapidly. But instrumental Music, by a proper arrangement, by a quicker or slower succession of acute and grave, of resembling and contrasted sounds, can not only accommodate itself to the gay, the sedate, or the melancholy mood; but if the mind is so far vacant as not to be disturbed by any disorderly passion, it can, at least for the moment, and to a certain degree, produce every possible modification of each of those moods or dispositions. We all readily distinguish the cheerful, the gay, and the sprightly Music, from the melancholy, the plaintive, and the affecting; and both these from what holds a sort of middle place between them, the sedate, the tranquil, and the composing. And we are all sensible that, in the natural and ordinary state of the mind, Music can, by a sort of incantation, sooth and charm us into some degree of that particular mood or disposition which accords with its own character and temper. In a concert of instrumental Music the attention is engaged, with pleasure and delight, to listen to a combination of the most agreeable and melodious sounds, which follow one another, sometimes with a quicker, and sometimes with a slower succession; and in which those that immediately follow one another sometimes exactly or nearly resemble, and sometimes contrast with one another in tune, in time, and in order of arrangement. The mind being thus successively occupied by a train of objects, of which the nature, succession, and connection correspond, sometimes to the gay, sometimes to the tranquil, and sometimes to the melancholy mood or disposition, it is itself successively led into each of those moods or dispositions; and is thus brought into a sort of harmony or concord with the Music which so agreeably engages its attention.

It is not, however, by imitation properly, that instrumental Music produces this effect: instrumental Music does not imitate, as vocal Music, as Painting, or as Dancing would imitate, a gay, a sedate, or a melancholy person; it does not tell us, as any of those other arts could tell us, a pleasant, a serious, or a melancholy story. It is not, as in vocal

Music, in Painting, or in Dancing, by sympathy with the gaiety, the sedateness, or the melancholy and distress of some other person, that instrumental Music soothes us into each of these dispositions: it becomes itself a gay, a sedate, or a melancholy object; and the mind naturally assumes the mood or disposition which at the time corresponds to the object which engages its attention. Whatever we feel from instrumental Music is an original, and not a sympathetic feeling: it is our own gaiety, sedateness, or melancholy; not the the reflected disposition of another person.

When we follow the winding alleys of some happily situated and well laid out garden, we are presented with a succession of landscapes, which are sometimes gay, sometimes gloomy, and sometimes calm and serene; if the mind is in its natural state, it suits itself to the objects which successively present themselves, and varies in some degree its mood and present humour with every variation of the scene. It would be improper, however, to say that those scenes imitated the gay, the calm, or the melancholy mood of the mind; they may produce in their turn each of those moods, but they cannot imitate any of them. Instrumental Music, in the same manner, though it can excite all those different dispositions, cannot imitate any of them. There are no two things in nature more perfectly disparate than sound and sentiment; and it is impossible by any human power to fashion the one into any thing that bears any real resemblance to the other.

This power of exciting and varying the different moods and dispositions of the mind, which instrumental Music really possesses to a very considerable degree, has been the principal source of its reputation for those great imitative powers which have been ascribed to it. ‘Painting,’ says an author, more capable of feeling strongly than of analysing accurately, Mr. Rousseau of Geneva, ‘Painting, which presents its imitations, not to the imagination, but to the senses, and to only one of the senses, can represent nothing besides the objects of sight. Music, one might imagine, should be equally confined to those of hearing. It imitates, however, every thing, even those objects which are perceivable by sight only. By a delusion that seems almost inconceivable, it can, as it were, put the eye into the ear; and the greatest wonder, of an art which acts only by motion and succession, is, that it can imitate rest and repose. Night, Sleep, Solitude, and Silence are all within the compass of musical imitation. Though all Nature should be asleep, the person who contemplates it is awake; and the art of the musician consists in substituting, in the room of an image of what is not the object of

hearing, that of the movements which its presence would excite in the mind of the spectator.' — That is, of the effects which it would produce upon his mood and disposition. 'The musician (continues the same author) will sometimes, not only agitate the waves of the sea, blow up the flames of a conflagration, make the rain fall, the rivulets flow and swell the torrents, but he will paint the horrors of a hideous desert, darken the walls of a subterraneous dungeon, calm the tempest, restore serenity and tranquillity to the air and the sky, and shed from the orchestra a new freshness over the groves and the fields. He will not directly represent any of these objects, but he will excite in the mind the same movements which it would feel from seeing them.'

Upon this very eloquent description of Mr. Rousseau I must observe, that without the accompaniment of the scenery and action of the opera, without the assistance either of the scene-painter or of the poet, or of both, the instrumental Music of the orchestra could produce none of the effects which are here ascribed to it; and we could never know, we could never even guess, which of the gay, melancholy, or tranquil objects above mentioned it meant to represent to us; or whether it meant to represent any of them, and not merely to entertain us with a concert of gay, melancholy, or tranquil Music; or, as the ancients called them, of the Diastaltic, of the Systaltic, or of the Middle Music. With that accompaniment, indeed, though it cannot always even then, perhaps, be said properly to imitate, yet by supporting the imitation of some other art, it may produce all the same effects upon us as if itself had imitated in the finest and most perfect manner. Whatever be the object or situation which the scene-painter represents upon the theatre, the Music of the orchestra, by disposing the mind to the same sort of mood and temper which it would feel from the presence of that object, or from sympathy with the person who was placed in that situation, can greatly enhance the effect of that imitation: it can accommodate itself to every diversity of scene. The melancholy of the man who, upon some great occasion, only finds himself alone in the darkness, the silence and solitude of the night, is very different from that of one who, upon a like occasion, finds himself in the midst of some dreary and inhospitable desert; and even in this situation his feelings would not be the same as if he was shut up in a subterraneous dungeon. The different degrees of precision with which the Music of the orchestra can accommodate itself to each of those diversities, must depend upon the taste, the sensibility, the fancy and imagination of the composer: it may sometimes, perhaps, contribute to this precision, that it should imitate, as well as it can, the sounds which

either naturally accompany, or which might be supposed to accompany, the particular objects represented. The symphony in the French opera of Alcyone, which imitated the violence of the winds and the dashing of the waves, in the tempest which was to drown Coix, is much commended by cotemporary writers. That in the opera of Isse, which imitated that murmuring in the leaves of the oaks of Dodona, which might be supposed to precede the miraculous pronunciation of the oracle: and that in the opera of Amadis, of which the dismal accents imitated the sounds which might be supposed to accompany the opening of the tomb of Ardan, before the apparition of the ghost of that warrior, are still more celebrated. Instrumental Music, however, without violating too much its own melody and harmony, can imitate but imperfectly the sounds of natural objects, of which the greater part have neither melody nor harmony. Great reserve, great discretion, and a very nice discernment are requisite, in order to introduce with propriety such imperfect imitations, either into Poetry or Music; when repeated too often, when continued too long, they appear to be what they really are, mere tricks, in which a very inferior artist, if he will only give himself the trouble to attend to them, can easily equal the greatest. I have seen a Latin translation of Mr. Pope's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, which in this respect very much excelled the original. Such imitations are still easier in Music. Both in the one art and in the other, the difficulty is not in making them as well as they are capable of being made, but in knowing when and how far to make them at all: but to be able to accommodate the temper and character of the Music to every peculiarity of the scene and situation with such exact precision, that the one shall produce the very same effect upon the mind as the other, is not one of those tricks in which an inferior artist can easily equal the greatest; it is an art which requires all the judgment, knowledge, and invention of the most consummate master. It is upon this art, and not upon its imperfect imitation, either of real or imaginary sounds, that the great effects of instrumental Music depend; such imitations ought perhaps to be admitted only so far as they may sometimes contribute to ascertain the meaning, and thereby to enhance the effects of this art.

By endeavouring to extend the effects of scenery beyond what the nature of the thing will admit of, it has been much abused; and in the common, as well as in the musical drama, many imitations have been attempted, which, after the first and second time we have seen them, necessarily appear ridiculous: such are, the Thunder rumbling from the Mustard-bowl, and the Snow of Paper and thick Hail of Pease, so finely

exposed by Mr. Pope. Such imitations resemble those of painted Statuary; they may surprise at first, but they disgust ever after, and appear evidently such simple and easy tricks as are fit only for the amusement of children and their nurses at a puppet-show. The thunder of either theatre ought certainly never to be louder than that which the orchestra is capable of producing; and their most dreadful tempests ought never to exceed what the scene painter is capable of representing. In such imitations there may be an art which merits some degree of esteem and admiration. In the other there can be none which merits any.

This abuse of scenery has both subsisted much longer, and been carried to a much greater degree of extravagance, in the musical than in the common drama. In France it has been long banished from the latter; but it still continues, not only to be tolerated, but to be admired and applauded in the former. In the French operas, not only thunder and lightning, storms and tempests, are commonly represented in the ridiculous manner above mentioned, but all the marvellous, all the supernatural of Epic Poetry, all the metamorphoses of Mythology, all the wonders of Witchcraft and Magic, every thing that is most unfit to be represented upon the stage, are every day exhibited with the most complete approbation and applause of that ingenious nation. The music of the orchestra producing upon the audience nearly the same effect which a better and more artful imitation would produce, hinders them from feeling, at least in its full force, the ridicule of those childish and awkward imitations which necessarily abound in that extravagant scenery. And in reality such imitations, though no doubt ridiculous every where, yet certainly appear somewhat less so in the musical than they would in the common drama. The Italian opera, before it was reformed by Apostolo, Zeno, and Metastasio, was in this respect equally extravagant, and was upon that account the subject of the agreeable raillery of Mr. Addison in several different papers of the Spectator. Even since that reformation it still continues to be a rule, that the scene should change at least with every act; and the unity of place never was a more sacred law in the common drama, than the violation of it has become in the musical: the latter seems in reality to require both a more picturesque and a more varied scenery, than is at all necessary for the former. In an opera, as the Music supports the effect of the scenery, so the scenery often serves to determine the character, and to explain the meaning of the Music; it ought to vary therefore as that character varies. The pleasure of an opera, besides, is in its nature more a sensual pleasure, than that of a common comedy or tragedy; the latter produce their effect principally by

means of the imagination: in the closet, accordingly, their effect is not much inferior to what it is upon the stage. But the effect of an opera is seldom very great in the closet; it addresses itself more to the external senses, and as it soothes the ear by its melody and harmony, so we feel that it ought to dazzle the eye with the splendour of its scenery.

In an opera the instrumental Music of the orchestra supports the imitation both of the poet and of the actor, as well as of the scene-painter. The overture disposes the mind to that mood which fits it for the opening of the piece. The Music between the acts keeps up the impression which the foregoing had made, and prepares us for that which the following is to make. When the orchestra interrupts, as it frequently does, either the recitative or the air, it is in order either to enforce the effect of what had gone before, or to put the mind in the mood which fits it for hearing what is to come after. Both in the recitatives and in the airs it accompanies and directs the voice, and often brings it back to the proper tone and modulation, when it is upon the point of wandering away from them; and the correctness of the best vocal Music is owing in a great measure to the guidance of instrumental; though in all these cases it supports the imitation of another art, yet in all of them it may be said rather to diminish than to increase the resemblance between the imitating and the imitated object. Nothing can be more unlike to what really passes in the world, than that persons engaged in the most interesting situations, both of public and private life, in sorrow, in disappointment, in distress, in despair, should, in all that they say and do, be constantly accompanied with a fine concert of instrumental Music. Were we to reflect upon it, such accompaniment must in all cases diminish the probability of the action, and render the representation still less like nature than it otherwise would be. It is not by imitation, therefore, that instrumental Music supports and enforces the imitations of the other arts; but it is by producing upon the mind, in consequence of other powers, the same sort of effect which the most exact imitation of nature, which the most perfect observation of probability, could produce. To produce this effect is, in such entertainments, the sole end and purpose of that imitation and observation. If it can be equally well produced by other means, this end and purpose may be equally well answered.

But if instrumental Music can seldom be said to be properly imitative, even when it is employed to support the imitation of some other art, it is commonly still less so when it is employed alone. Why should it embarrass its melody and harmony, or constrain its time and measure, by attempting an imitation which, without the accompaniment of some other

art to explain and interpret its meaning, nobody is likely to understand? In the most approved instrumental Music, accordingly, in the overtures of Handel and the concertos of Correlli, there is little or no imitation, and where there is any, it is the source of but a very small part of the merit of those compositions. Without any imitation, instrumental Music can produce very considerable effects; though its powers over the heart and affections are, no doubt, much inferior to those of vocal Music, it has, however, considerable powers: by the sweetness of its sounds it awakens agreeably, and calls upon the attention; by their connection and affinity it naturally detains that attention, which follows easily a series of agreeable sounds, which have all a certain relation both to a common, fundamental, or leading note, called the key note; and to a certain succession or combination of notes, called the song or composition. By means of this relation each foregoing sound seems to introduce, and as it were prepare the mind for the following: by its rhythmus, by its time and measure, it disposes that succession of sounds into a certain arrangement, which renders the whole more easy to be comprehended and remembered. Time and measure are to instrumental Music what order and method are to discourse; they break it into proper parts and divisions, by which we are enabled both to remember better what is gone before, and frequently to foresee somewhat of what is to come after; we frequently foresee the return of a period which we know must correspond to another which we remember to have gone before; and, according to the saying of an ancient philosopher and musician, the enjoyment of Music arises partly from memory and partly from foresight. When the measure, after having been continued so long as to satisfy us, changes to another, that variety, which thus disappoints, becomes more agreeable to us than the uniformity which would have gratified our expectation: but without this order and method we could remember very little of what had gone before, and we could foresee still less of what was to come after; and the whole enjoyment of Music would be equal to little more than the effect of the particular sounds which rung in our ears at every particular instant. By means of this order and method it is, during the progress of the entertainment, equal to the effect of all that we remember, and of all that we foresee; and at the conclusion of the entertainment, to the combined and accumulated effect of all the different parts of which the whole was composed.

A well-composed concerto of instrumental Music, by the number and variety of the instruments, by the variety of the parts which are performed by them, and the perfect concord or correspondence of all

these different parts; by the exact harmony or coincidence of all the different sounds which are heard at the same time, and by that happy variety of measure which regulates the succession of those which are heard at different times, presents an object so agreeable, so great, so various, and so interesting, that alone, and without suggesting any other object, either by imitation or otherwise, it can occupy, and as it were fill up, completely the whole capacity of the mind, so as to leave no part of its attention vacant for thinking of any thing else. In the contemplation of that immense variety of agreeable and melodious sounds, arranged and digested, both in their coincidence and in their succession, into so complete and regular a system, the mind in reality enjoys not only a very great sensual, but a very high intellectual pleasure, not unlike that which it derives from the contemplation of a great system in any other science. A full concerto of such instrumental Music, not only does not require, but it does not admit of any accompaniment. A song or a dance, by demanding an attention which we have not to spare, would disturb, instead of heightening, the effect of the Music; they may often very properly succeed, but they cannot accompany it. That music seldom means to tell any particular story, or to imitate any particular event, or in general to suggest any particular object, distinct from that combination of sounds of which itself is composed. Its meaning, therefore, may be said to be complete in itself, and to require no interpreters to explain it. What is called the subject of such Music is merely, as has already been said, a certain leading combination of notes, to which it frequently returns, and to which all its digressions and variations bear a certain affinity. It is altogether different from what is called the subject of a poem or a picture, which is always something which is not either in the poem or in the picture, or something distinct from that combination, either of words on the one hand or of colours on the other, of which they are respectively composed. The subject of a composition of instrumental Music is part of that composition: the subject of a poem or picture is part of neither.

The effect of instrumental Music upon the mind has been called its expression. In the feeling it is frequently not unlike the effect of what is called the expression of Painting, and is sometimes equally interesting. But the effect of the expression of Painting arises always from the thought of something which, though distinctly and clearly suggested by the drawing and colouring of the picture, is altogether different from that drawing and colouring. It arises sometimes from sympathy with, sometimes from antipathy and aversion to, the sentiments, emotions, and passions which the countenance, the action, the air and attitude of the

persons represented suggest. The melody and harmony of instrumental Music, on the contrary, do not distinctly and clearly suggest any thing that is different from that melody and harmony. Whatever effect it produces is the immediate effect of that melody and harmony, and not of something else which is signified and suggested by them: they in fact signify and suggest nothing. It may be proper to say that the complete art of painting, the complete merit of a picture, is composed of three distinct arts or merits; that of drawing, that of colouring, and that of expression. But to say, as Mr. Addison does, that the complete art of a musician, the complete merit of a piece of Music, is composed or made up of three distinct arts or merits, that of melody, that of harmony, and that of expression, is to say, that it is made up of melody and harmony, and of the immediate and necessary effect of melody and harmony: the division is by no means logical; expression in painting is not the necessary effect either of good drawing or of good colouring, or of both together; a picture may be both finely drawn and finely coloured, and yet have very little expression: but that effect upon the mind which is called expression in Music, is the immediate and necessary effect of good melody. In the power of producing this effect consists the essential characteristic which distinguishes such melody from what is bad or indifferent. Harmony may enforce the effect of good melody, but without good melody the most skilful harmony can produce no effect which deserves the name of expression; it can do little more than fatigue and confound the ear. A painter may possess, in a very eminent degree, the talents of drawing and colouring, and yet possess that of expression in a very inferior degree. Such a painter, too, may have great merit. In the judgment of Du Piles, even the celebrated Titian was a painter of this kind. But to say that a musician possessed the talents of melody and harmony in a very eminent degree, and that of expression in a very inferior one, would be to say, that in his works the cause was not followed by its necessary and proportionable effect. A musician may be a very skilful harmonist, and yet be defective in the talents of melody, air, and expression; his songs may be dull and without effect. Such a musician too may have a certain degree of merit, not unlike that of a man of great learning, who wants fancy, taste, and invention.

Instrumental Music, therefore, though it may, no doubt, be considered in some respects as an imitative art, is certainly less so than any other which merits that appellation; it can imitate but a few objects, and even these so imperfectly, that without the accompaniment of some other art, its imitation is scarce ever intelligible: imitation is by no means essential

to it, and the principal effect it is capable of producing arises from powers altogether different from those of imitation.

PART III.

The imitative powers of Dancing are much superior to those of instrumental Music, and are at least equal, perhaps superior, to those of any other art. Like instrumental Music, however, it is not necessarily or essentially imitative, and it can produce very agreeable effects, without imitating any thing. In the greater part of our common dances there is little or no imitation, and they consist almost entirely of a succession of such steps, gestures, and motions, regulated by the time and measure of Music, as either display extraordinary grace or require extraordinary agility. Even some of our dances, which are said to have been originally imitative, have, in the way in which we practise them, almost ceased to be so. The minuet, in which the woman, after passing and repassing the man several times, first gives him up one hand, then the other, and then both hands, is said to have been originally a Moorish dance, which emblematically represented the passion of love. Many of my readers may have frequently danced this dance, and, in the opinion of all who saw them, with great grace and propriety, though neither they nor the spectators once thought of the allegorical meaning which it originally intended to express.

A certain measured, cadenced step, commonly called a dancing step, which keeps time with, and as it were beats the measure of, the Music which accompanies and directs it, is the essential characteristic which distinguishes a dance from every other sort of motion. When the dancer, moving with a step of this kind, and observing this time and measure, imitates either the ordinary or the more important actions of human life, he shapes and fashions, as it were, a thing of one kind, into the resemblance of another thing of a very different kind: his art conquers the disparity which Nature has placed between the imitating and the imitated object, and has upon that account some degree of that sort of merit which belongs to all the imitative arts. This disparity, indeed, is not so great as in some other of those arts, nor consequently the merit of the imitation which conquers it. Nobody would compare the merit of a good imitative dancer to that of a good painter or statuary. The dancer, however, may have a very considerable degree of merit, and his imitation perhaps may sometimes be capable of giving us as much pleasure as that of either of the other two artists. All the subjects, either of Statuary or of History Painting, are within the compass of his imitative powers; and in

representing them, his art has even some advantage over both the other two. Statuary and History Painting can represent but a single instant of the action which they mean to imitate: the causes which prepared, the consequences which followed, the situation of that single instant are altogether beyond the compass of their imitation. A pantomime dance can represent distinctly those causes and consequences; it is not confined to the situation of a single instant; but, like Epic Poetry, it can represent all the events of a long story, and exhibit a long train and succession of connected and interesting situations. It is capable therefore of affecting us much more than either Statuary or Painting. The ancient Romans used to shed tears at the representations of their pantomimes, as we do at that of the most interesting tragedies; an effect which is altogether beyond the powers of Statuary or Painting.

The ancient Greeks appear to have been a nation of dancers, and both their common and their stage dances seem to have been all imitative. The stage dances of the ancient Romans appear to have been equally so. Among that grave people it was reckoned indecent to dance in private societies; and they could therefore have no common dances; and among both nations imitation seems to have been considered as essential to dancing.

It is quite otherwise in modern times: though we have pantomime dances upon the stage, yet the greater part even of our stage dances are not pantomime, and cannot well be said to imitate any thing. The greater part of our common dances either never were pantomime, or, with a very few exceptions, have almost all ceased to be so.

This remarkable difference of character between the ancient and the modern dances seems to be the natural effect of a correspondent difference in that of the music, which has accompanied and directed both the one and the other.

In modern times we almost always dance to instrumental music, which being itself not imitative, the greater part of the dances which it directs, and as it were inspires, have ceased to be so. In ancient times, on the contrary, they seem to have danced almost always to vocal music; which being necessarily and essentially imitative, their dances became so too. The ancients seem to have had little or nothing of what is properly called instrumental music, or of music composed not to be sung by the voice, but to be played upon instruments, and both their wind and stringed instruments seem to have served only as an accompaniment and direction to the voice.

In the country it frequently happens, that a company of young people take a fancy to dance, though they have neither fiddler nor piper to dance to. A lady undertakes to sing while the rest of the company dance: in most cases she sings the notes only, without the words, and then the voice being little more than a musical instrument, the dance is performed in the usual way, without any imitation. But if she sings the words, and if in those words there happens to be somewhat more than ordinary spirit and humour, immediately all the company, especially all the best dancers, and all those who dance most at their ease, become more or less pantomimes, and by their gestures and motions express, as well as they can, the meaning and story of the song. This would be still more the case, if the same person both danced and sung; a practice very common among the ancients: it requires good lungs and a vigorous constitution; but with these advantages and long practice, the very highest dances may be performed in this manner. I have seen a Negro dance to his own song, the war-dance of his own country, with such vehemence of action and expression, that the whole company, gentlemen as well as ladies, got up upon chairs and tables, to be as much as possible out of the way of his fury. In the Greek language there are two verbs which both signify to dance; each of which has its proper derivatives, signifying a dance and a dancer. In the greater part of Greek authors, these two sets of words, like all others which are nearly synonymous, are frequently confounded, and used promiscuously. According to the best critics, however, in strict propriety, one of these verbs signifies to dance and sing at the same time, or to dance to one’s own music. The other to dance without singing, or to dance to the music of other people. There is said too to be a correspondent difference in the signification of their respective derivatives. In the choruses of the ancient Greek tragedies, consisting sometimes of more than fifty persons, some piped and some sung, but all danced, and danced to their own music.

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asterisks [The following Observations were found among Mr. Smith’s Manuscripts, without any intimation whether they were intended as part of this, or of a different Essay. As they appeared too valuable to be suppressed, the Editors have annexed them to this Essay.]

OF THE AFFINITY BETWEEN MUSIC, DANCING, AND POETRY.

In the second part of the preceding Essay I have mentioned the connection between the two arts of Music and Dancing, formed by the Rhythmus, as the ancients termed it, or, as we call it, the tune or measure that equally regulates both.

It is not, however, every sort of step, gesture, or motion, of which the correspondence with the tune or measure of Music will constitute a Dance. It must be a step, gesture, or motion of a particular sort. In a good opera-actor, not only the modulations and pauses of his voice, but every motion and gesture, every variation, either in the air of his head or in the attitude of his body, correspond to the time and measure of Music. The best opera-actor, however, is not, according to the language of any country in Europe, understood to dance, yet in the performance of his part, he makes use of what is called the stage step; but even this step is not understood to be a dancing step.

Though the eye of the most ordinary spectator readily distinguishes between what is called a dancing step and any other step, gesture, or motion, yet it may not perhaps be very easy to express what it is which constitutes this distinction. To ascertain exactly the precise limits at which the one species begins, and the other ends, or to give an accurate definition of this very frivolous matter, might perhaps require more thought and attention than the very small importance of the subject may seem to deserve. Were I, however, to attempt to do this, I should observe, that though in performing any ordinary action — in walking, for example — from the one end of the room to the other, a person may show both grace and agility, yet if he betrays the least intention of showing either, he is sure of offending more or less, and we never fail to accuse him of some degree of vanity and affectation. In the performance of any such ordinary action, every person wishes to appear to be solely occupied about the proper purpose of the action: if he means to show either grace or agility, he is careful to conceal that meaning, and he is very seldom successful in doing so: he offends, however, just in proportion as he betrays it, and he almost always betrays it. In Dancing, on the contrary, every person professes, and avows, as it were, the intention of displaying some degree either of grace or of agility, or of both. The display of one, or other, or both of these qualities, is in reality the proper purpose of the

action; and there can never be any disagreeable vanity or affectation in following out the proper purpose of any action. When we say of any particular person, that he gives himself many affected airs and graces in Dancing, we mean either that he gives himself airs and graces which are unsuitable to the nature of the Dance, or that he executes awkwardly, perhaps exaggerates too much, (the most common fault in Dancing,) the airs and graces which are suitable to it. Every Dance is in reality a succession of airs and graces of some kind or other, and of airs and graces which, if I may say so, profess themselves to be such. The steps, gestures, and motions which, as it were, avow the intention of exhibiting a succession of such airs and graces, are the steps, the gestures, and the motions which are peculiar to Dancing, and when these are performed to the time and the measure of Music, they constitute what is properly called a Dance.

But though every sort of step, gesture, or motion, even though performed to the time and measure of Music, will not alone make a Dance, yet almost any sort of sound, provided it is repeated with a distinct rhythmus, or according to a distinct time and measure, though without any variation as to gravity or acuteness, will make a sort of Music, no doubt indeed, an imperfect one. Drums, cymbals, and, so far as I have observed, all other instruments of percussion, have only one note; this note, however, when repeated with a certain rhythmus, or according to a certain time and measure, and sometimes, in order to mark more distinctly that time and measure, with some little variation as to loudness and lowness, though without any as to acuteness and gravity, does certainly make a sort of Music, which is frequently far from being disagreeable, and which even sometimes produces considerable effects. The simple note of such instruments, it is true, is generally a very clear, or what is called a melodious, sound. It does not however seem indispensably necessary that it should be so. The sound of the muffled drum, when it beats the dead march, is far from being either clear or melodious, and yet it certainly produces a species of Music which is sometimes affecting. Even in the performance of the most humble of all artists, of the man who drums upon the table with his fingers, we may sometimes distinguish the measure, and perhaps a little of the humour, of some favourite song; and we must allow that even he makes some sort of Music. Without a proper step and motion, the observation of tune alone will not make a Dance; time alone, without tune, will make some sort of Music.

That exact observation of tune, or of the proper intervals of gravity and acuteness, which constitutes the great beauty of all perfect Music, constitutes likewise its great difficulty. The time, or measure of a song are simple matters, which even a coarse and unpractised ear is capable of distinguishing and comprehending: but to distinguish and comprehend all the variations of the tune, and to conceive with precision the exact proportion of every note, is what the finest and most cultivated ear is frequently no more than capable of performing. In the singing of the common people we may generally remark a distinct enough observation of time, but a very imperfect one of tune. To discover and to distinguish with precision the proper intervals of tune, must have been a work of long experience and much observation. In the theoretical treatises upon Music, what the authors have to say upon time is commonly discussed in a single chapter of no great length or difficulty. The theory of tune fills commonly all the rest of the volume, and has long ago become both an extensive and an abstruse science, which is often but imperfectly comprehended, even by intelligent artists. In the first rude efforts of uncivilized nations towards singing, the niceties of tune could be but little attended to: I have, upon this account, been frequently disposed to doubt of the great antiquity of those national songs, which it is pretended have been delivered down from age to age by a sort of oral tradition, without having been ever noted or distinctly recorded for many successive generations. The measure, the humour of the song, might perhaps have been delivered down in this manner, but it seems scarcely possible that the precise notes of the tune should have been so preserved. The method of singing some of what we reckon our old Scotch songs, has undergone great alterations within the compass of my memory, and it may have undergone still greater before.

The distinction between the sounds or tones of singing and those of speaking seems to be of the same kind with that between the steps, gestures, and motions of Dancing, and those of any other ordinary action; though in speaking, a person may show a very agreeable tone of voice, yet if he seems to intend to show it, if he appears to listen to the sound of his own voice, and as it were to tune it into a pleasing modulation, he never fails to offend, as guilty of a most disagreeable affectation. In speaking, as in every other ordinary action, we expect and require that the speaker should attend only to the proper purpose of the action, the clear and distinct expression of what he has to say. In singing, on the contrary, every person professes the intention to please by the tone and cadence of his voice; and he not only appears to be guilty of no

disagreeable affectation in doing so, but we expect and require that he should do so. To please by the choice and arrangement of agreeable sounds is the proper purpose of all Music, vocal as well as instrumental; and we always expect and require, that every person should attend to the proper purpose of whatever action he is performing. A person may appear to sing, as well as to dance, affectedly; he may endeavour to please by sounds and tones which are unsuitable to the nature of the song, or he may dwell too much on those which are suitable to it, or in some other way he may show an overweening conceit of his own abilities, beyond what seems to be warranted by his performance. The disagreeable affectation appears to consist always, not in attempting to please by a proper, but by some improper modulation of the voice. It was early discovered that the vibrations of chords or strings, which either in their lengths, or in their densities, or in their degrees of tension, bear a certain proportion to one another, produce sounds which correspond exactly, or, as the musicians say, are the unisons of those sounds or tones of the human voice which the ear approves of in singing. This discovery has enabled musicians to speak with distinctness and precision concerning the musical sounds or tones of the human voice; they can always precisely ascertain what are the particular sounds or tones which they mean, by ascertaining what are the proportions of the strings of which the vibrations produce the unisons of those sounds or tones. What are called the intervals; that is, the differences, in point of gravity and acuteness, between the sounds or tones of a singing voice, are much greater and more distinct than those of the speaking voice. Though the former, therefore, can be measured and appreciated by the proportions of chords or strings, the latter cannot. The nicest instruments cannot express the extreme minuteness of these intervals. The heptamerede of Mr. Sauveur could express an interval so small as the seventh part of what is called a comma, the smallest interval that is admitted in modern Music. Yet even this instrument, we are informed by Mr. Duclos, could not express the minuteness of the intervals in the pronunciation of the Chinese language; of all the languages in the world, that of which the pronunciation is said to approach the nearest to singing, or in which the intervals are said to be the greatest.

As the sounds or tones of the singing voice, therefore, can be ascertained or appropriated, while those of the speaking voice cannot; the former are capable of being noted or recorded, while the latter are not.

OF THE EXTERNAL SENSES.

The Senses, by which we perceive external objects, are commonly reckoned Five in Number; viz. Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching.

Of these, the four first mentioned are each of them confined to particular parts or organs of the body; the Sense of Seeing is confined to the Eyes; that of Hearing to the Ears; that of Smelling to the Nostrils; and that of Tasting to the Palate. The Sense of Touching alone seems not to be confined to any particular organ, but to be diffused through almost every part of the body; if we except the hair and the nails of the fingers and toes, I believe through every part of it. I shall say a few words concerning each of these Senses; beginning with the last, proceeding backwards in the opposite order to that in which they are commonly enumerated.

Of the Sense of Touching.

The objects of Touch always present themselves as pressing upon, or as resisting the particular part of the body which perceives them, or by which we perceive them. When I lay my hand upon the table, the table presses upon my hand, or resists the further motion of my hand, in the same manner as my hand presses upon the table. But pressure or resistance necessarily supposes externality in the thing which presses or resists. The table could not press upon, or resist the further motion of my hand, if it was not external to my hand. I feel it accordingly as something which is not merely an affection of the hand, but altogether external to and independent of my hand. The agreeable, indifferent, or painful sensation of pressure, accordingly as I happen to press hardly or softly, I feel, no doubt, as affections of my hand; but the thing which presses and which resists I feel as something altogether different from those affections, as external to my hand, and as being altogether independent of it.

In moving my hand along the table it soon comes, in every direction, to a place where this pressure or resistance ceases. This place we call the boundary, or end of the table; of which the extent and figure are determined by the extent and direction of the lines or surfaces which constitute this boundary or end.

It is in this manner that a man born blind, or who has lost his sight so early that he has no remembrance of visible objects, may form the most distinct idea of the extent and figure of all the different parts of his own body, and of every other tangible object which he has an opportunity of handling and examining. When he lays his hand upon his foot, as his hand feels the pressure or resistance of his foot, so his foot feels that of his hand. They are both external to one another, but they are, neither of them, altogether so external to him. He feels in both, and he naturally considers them as parts of himself, or at least as something which belongs to him, and which, for his own comfort, it is necessary that he should take some care of.

When he lays his hand upon the table, though his hand feels the pressure of the table, the table does not feel, at least he does not know that it feels, the pressure of his hand. He feels it therefore as something external, not only to his hand, but to himself, as something which makes

no part of himself, and in the state and condition of which he has not necessarily any concern.

When he lays his hand upon the body either of another man, or of any other animal, though he knows, or at least may know, that they feel the pressure of his hand as much as he feels that of their body: yet as this feeling is altogether external to him, he frequently gives no attention to it, and at no time takes any further concern in it than he is obliged to do by that fellow-feeling which Nature has, for the wisest purposes, implanted in man, not only towards all other men, but (though no doubt in a much weaker degree) towards all other animals. Having destined him to be the governing animal in this world, it seems to have been her benevolent intention to inspire him with some degree of respect, even for the meanest and weakest of his subjects.

This power or quality of resistance we call Solidity; and the thing which possesses it, the Solid Body or Thing. As we feel it as something altogether external to us, so we necessarily conceive it as something altogether independent of us. We consider it, therefore, as what we call a Substance, or as a thing that subsists by itself, and independent of any other thing. Solid and substantial, accordingly, are two words which, in common language, are considered either as altogether or as nearly synonymous.

Solidity necessarily supposes some degree of extension, and that in all the three directions of length, breadth, and thickness. All the solid bodies, of which we have any experience, have some degree of such bulk or magnitude. It seems to be essential to their nature, and without it, we cannot even conceive how they should be capable of pressure or resistance; are are the powers by which they are made known to us, and by which alone they are capable of acting upon our own, and upon all other bodies.

Extension, at least any sensible extension, supposes divisibility. The body may be so hard, that our strength is not sufficient to break it; we still suppose, however, that if a sufficient force were applied, it might be so broken; and, at any rate, we can always, in fancy at least, imagine it to be divided into two or more parts.

Every solid and extended body, if it be not infinite, (as the universe may be conceived to be,) must have some shape or figure, or be bounded by certain lines and surfaces.

Every such body must likewise be conceived as capable both of motion and of rest; both of altering its situation with regard to other

surrounding bodies, and of remaining in the same situation. That bodies of small or moderate bulk, are capable of both motion and rest we have constant experience. Great masses, perhaps, are according to the ordinary habits of the imagination, supposed to be more fitted for rest than for motion. Provided a sufficient force could be applied, however, we have no difficulty in conceiving that the greatest and most unwieldy masses might be made capable of motion. Philosophy teaches us, (and by reasons too to which it is scarcely possible to refuse our assent,) that the earth itself, and bodies much larger than the earth, are not only movable, but are at all times actually in motion, and continually altering their situation, in respect to other surrounding bodies, with a rapidity that almost passes all human comprehension. In the system of the universe, at least according to the imperfect notions which we have hitherto been able to attain concerning it, the great difficulty seems to be, not to find the most enormous masses in motion, but to find the smallest particle of matter that is perfectly at rest with regard to all other surrounding bodies.

These four qualities, or attributes of extension, divisibility, figure, and mobility, or the capacity of motion or rest, seem necessarily involved in the idea or conception of a solid substance. They are, in reality, inseparable from that idea or conception, and the solid substance cannot possibly be conceived to exist without them. No other qualities or attributes seem to be involved, in the same manner, in this our idea or conception of solidity. It would, however, be rash from thence to conclude that the solid substance can, as such, possess no other qualities or attributes. This rash conclusion, notwithstanding, has been not only drawn, but insisted upon, as an axiom of indubitable certainty, by philosophers of very eminent reputation.

Of these external and resisting substances, some yield easily, and change their figure, at least in some degree, in consequence of the pressure of our hand: others neither yield nor change their figure, in any respect, in consequence of the utmost pressure which our hand alone is capable of giving them. The former we call soft, the latter hard, bodies. In some bodies the parts are so very easily separable, that they not only yield to a very moderate pressure, but easily receive the pressing body within them, and without much resistance allow it to traverse their extent in every possible direction. These are called Fluid, in contradistinction to those of which the parts not being so easily separable, are upon that account peculiarly called Solid Bodies; as if they possessed, in a more distinct and perceptible manner, the characteristical quality of solidity or the power of resistance. Water, however (one of the fluids with which we

are most familiar), when confined on all sides (as in a hollow globe of metal, which is first filled with it, and then sealed hermetically), has been found to resist pressure as much as the very hardest, or what we commonly call the most solid bodies.

Some fluids yield so very easily to the slightest pressure, that upon ordinary occasions we are scarcely sensible of their resistance; and are upon that account little disposed to conceive them as bodies, or as things capable of pressure and resistance. There was a time, as we may learn from Aristotle and Lucretius, when it was supposed to require some degree of philosophy to demonstrate that air was a real solid body, or capable of pressure and resistance. What, in ancient times, and in vulgar apprehensions, was supposed to be doubtful with regard to air, still continues to be so with regard to light, of which the rays, however condensed or concentrated, have never appeared capable of making the smallest resistance to the motion of other bodies, the characteristical power or quality of what are called bodies, or solid substances. Some philosophers accordingly doubt, and some even deny, that light is a material or corporeal substance.

Though all bodies or solid substances resist, yet all those with which we are acquainted appear to be more or less compressible, or capable of having, without any diminution in the quantity of their matter, their bulk more or less reduced within a smaller space than that which they usually occupy. An experiment of the Florentine academy was supposed to have fully demonstrated that water was absolutely incompressible. The same experiment, however, having been repeated with more care and accuracy, it appears, that water, though it strongly resists compression, is, however, when a sufficient force is applied, like all other bodies, in some degree liable to it. Air, on the contrary, by the application of a very moderate force, is easily reducible within a much smaller portion of space than that which it usually occupies. The condensing engine, and what is founded upon it, the wind-gun, sufficiently demonstrate this: and even without the help of such ingenious and expensive machines, we may easily satisfy ourselves of the truth of this proportion, by squeezing a full-blown bladder of which the neck is well tied.

The hardness or softness of bodies, or the greater or smaller force with which they resist any change of shape, seems to depend altogether upon the stronger or weaker degree of cohesion with which their parts are mutually attracted to one another. The greater or smaller force with which they resist compression may, upon many occasions, be owing partly to the same cause: but it may likewise be owing to the greater or

smaller proportion of empty space comprehended within their dimensions, or intermixed with the solid parts which compose them. A body which comprehended no empty space within its dimensions, which, through all its parts, was completely filled with the resisting substance, we are naturally disposed to conceive as something which would be absolutely incompressible, and which would resist, with unconquerable force, every attempt to reduce it within narrower dimensions. If the solid and resisting substance, without moving out of its place, should admit into the same place another solid and resisting substance, it would from that moment, in our apprehension, cease to be a solid and resisting substance, and would no longer appear to possess that quality, by which alone it is made known to us, and which we therefore consider as constituting its nature and essence, and as altogether inseparable from it. Hence our notion of what has been called impenetrability of matter; or of the absolute impossibility that two solid resisting substances should occupy the same place at the same time.

This doctrine, which is as old as Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus, was in the last century revived by Gassendi, and has since been adopted by Newton and the far greater part of his followers. It may at present be considered as the established system, or as the system that is most in fashion, and most approved of by the greater part of the philosophers of Europe. Though it has been opposed by several puzzling arguments, drawn from that species of metaphysics which confounds every thing and explains nothing, it seems upon the whole to be the most simple, the most distinct, and the most comprehensible account that has yet been given of the phenomena which are meant to be explained by it. I shall only observe, that whatever system may be adopted concerning the hardness or softness, the fluidity or solidity, the compressibility or incompressibility of the resisting substance, the certainty of our distinct sense and feeling of its Externality, or of its entire independency upon the organ which perceives it, or by which we perceive it, cannot in the smallest degree be affected by any such system. I shall not therefore attempt to give any further account of such systems.

Heat and cold being felt by almost every part of the human body, have commonly been ranked along with solidity and resistance, among the qualities which are the objects of Touch. It is not, however, I think, in our language proper to say that we touch, but that we feel the qualities of heat and cold. The word feeling, though in many cases we use it as synonymous to touching, has, however, a much more extensive signification, and is frequently employed to denote our internal, as well

as our external, affections. We feel hunger and thirst, we feel joy and sorrow, we feel love and hatred.

Heat and cold, in reality, though they may frequently be perceived by the same parts of the human body, constitute an order of sensations altogether different from those which are the proper objects of Touch. They are naturally felt, not as pressing upon the organ, but as in the organ. What we feel while we stand in the sunshine during a hot, or in the shade during a frosty, day, is evidently felt, not as pressing upon the body, but as in the body. It does not necessarily suggest the presence of any external object, nor could we from thence alone infer the existence of any such object. It is a sensation which neither does nor can exist any where but either in the organ which feels it, or in the unknown principle of perception, whatever that may be, which feels in that organ, or by means of that organ. When we lay our hand upon a table, which is either heated or cooled a good deal beyond the actual temperature of our hand, we have two distinct perceptions: first, that of the solid or resisting table, which is necessarily felt as something external to, and independent of, the hand which feels it; and secondly, that of the heat or cold, which by the contact of the table is excited in our hand, and which is naturally felt as nowhere but in our hand, or in the principle of perception which feels in our hand.

But though the sensations of heat and cold do not necessarily suggest the presence of any external object, we soon learn from experience that they are commonly excited by some such object: sometimes by the temperature of some external body immediately in contact with our own body, and sometimes by some body at either a moderate or a great distance from us; as by the fire in a chamber, or by the sun in a summer’s day. By the frequency and uniformity of this experience, by the custom and habit of thought which that frequency and uniformity necessarily occasion, the Internal Sensation, and the External Cause of that Sensation, come in our conception to be so strictly connected, that in our ordinary and careless way of thinking, we are apt to consider them as almost one and the same thing, and therefore denote them by one and the same word. The confusion, however, is in this case more in the word than in the thought; for in reality we still retain some notion of the distinction, though we do not always evolve it with that accuracy which a very slight degree of attention might enable us to do. When we move our hand, for example, along the surface of a very hot or of a very cold table, though we say that the table is hot or cold in every part of it, we never mean that, in any part of it, it feels the sensations either of heat or

of cold, but that in every part of it, it possesses the power of exciting one or other of those sensations in our bodies. The philosophers who have taken so much pains to prove that there is no heat in the fire, meaning that the sensation or feeling of heat is not in the fire, have laboured to refute an opinion which the most ignorant of mankind never entertained. But the same word being, in common language, employed to signify both the sensation and the power of exciting that sensation, they, without knowing it perhaps, or intending it, have taken advantage of this ambiguity, and have triumphed in their own superiority, when by irresistible arguments they establish an opinion which, in words indeed, is diametrically opposite to the most obvious judgments of mankind, but which in reality is perfectly agreeable to those judgments.

Of the Sense of Tasting.

When we taste any solid or liquid substance, we have always two distinct perceptions: first, that of the solid or liquid body, which is naturally felt as pressing upon, and therefore as external to, and independent of, the organ which feels it; and secondly, that of particular taste, relish, or savour which it excites in the palate or organ of Tasting, and which is naturally felt, not as pressing upon, as external to, or as independent of, that organ; but as altogether in the organ, and nowhere but in the organ, or in the principle of perception which feels in that organ. When we say that the food which we eat has an agreeable or disagreeable taste in every part of it, we do not thereby mean that it has the feeling or sensation of taste in any part of it, but that in every part of it, it has the power of exciting that feeling or sensation in our palates. Though in this case we denote by the same word (in the same manner, and for the same reason, as in the case of heat and cold) both the sensation and the power of exciting that sensation, this ambiguity of language misleads the natural judgments of mankind in the one case as little as in the other. Nobody ever fancies that our food feels its own agreeable or disagreeable taste.

Of the Sense of Smelling.

Every smell or odour is naturally felt as in the nostrils; not as pressing upon or resisting the organ, not as in any respect external to, or independent of, the organ, but as altogether in the organ, and nowhere else but in the organ, or in the principle of perception which feels in that organ. We soon learn from experience, however, that this sensation is commonly excited by some external body; by a flower, for example, of which the absence removes, and the presence brings back, the sensation. This external body we consider as the cause of this sensation, and we denominate by the same words both the sensation and the power by which the external body produces this sensation. But when we say that the smell is in the flower, we do not thereby mean that the flower itself has any feeling of the sensation which we feel; but that it has the power of exciting this sensation in our nostrils, or in the principle of perception which feels in our nostrils. Though this sensation, and the power by which it is excited, are thus denoted by the same word, this ambiguity of language misleads, in this case, the natural judgments of mankind as little as in the two preceding.

Of the Sense of Hearing.

Every sound is naturally felt as in the Ear, the organ of Hearing. Sound is not naturally felt as resisting or pressing upon the organ, or as in any respect external to, or independent of, the organ. We naturally feel it as an affection of our Ear, as something which is altogether in our Ear, and nowhere but in our Ear, or in the principle of perception which feels in our Ear. We soon learn from experience, indeed, that the sensation is frequently excited by bodies at a considerable distance from us; often at a much greater distance, than those ever are which excite the sensation of Smelling. We learn too from experience that this sound or sensation in our Ears receives different modifications, according to the distance and direction of the body which originally causes it. The sensation is stronger, the sound is louder, when that body is near. The sensation is weaker, the sound is lower, when that body is at a distance. The sound, or sensation, too undergoes some variation according as the body is placed on the right hand or on the left, before or behind us. In common language we frequently say, that the sound seems to come from a great or from a small distance, from the right hand or from the left, from before or from behind us. We frequently say too that we hear a sound at a great or small distance, on our right hand or on our left. The real sound, however, the sensation in our ear, can never be heard or felt any where but in our ear, it can never change its place, it is incapable of motion, and can come, therefore, neither from the right nor from the left, neither from before nor from behind us. The Ear can feel or hear nowhere but where it is, and cannot stretch out its powers of perception, either to a great or to a small distance, either to the right or to the left. By all such phrases we in reality mean nothing but to express our opinion concerning either the distance or the direction of the body which excites the sensation of sound. When we say that the sound is in the bell, we do not mean that the bell hears its own sound, or that any thing like our sensation is in the bell, but that it possesses the power of exciting that sensation in our organ of Hearing. Though in this, as well as in some other cases, we express by the same word, both the Sensation, and the Power of exciting that Sensation; this ambiguity of language occasions scarce any confusion in the thought, and when the different meanings of the word are properly distinguished, the opinions of the vulgar, and those of the

philosopher, though apparently opposite, on examination turn out to be exactly the same.

These four classes of secondary qualities, as philosophers have called them, or to speak more properly, these four classes of Sensations; Heat and Cold, Taste, Smell, and Sound; being felt, not as resisting or pressing upon the organ, but as in the organ, are not naturally perceived as external and independent substances; or even as qualities of such substances; but as mere affections of the organ, and what can exist nowhere but in the organ.

They do not possess, nor can we even conceive them as capable of possessing, any one of the qualities, which we consider as essential to, and inseparable from, external solid and independent substances.

First, They have no extension. They are neither long nor short; they are neither broad nor narrow; they are neither deep nor shallow. The bodies which excite them, the spaces within which they may be perceived, may possess any of those dimensions; but the Sensations themselves can possess none of them. When we say of a Note in Music, that it is long or short, we mean that it is so in point of duration. In point of extension we cannot even conceive, that it should be either the one or the other.

Secondly, Those Sensations have no figure. They are neither round nor square, though the bodies which excite them, though the spaces within which they may be perceived, may be either the one or the other.

Thirdly, Those Sensations are incapable of motion. The bodies which excite them may be moved to a greater or to a smaller distance. The Sensations become fainter in the one case, and stronger in the other. Those bodies may change their direction with regard to the organ of Sensation. If the change be considerable, the Sensations undergo some sensible variation in consequence of it. But still we never ascribe motion to the Sensations. Even when the person who feels any of those Sensations, and consequently the organ by which he feels them, changes his situation, we never, even in this case, say, that the Sensation moves, or is moved. It seems to exist always, where alone it is capable of existing, in the organ which feels it. We never even ascribe to those Sensations the attribute of rest; because we never say that any thing is at rest, unless we suppose it capable of motion. We never say that any thing does not change its situation with regard to other things, unless we can suppose it to be capable of changing that situation.

Fourthly, Those Sensations, as they have no extension, so they can have no divisibility. We cannot even conceive that a degree of Heat or Cold, that a Smell, a Taste, or a Sound, should be divided (in the same manner as the solid and extended substance may be divided) into two halves, or into four quarters, or into any number of parts.

But though all these Sensations are equally incapable of division; there are three of them, Taste, Smell, and Sound; which seem capable of a certain composition and decomposition. A skilful cook will, by his taste, perhaps, sometimes distinguish the different ingredients, which enter into the composition of a new sauce, and of which the simple tastes make up the compound one of the sauce. A skilful perfumer may, perhaps, sometimes be able to do the same thing with regard to a new scent. In a concert of vocal and instrumental music, an acute and experienced Ear readily distinguishes all the different sounds which strike upon it at the same time, and which may, therefore, be considered as making up one compound sound.

Is it by nature, or by experience, that we learn to distinguish between simple and compound Sensations of this kind? I am disposed to believe that it is altogether by experience; and that naturally all Tastes, Smells, and Sounds, which affect the organ of Sensation at the same time, are felt as simple and uncompounded Sensations. It is altogether by experience, I think, that we learn to observe the different affinities and resemblances which the compound Sensation bears to the different simple ones, which compose it, and to judge that the different causes, which excite those different simple Sensations, enter into the composition of that cause which excites the compounded one.

It is sufficiently evident that this composition and decomposition is altogether different from that union and separation of parts, which constitutes the divisibility of solid extension.

The Sensations of Heat and Cold seem incapable even of this species of composition and decomposition. The Sensations of Heat and Cold may be stronger at one time and weaker at another. They may differ in degree, but they cannot differ in kind. The Sensations of Taste, Smell, and Sound, frequently differ, not only in degree, but in kind. They are not only stronger and weaker, but some Tastes are sweet and some bitter; some Smells are agreeable, and some offensive; some Sounds are acute, and some grave; and each of these different kinds or qualities, too, is capable of an immense variety of modifications. It is the combination of

such simple Sensations, as differ not only in degree but in kind, which constitutes the compounded Sensation.

These four classes of Sensations, therefore, having none of the qualities which are essential to, and inseparable from, the solid, external, and independent substances which excite them, cannot be qualities or modifications of those substances. In reality we do not naturally consider them as such; though in the way in which we express ourselves on the subject, there is frequently a good deal of ambiguity and confusion. When the different meanings of words, however, are fairly distinguished, these Sensations are, even by the most ignorant and illiterate, understood to be, not the qualities, but merely the effects of the solid, external, and independent substances upon the sensible and living organ, or upon the principle of perception which feels in that organ.

Philosophers, however, have not in general supposed that those exciting bodies produce those Sensations immediately, but by the intervention of one, two, or more intermediate causes.

In the Sensation of Taste, for example, though the exciting body presses upon the organ of Sensation, this pressure is not supposed to be the immediate cause of the Sensation of Taste. Certain juices of the exciting body are supposed to enter the pores of the palate, and to excite, in the irritable and sensible fibres of that organ, certain motions or vibrations, which produce there the Sensation of Taste. But how those juices should excite such motions, or how such motions should produce, either in the organ, or in the principle of perception which feels in the organ, the Sensation of Taste; or a Sensation, which not only does not bear the smallest resemblance to any motion, but which itself seems incapable of all motion, no philosopher has yet attempted, nor probably ever will attempt, to explain to us.

The Sensations of Heat and Cold, of Smell and Sound, are frequently excited by bodies at a distance, sometimes at a great distance, from the organ which feels them. But it is a very ancient and well-established axiom in metaphysics, that nothing can act where it is not; and this axiom, it must, I think, be acknowledged, is at least perfectly agreeable to our natural and usual habits of thinking.

The Sun, the great source of both Heat and Light, is at an immense distance from us. His rays, however (traversing, with inconceivable rapidity, the immensity of the intervening regions), as they convey the Sensation of Light to our eyes, so they convey that of Heat to all the sensible parts of our body. They even convey the power of exciting that Sensation to all the other bodies that surround us. They warm the earth

and air, we say; that is, they convey to the earth and the air the power of exciting that Sensation in our bodies. A common fire produces, in the same manner, all the same effects; though the sphere of its action is confined within much narrower limits.

The odoriferous body, which is generally too at some distance from us, is supposed to act upon our organs by means of certain small particles of matter, called Effluvia, which being sent forth in all possible directions, and drawn into our nostrils by the inspiration of breathing, produce there the Sensation of Smell. The minuteness of those small particles of matter, however, must surpass all human comprehension. Inclose in a gold box, for a few hours, a small quantity of musk. Take out the musk, and clean the box with soap and water as carefully as it is possible. Nothing can be supposed to remain in the box, but such effluvia as, having penetrated into its interior pores, may have escaped the effects of this cleansing. The box, however, will retain the smell of musk for many, I do not know for how many years; and these effluvia, how minute soever we may suppose them, must have had the powers of subdividing themselves, and of emitting other effluvia of the same kind, continually, and without any interruption, during so long a period. The nicest balance, however, which human art has ever been able to invent, will not show the smallest increase of weight in the gold box immediately after it has been thus carefully cleaned.

The Sensation of Sound is frequently felt at a much greater distance from the sounding, than that of Smell ever is from the odoriferous body. The vibrations of the sounding body, however, are supposed to produce certain correspondent vibrations and pulses in the surrounding atmosphere, which being propagated in all directions, reach our organ of Hearing, and produce there the Sensation of Sound. There are not many philosophical doctrines, perhaps, established upon a more probable foundation, than that of the propagation of Sound by means of the pulses or vibrations of the air. The experiment of the bell, which, in an exhausted receiver, produces no sensible Sound, would alone render this doctrine somewhat more than probable. But this great probability is still further confirmed by the computations of Sir Isaac Newton, who has shown that, what is called the velocity of Sound, or the time which passes between the commencement of the action of the sounding body, and that of the Sensation in our ear, is perfectly suitable to the velocity with which the pulses and vibrations of an elastic fluid of the same density with the air, are naturally propagated. Dr. Benjamin Franklin has made objections to this doctrine, but, I think, without success.

Such are the intermediate causes by which philosophers have endeavoured to connect the Sensation in our organs, with the distant bodies which excite them. How those intermediate causes, by the different motions and vibrations which they may be supposed to excite on our organs, produce there those different Sensations, none of which bear the smallest resemblance to vibration or motion of any kind, no philosopher has yet attempted to explain to us.

Of the Sense of Seeing.

Dr. Berkley, in his New Theory of Vision, one of the finest examples of philosophical analysis that is to be found, either in our own, or in any other language, has explained, so very distinctly, the nature of the objects of Sight: their dissimilitude to, as well as their correspondence and connection with those of Touch, that I have scarcely any thing to add to what he has already done. It is only in order to render some things, which I shall have occasion to say hereafter, intelligible to such readers as may not have had an opportunity of studying his book, that I have presumed to treat of the same subject, after so great a master. Whatever I shall say upon it, if not directly borrowed from Dr. Berkley, has at least been suggested by what he has already said.

That the objects of Sight are not perceived as resisting or pressing upon the organ which perceives them, is sufficiently obvious. They cannot therefore suggest, at least in the same manner as the objects of Touch, their externality and independency of existence.

We are apt, however, to imagine that we see objects at a distance from us, and that consequently the externality of their existence is immediately perceived by our sight. But if we consider that the distance of any object from the eye, is a line turned endways to it; and that this line must consequently appear to it, but as one point; we shall be sensible that distance from the eye cannot be the immediate object of Sight, but that all visible objects must naturally be perceived as close upon the organ, or more properly, perhaps, like all other Sensations, as in the organ which perceives them. That the objects of Sight are all painted in the bottom of the eye, upon a membrane called the retina, pretty much in the same manner as the like objects are painted in a Camera Obscura, is well known to whoever has the slightest tincture of the science of Optics: and the principle of perception, it is probable, originally perceives them, as existing in that part of the organ, and nowhere but in that part of the organ. No optician, accordingly, no person who has ever bestowed any moderate degree of attention upon the nature of Vision, has ever pretended that distance from the eye was the immediate object of Sight. How it is that, by means of our Sight we learn to judge of such distances Opticians have endeavoured to explain in several different ways. I shall not, however, at present, stop to examine their systems.

The objects of Touch are solidity, and those modifications of solidity which we consider as essential to it, and inseparable from it; solid extension, figure, divisibility, and mobility.

The objects of Sight are colour, and those modifications of colour which, in the same manner, we consider as essential to it, and inseparable from it; coloured extension, figure, divisibility, and mobility. When we open our eyes, the sensible coloured objects, which present themselves to us, must all have a certain extension, or must occupy a certain portion of the visible surface which appears before us. They must too have all a certain figure, or must be bounded by certain visible lines, which mark upon that surface the extent of their respective dimensions. Every sensible portion of this visible or coloured extension must be conceived as divisible, or as separable into two, three, or more parts. Every portion too of this visible or coloured surface must be conceived as moveable, or as capable of changing its situation, and of assuming a different arrangement with regard to the other portions of the same surface.

Colour, the visible, bears no resemblance to solidity, the tangible object. A man born blind, or who has lost his sight so early as to have no remembrance of visible objects, can form no idea or conception of colour. Touch alone can never help him to it. I have heard, indeed, of some persons who had lost their sight after the age of manhood, and who had learned to distinguish by the touch alone, the different colours of cloths or silks, the goods which it happened to be their business to deal in. The powers by which different bodies excite in the organs of Sight the Sensations of different colours, probably depend upon some difference in the nature, configuration, and arrangement of the parts which compose their respective surfaces. This difference may, to a very nice and delicate touch, make some difference in the feeling, sufficient to enable a person, much interested in the case, to make this distinction in some degree, though probably in a very imperfect and inaccurate one. A man born blind might possibly be taught to make the same distinctions. But though he might thus be able to name the different colours, which those different surfaces reflected, though he might thus have some imperfect notion of the remote causes of the Sensations, he could have no better idea of the Sensations themselves, than that other blind man, mentioned by Mr. Locke, had, who said that he imagined the Colour of Scarlet resembled the Sound of a Trumpet. A man born deaf may, in the same manner, be taught to speak articulately. He is taught how to shape and dispose of his organs, so as to pronounce each letter, syllable, and word. But still, though he may have some imperfect idea of the remote causes of the

Sounds which he himself utters, of the remote causes of the Sensations which he himself excites in other people; he can have none of those Sounds or Sensations themselves.

If it were possible, in the same manner, that a man could be born without the Sense of Touching, that of Seeing could never alone suggest to him the idea of Solidity, or enable him to form any notion of the external and resisting substance. It is probable, however, not only that no man, but that no animal was ever born without the Sense of Touching, which seems essential to, and inseparable from, the nature of animal life and existence. It is unnecessary, therefore, to throw away any reasoning, or to hazard any conjectures, about what might be the effects of what I look upon as altogether an impossible supposition. The eye when pressed upon by any external and solid substance, feels, no doubt, that pressure and resistance, and suggests to us (in the same manner as every other feeling part of the body) the external and independent existence of that solid substance. But in this case, the eye acts, not as the organ of Sight, but as an organ of Touch; for the eye possesses the Sense of Touching in common with almost all the other parts of the body.

The extension, figure, divisibility, and mobility of Colour, the sole object of Sight, though, on account of their correspondence and connection with the extension, figure, divisibility, and mobility of Solidity, they are called by the same name, yet seem to bear no sort of resemblance to their namesakes. As Colour and Solidity bear no sort of resemblance to one another, so neither can their respective modifications. Dr. Berkley very justly observes, that though we can conceive either a coloured or a solid line to be prolonged indefinitely, yet we cannot conceive the one to be added to the other. We cannot, even in imagination, conceive an object of Touch to be prolonged into an object of Sight, or an object of Sight into an object of Touch. The objects of Sight and those of Touch constitute two worlds, which, though they have a most important correspondence and connection with one another, bear no sort of resemblance to one another. The tangible world, as well as all the different parts which compose it, has three dimensions, Length, Breadth, and Depth. The visible world, as well as all the different parts which compose it, has only two, Length and Breadth. It presents to us only a plain or surface, which, by certain shades and combinations of Colour, suggests and represents to us (in the same manner as a picture does) certain tangible objects which have no Colour, and which therefore can bear no resemblance to those shades and combinations of Colour. Those shades and combinations suggest those different tangible objects

as at different distances, according to certain rules of Perspective, which it is, perhaps, not very easy to say how it is that we learn, whether by some particular instinct, or by some application of either reason or experience, which has become so perfectly habitual to us, that we are scarcely sensible when we make use of it.

The distinctness of this Perspective, the precision and accuracy with which, by means of it, we are capable of judging concerning the distance of different tangible objects, is greater or less, exactly in proportion as this distinctness, as this precision and accuracy, are of more or less importance to us. We can judge of the distance of near objects, of the chairs and tables for example, in the chamber where we are sitting, with the most perfect precision and accuracy; and if in broad daylight we ever stumble over any of them, it must be, not from any error in the Sight, but from some defect in the attention. The precision and accuracy of our judgment concerning such near objects are of the utmost importance to us, and constitute the great advantage which a man who sees has over one who is unfortunately blind. As the distance increases, the distinctness of this Perspective, the precision and accuracy of our judgment gradually diminish. Of the tangible objects which are even at the moderate distance of one, two, or three miles from the eye, we are frequently at a loss to determine which is nearest, and which remotest. It is seldom of much importance to us to judge with precision concerning the situation of the tangible objects which are even at this moderate distance. As the distance increases, our judgments become more and more uncertain; and at a very great distance, such as that of the fixed stars, it becomes altogether uncertain. The most precise knowledge of the relative situation of such objects could be of no other use to the enquirer than to satisfy the most unnecessary curiosity.

The distances at which different men can by Sight distinguish, with some degree of precision, the situation of the tangible objects which the visible ones represent, is very different; and this difference, though it, no doubt, may sometimes depend upon some difference in the original configuration of their eyes, yet seems frequently to arise altogether from the different customs and habits which their respective occupations have led them to contract. Men of letters, who live much in their closets, and have seldom occasion to look at very distant objects, are seldom far-sighted. Mariners, on the contrary, almost always are; those especially who have made many distant voyages, in which they have been the greater part of their time out of sight of land, and have in daylight been constantly looking out towards the horizon for the appearance of some

ship, or of some distant shore. It often astonishes a landsman to observe with what precision a sailor can distinguish in the offing, not only the appearance of a ship which is altogether invisible to the landsman, but the number of her masts, the direction of her course, and the rate of her sailing. If she is a ship of his acquaintance, he frequently can tell her name, before the landsman has been able to discover even the appearance of a ship.

Visible objects, Colour, and all its different modifications, are in themselves mere shadows or pictures, which seem to float, as it were, before the organ of Sight. In themselves, and independent of their connection with the tangible objects which they represent, they are of no importance to us, and can essentially neither benefit us nor hurt us. Even while we see them we are seldom thinking of them. Even when we appear to be looking at them with the greatest earnestness, our whole attention is frequently employed, not upon them, but upon the tangible objects represented by them.

It is because almost our whole attention is employed, not upon the visible and representing, but upon the tangible and represented objects, that in our imaginations we are apt to ascribe to the former a degree of magnitude which does not belong to them, but which belongs altogether to the latter. If you shut one eye, and hold immediately before the other a small circle of plain glass, of not more than half an inch in diameter, you may see through that circle the most extensive prospects; lawns and woods, and arms of the sea, and distant mountains. You are apt to imagine that the Landscape which is thus presented to you, that the visible Picture which you thus see, is immensely great and extensive. The tangible objects which this visible Picture represents, undoubtedly are so. But the visible Picture which represents them can be no greater than the little visible circle through which you see it. If while you are looking through this circle, you could conceive a fairy hand and a fairy pencil to come between your eye and the glass, that pencil could delineate upon that little glass the outline of all those extensive lawns and woods, and arms of the sea, and distant mountains, in the full and the exact dimensions with which they are really seen by the naked eye.

Every visible object which covers from the eye any other visible object, must appear at least as large as that other visible object. It must occupy at least an equal portion of that visible plain or surface which is at that time presented to the eye. Opticians accordingly tell us, that all the visible objects which are seen under equal angles must to the eye appear

equally large. But the visible object, which covers from the eye any other visible object, must necessarily be seen under angles at least equally large as those under which that other object is seen. When I hold up my finger, however, before my eye, it appears to cover the greater part of the visible chamber in which I am sitting. It should therefore appear as large as the greater part of that visible chamber. But because I know that the tangible finger bears but a very small proportion to the greater part of the tangible chamber, I am apt to fancy that the visible finger bears but a like proportion to the greater part of the visible chamber. My judgment corrects my eye-sight, and, in my fancy, reduces the visible object, which represents the little tangible one, below its real visible dimensions; and, on the contrary, it augments the visible object which represents the great tangible one a good deal beyond those dimensions. My attention being generally altogether occupied about the tangible and represented, and not at all about the visible and representing objects, my careless fancy bestows upon the latter a proportion which does not in the least belong to them, but which belongs altogether to the former.

It is because the visible object which covers any other visible object must always appear at least as large as that other object, that opticians tell us that the sphere of our vision appears to the eye always equally large; and that when we hold our hand before our eye in such a manner that we see nothing but the inside of the hand, we still see precisely the same number of visible points, the sphere of our vision is still as completely filled, the retina of the eye is as entirely covered with the object which is thus presented to it, as when we survey the most extensive horizon.

A young gentleman who was born with a cataract upon each of his eyes, was, in one thousand seven hundred and twenty-eight, couched by Mr. Cheselden, and by that means for the first time made to see distinctly. ‘At first,’ says the operator, ‘he could bear but very little sight, and the things he saw he thought extremely large; but upon seeing things larger, those first seen he conceived less, never being able to imagine any lines beyond the bounds he saw; the room he was in, he said, he knew to be but part of the house, yet he could not conceive that the whole house would look bigger.’ It was unavoidable that he should at first conceive, that no visible object could be greater, could present to his eye a greater number of visible points, or could more completely fill the comprehension of that organ, than the narrowest sphere of his vision. And when that sphere came to be enlarged, he still could not conceive that the visible objects which it presented could be larger than those

which he had first seen. He must probably by this time have been in some degree habituated to the connection between visible and tangible objects, and enabled to conceive that visible object to be small which represented a small tangible object; and that to be great, which represented a great one. The great objects did not appear to his sight greater than the small ones had done before; but the small ones, which, having filled the whole sphere of his vision, had before appeared as large as possible, being now known to represent much smaller tangible objects, seemed in his conception to grow smaller. He had begun now to employ his attention more about the tangible and represented, than about the visible and representing objects; and he was beginning to ascribe to the latter the proportions and dimensions which properly belonged altogether to the former.

As we frequently ascribe to the objects of Sight a magnitude and proportion which does not really belong to them, but to the objects of Touch which they represent, so we likewise ascribe to them a steadiness of appearance, which as little belongs to them, but which they derive altogether from their connection with the same objects of Touch. The chair which now stands at the farther end of the room, I am apt to imagine, appears to my eye as large as it did when it stood close by me, when it was seen under angles at least four times larger than those under which it is seen at present, and when it must have occupied, at least, sixteen times that portion which it occupies at present, of the visible plain or surface which is now before my eyes. But as I know that the magnitude of the tangible and represented chair, the principal object of my attention, is the same in both situations, I ascribe to the visible and representing chair (though now reduced to less than the sixteenth part of its former dimensions) a steadiness of appearance, which certainly belongs not in any respect to it, but altogether to the tangible and represented one. As we approach to, or retire from, the tangible object which any visible one represents, the visible object gradually augments in the one case, and diminishes in the other. To speak accurately, it is not the same visible object which we see at different distances, but a succession of visible objects, which, though they all resemble one another, those especially which follow near after one another; yet are all really different and distinct. But as we know that the tangible object which they represent remains always the same, we ascribe to them too a sameness which belongs altogether to it: and we fancy that we see the same tree at a mile, at half a mile, and at a few yards distance. At those different distances, however, the visible objects are so very widely

different, that we are sensible of a change in their appearance. But still, as the tangible objects which they represent remain invariably the same, we ascribe a sort of sameness even to them too.

It has been said, that no man ever saw the same visible object twice; and this, though, no doubt, an exaggeration, is, in reality, much less so than at first view it appears to be. Though I am apt to fancy that all the chairs and tables, and other little pieces of furniture in the room where I am sitting, appear to my eye always the same, yet their appearance is in reality continually varying, not only according to every variation in their situation and distance with regard to where I am sitting, but according to every, even the most insensible variation in the altitude of my body, in the movement of my head, or even in that of my eyes. The perspective necessarily varies according to all even the smallest of these variations; and consequently the appearance of the objects which that perspective presents to me. Observe what difficulty a portrait painter finds, in getting the person who sits for his picture to present to him precisely that view of the countenance from which the first outline was drawn. The painter is scarce ever completely satisfied with the situation of the face which is presented to him, and finds that it is scarcely ever precisely the same with that from which he rapidly sketched the first outline. He endeavours, as well as he can, to correct the difference from memory, from fancy, and from a sort of art of approximation, by which he strives to express as nearly as he can, the ordinary effect of the look, air, and character of the person whose picture he is drawing. The person who draws from a statue, which is altogether immovable, feels a difficulty, though, no doubt, in a less degree, of the same kind. It arises altogether from the difficulty which he finds in placing his own eye precisely in the same situation during the whole time which he employs in completing his drawing. This difficulty is more than doubled upon the painter who draws from a living subject. The statue never is the cause of any variation or unsteadiness in its own appearance. The living subject frequently is.

The benevolent purpose of nature in bestowing upon us the sense of seeing, is evidently to inform us concerning the situation and distance of the tangible objects which surround us. Upon the knowledge of this distance and situation depends the whole conduct of human life, in the most trifling as well as in the most important transactions. Even animal motion depends upon it; and without it we could neither move, nor even sit still, with complete security. The objects of sight, as Dr. Berkley finely observes, constitute a sort of language which the Author of Nature

addresses to our eyes, and by which he informs us of many things, which it is of the utmost importance to us to know. As, in common language, the words or sounds bear no resemblance to the thing which they denote, so, in this other language, the visible objects bear no sort of resemblance to the tangible object which they represent, and of whose relative situation, with regard both to ourselves and to one another, they inform us.

He acknowledges, however, that though scarcely any word be by nature better fitted to express one meaning than any other meaning, yet that certain visible objects are better fitted than others to represent certain tangible objects. A visible square, for example, is better fitted than a visible circle to represent a tangible square. There is, perhaps, strictly speaking, no such thing as either a visible cube, or a visible globe, the objects of sight being all naturally presented to the eye as upon one surface. But still there are certain combinations of colours which are fitted to represent to the eye, both the near and the distant, both the advancing and the receding lines, angles, and surfaces of the tangible cube; and there are others fitted to represent, in the same manner, both the near and the receding surface of the tangible globe. The combination which represents the tangible cube, would not be fit to represent the tangible globe; and that which represents the tangible globe, would not be fit to represent the tangible cube. Though there may, therefore, be no resemblance between visible and tangible objects, there seems to be some affinity or correspondence between them sufficient to make each visible object fitter to represent a certain precise tangible object than any other tangible object. But the greater part of words seem to have no sort of affinity or correspondence with the meanings or ideas which they express; and if custom had so ordered it, they might with equal propriety have been made use of to express any other meanings or ideas.

Dr. Berkley, with that happiness of illustration which scarcely ever deserts him, remarks, that this in reality is no more than what happens in common language; and that though letters bear no sort of resemblance to the words which they denote, yet that the same combination of letters which represents one word, would not always be fit to represent another; and that each word is always best represented by its own proper combination of letters. The comparison, however, it must be observed, is here totally changed. The connection between visible and tangible objects was first illustrated by comparing it with that between spoken language and the meanings or ideas which spoken language suggests to us; and it is now illustrated by the connection between written language

and spoken language, which is altogether different. Even this second illustration, besides, will not apply perfectly to the case. When custom, indeed has perfectly ascertained the powers of each letter; when it has ascertained, for example, that the first letter of the alphabet shall always represent such a sound, and the second letter such another sound; each word comes then to be more properly represented by one certain combination of written letters or characters, than it could be by any other combination. But still the characters themselves are altogether arbitrary, and have no sort of affinity or correspondence with the articulate sounds which they denote. The character which marks the first letter of the alphabet, for example, if custom had so ordered it, might, with perfect propriety, have been made use of to express the sound which we now annex to the second, and the character of the second to express that which we now annex to the first. But the visible characters which represent to our eyes the tangible globe, could not so well represent the tangible cube; nor could those which represent the tangible cube, so properly represent the tangible globe. There is evidently, therefore, a certain affinity and correspondence between each visible object and the precise tangible object represented by it, much superior to what takes place either between written and spoken language, or between spoken language and the ideas or meanings which it suggests. The language which nature addresses to our eyes, has evidently a fitness of representation, an aptitude for signifying the precise things which it denotes, much superior to that of any of the artificial languages which human art and ingenuity have ever been able to invent.

That this affinity and correspondence, however, between visible and tangible objects could not alone, and without the assistance of observation and experience, teach us, by any effort of reason, to infer what was the precise tangible object which each visible one represented, if it is not sufficiently evident from what has been already said, it must be completely so from the remarks of Mr. Cheselden upon the young gentleman above-mentioned, whom he had couched for a cataract. ‘Though we say of this gentleman, that he was blind,’ observes Mr. Cheselden, ‘as we do of all people who have ripe cataracts; yet they are never so blind from that cause but that they can discern day from night; and for the most part, in a strong light, distinguish black, white, and scarlet; but they cannot perceive the shape of any thing; for the light by which these perceptions are made, being let in obliquely through aqueous humour, or the anterior surface of the crystalline, (by which the rays

cannot be brought into a focus upon the retina,) they can discern in no other manner than a sound eye can through a glass of broken jelly, where a great variety of surfaces so differently refract the light, that the several distinct pencils of rays cannot be collected by the eye into their proper foci; wherefore the shape of an object in such a case cannot be at all discerned though the colour may: and thus it was with this young gentleman, who, though he knew those colours asunder in a good light, yet when he saw them after he was couched, the faint ideas he had of them before were not sufficient for him to know them by afterwards; and therefore he did not think them the same which he had before known by those names.' This young gentleman, therefore, had some advantage over one who from a state of total blindness had been made for the first time to see. He had some imperfect notion of the distinction of colours; and he must have known that those colours had some sort of connection with the tangible objects which he had been accustomed to feel. But had he emerged from total blindness, he could have learnt this connection only from a very long course of observation and experience. How little this advantage availed him, however, we may learn partly from the passages of Mr. Cheselden's narrative, already quoted, and still more from the following:

'When he first saw,' says that ingenious operator, 'he was so far from making any judgment about distances, that he thought all objects whatever touched his eyes (as he expressed) as what he felt did his skin; and thought no objects so agreeable as those which were smooth and regular, though he could form no judgment of their shape, or guess what it was in any object that was pleasing to him. He knew not the shape of any thing, nor any one thing from another, however different in shape or magnitude; but upon being told what things were, whose form he before knew from feeling, he would carefully observe, that he might know them again; but having too many objects to learn at once, he forgot many of them; and (as he said) at first learned to know, and again forgot a thousand things in a day. One particular only (though it may appear trifling) I will relate: Having often forgot which was the cat and which was the dog, he was ashamed to ask; but catching the cat (which he knew by feeling) he was observed to look at her steadfastly, and then setting her down, said, So, puss! I shall know you another time.'

When the young gentleman said, that the objects which he saw touched his eyes, he certainly could not mean that they pressed upon or resisted his eyes; for the objects of sight never act upon the organ in any way that resembles pressure or resistance. He could mean no more than

that they were close upon his eyes, or, to speak more properly, perhaps, that they were in his eyes. A deaf man, who was made all at once to hear, might in the same manner naturally enough say, that the sounds which he heard touched his ears, meaning that he felt them as close upon his ears, or, to speak perhaps more properly, as in his ears.

Mr. Cheselden adds afterwards: ‘We thought he soon knew what pictures represented which were showed to him, but we found afterwards we were mistaken; for about two months after he was couched, he discovered at once they represented solid bodies, when to that time, he considered them only as party-coloured planes, or surfaces diversified with variety of paints; but even then he was no less surprised, expecting the pictures would feel like the things they represented, and was amazed when he found those parts, which by their light and shadow appeared now round and uneven, felt only flat like the rest; and asked which was the lying sense, feeling or seeing?’

Painting, though, by combinations of light and shade, similar to those which Nature makes use of in the visible objects which she presents to our eyes, it endeavours to imitate those objects; yet it never has been able to equal the perspective of Nature, or to give to its productions that force and distinctness of relief and rejection which Nature bestows upon hers. When the young gentleman was just beginning to understand the strong and distinct perspective of Nature, the faint and feeble perspective of Painting made no impression upon him, and the picture appeared to him what it really was, a plain surface bedaubed with different colours. When he became more familiar with the perspective of Nature, the inferiority of that of Painting did not hinder him from discovering its resemblance to that of Nature. In the perspective of Nature, he had always found that the situation and distance of the tangible and represented objects, corresponded exactly to what the visible and representing ones suggested to him. He expected to find the same thing in the similar, though inferior perspective of Painting, and was disappointed when he found that the visible and tangible objects had not, in this case, their usual correspondence.

‘In a year after seeing,’ adds Mr. Cheselden, ‘the young gentleman being carried upon Epsom-downs, and observing a large prospect, he was exceedingly delighted with it, and called it a new kind of seeing.’ He had now, it is evident, come to understand completely the language of Vision. The visible objects which this noble prospect presented to him did not now appear as touching, or as close upon his eye. They did not

now appear of the same magnitude with those small objects to which, for some time after the operation, he had been accustomed, in the little chamber where he was confined. Those new visible objects at once, and as it were of their own accord, assumed both the distance and the magnitude of the great tangible objects which they represented. He had now, therefore, it would seem, become completely master of the language of Vision, and he had become so in the course of a year; a much shorter period than that in which any person, arrived at the age of manhood, could completely acquire any foreign language. It would appear too, that he had made very considerable progress even in the two first months. He began at that early period to understand even the feeble perspective of Painting; and though at first he could not distinguish it from the strong perspective of Nature, yet he could not have been thus imposed upon by so imperfect an imitation, if the great principles of Vision had not beforehand been deeply impressed upon his mind, and if he had not, either by the association of ideas, or by some other unknown principle, been strongly determined to expect certain tangible objects in consequence of the visible ones which had been presented to him. This rapid progress, however, may, perhaps, be accounted for from that fitness of representation, which has already been taken notice of, between visible and tangible objects. In this language of Nature, it may be said, the analogies are more perfect; the etymologies, the declensions, and conjugations, if one may say so, are more regular than those of any human language. The rules are fewer, and those rules admit of no exceptions.

But though it may have been altogether by the slow paces of observation and experience that this young gentleman acquired the knowledge of the connection between visible and tangible objects; we cannot from thence with certainty infer, that young children have not some instinctive perception of the same kind. In him this instinctive power, not having been exerted at the proper season, may, from disuse, have gone gradually to decay, and at last have been completely obliterated. Or, perhaps (what seems likewise very possible), some feeble and unobserved remains of it may have somewhat facilitated his acquisition of what he might otherwise have found it much more difficult to acquire a knowledge of.

That, antecedent to all experience, the young of at least the greater part of animals possess some instinctive perception of this kind, seems abundantly evident. The hen never feeds her young by dropping the food into their bills, as the linnet and thrush feed theirs. Almost as soon as her

chickens are hatched, she does not feed them, but carries them to the field to feed, where they walk about at their ease, it would seem, and appear to have the most distinct perception of all the tangible objects which surround them. We may often see them, accordingly, by the straightest road, run to and pick up any little grains which she shows them, even at the distance of several yards; and they no sooner come into the light than they seem to understand this language of Vision as well as they ever do afterwards. The young of the partridge and of the grouse seem to have, at the same early period, the most distinct perceptions of the same kind. The young partridge, almost as soon as it comes from the shell, runs about among long grass and corn; the young grouse among long heath, and would both most essentially hurt themselves if they had not the most acute, as well as distinct perception of the tangible objects which not only surround them but press upon them on all sides. This is the case too with the young of the goose, of the duck, and, so far as I have been able to observe, with those of at least the greater part of the birds which make their nests upon the ground, with the greater part of those which are ranked by Linnæus in the orders of the hen and the goose, and of many of those long-shanked and wading birds which he places in the order that he distinguishes by the name of Grallæ.

The young of those birds that build their nests in bushes, upon trees, in the holes and crevices of high walls, upon high rocks and precipices, and other places of difficult access; of the greater part of those ranked by Linnæus in the orders of the hawk, the magpie, and the sparrow, seem to come blind from the shell, and to continue so for at least some days thereafter. Till they are able to fly they are fed by the joint labour of both parents. As soon as that period arrives, however, and probably for some time before, they evidently enjoy all the powers of Vision in the most complete perfection, and can distinguish with most exact precision the shape and proportion of the tangible objects which every visible one represents. In so short a period they cannot be supposed to have acquired those powers from experience, and must therefore derive them from some instinctive suggestion. The sight of birds seems to be both more prompt and more acute than that of any other animals. Without hurting themselves they dart into the thickest and most thorny bushes, fly with the utmost rapidity through the most intricate forests, and while they are soaring aloft in the air, discover upon the ground the insects and grains upon which they feed.

The young of several sorts of quadrupeds seem, like those of the greater part of birds which make their nests upon the ground, to enjoy as

soon as they come into the world the faculty of seeing as completely as they ever do afterwards. The day, or the day after they are dropped, the calf follows the cow, and the foal the mare, to the field; and though from timidity they seldom remove far from the mother, yet they seem to walk about at their ease; which they could not do unless they could distinguish, with some degree of precision, the shape and proportion of the tangible objects which each visible one represents. The degree of precision, however, with which the horse is capable of making this distinction, seems at no period of his life to be very complete. He is at all times apt to startle at many visible objects, which, if they distinctly suggested to him the real shape and proportion of the tangible objects which they represent, could not be the objects of fear; at the trunk or root of an old tree, for example, which happens to be laid by the roadside, at a great stone, or the fragment of a rock which happens to lie near the way where he is going. To reconcile him, even to a single object of this kind, which has once alarmed him, frequently requires some skill, as well as much patience and good temper in the rider. Such powers of sight, however, as Nature has thought proper to render him capable of acquiring, he seems to enjoy from the beginning, in as great perfection as he ever does afterwards.

The young of other quadrupeds, like those of the birds which make their nests in places of difficult access, come blind into the world. Their sight, however, soon opens, and as soon as it does so, they seem to enjoy it in the most complete perfection, as we may all observe in the puppy and the kitten. The same thing, I believe, may be said of all other beasts of prey, at least of all those concerning which I have been able to collect any distinct information. They come blind into the world; but as soon as their sight opens, they appear to enjoy it in the most complete perfection.

It seems difficult to suppose that man is the only animal of which the young are not endowed with some instinctive perception of this kind. The young of the human species, however, continue so long in a state of entire dependency, they must be so long carried about in the arms of their mothers or of their nurses, that such an instinctive perception may seem less necessary to them than to any other race of animals. Before it could be of any use to them, observation and experience may, by the known principle of the association of ideas, have sufficiently connected in their young minds each visible object with the corresponding tangible one which it is fitted to represent. Nature, it may be said, never bestows upon any animal any faculty which is not either necessary or useful, and an instinct of this kind would be altogether useless to an animal which must

necessarily acquire the knowledge which the instinct is given to supply, long before that instinct could be of any use to it. Children, however, appear at so very early a period to know the distance, the shape, and magnitude of the different tangible objects which are presented to them, that I am disposed to believe that even they may have some instinctive perception of this kind; though possibly in a much weaker degree than the greater part of other animals. A child that is scarcely a month old, stretches out its hands to feel any little plaything that is presented to it. It distinguishes its nurse, and the other people who are much about it, from strangers. It clings to the former, and turns away from the latter. Hold a small looking-glass before a child of not more than two or three months old, and it will stretch out its little arms behind the glass, in order to feel the child which it sees, and which it imagines is at the back of the glass. It is deceived, no doubt; but even this sort of deception sufficiently demonstrates that it has a tolerably distinct apprehension of the ordinary perspective of Vision, which it cannot well have learnt from observation and experience.

Do any of our other senses, antecedently to such observation and experience, instinctively suggest to us some conception of the solid and resisting substances which excite their respective sensations, though these sensations bear no sort of resemblance to those substances?

The sense of Tasting certainly does not. Before we can feel the sensation, the solid and resisting substance which excites it must be pressed against the organs of Taste, and must consequently be perceived by them. Antecedently to observation and experience, therefore, the sense of Tasting can never be said instinctively to suggest some conception of that substance.

It may, perhaps, be otherwise with the sense of Smelling. The young of all suckling animals, (of the Mammalia of Linnæus,) whether they are born with sight or without it, yet as soon as they come into the world apply to the nipple of the mother in order to suck. In doing this they are evidently directed by the Smell. The Smell appears either to excite the appetite for the proper food, or at least to direct the new-born animal to the place where that food is to be found. It may perhaps do both the one and the other.

That when the stomach is empty, the Smell of agreeable food excites and irritates the appetite, is what we all must have frequently experienced. But the stomach of every new-born animal is necessarily empty. While in the womb it is nourished, not by the mouth, but by the navel-string. Children have been born apparently in the most perfect

health and vigour, and have applied to suck in the usual manner; but immediately, or soon after, have thrown up the milk, and in the course of a few hours have died vomiting and in convulsions. Upon opening their bodies it has been found that the intestinal tube or canal had never been opened or pierced in the whole extent of its length; but, like a sack, admitted of no passage beyond a particular place. It could not have been in any respect by the mouth, therefore, but altogether by the navel-string, that such children had been nourished and fed up to the degree of health and vigour in which they were born. Every animal, while in the womb, seems to draw its nourishment, more like a vegetable, from the root, than like an animal from the mouth; and that nourishment seems to be conveyed to all the different parts of the body by tubes and canals in many respects different from those which afterwards perform the same function. As soon as it comes into the world, this new set of tubes and canals which the providential care of Nature had for a long time before been gradually preparing, is all at once and instantaneously opened. They are all empty, and they require to be filled. An uneasy sensation accompanies the one situation, and an agreeable one the other. The smell of the substance which is fitted for filling them, increases and irritates that uneasy sensation, and produces in the infant hunger, or the appetite for food.

But all the appetites which take their origin from a certain state of the body, seem to suggest the means of their own gratification; and, even long before experience, some anticipation or preconception of the pleasure which attends that gratification. In the appetite for sex, which frequently, I am disposed to believe almost always, comes a long time before the age of puberty, this is perfectly and distinctly evident. The appetite for food suggests to the new-born infant the operation of sucking, the only means by which it can possibly gratifying that appetite. It is continually sucking. It sucks whatever is presented to its mouth. It sucks even when there is nothing presented to its mouth, and some anticipation or preconception of the pleasure which it is to enjoy in sucking, seems to make it delight in putting its mouth into the shape and configuration by which it alone can enjoy that pleasure. There are other appetites in which the most unexperienced imagination produces a similar effect upon the organs which Nature has provided for their gratification.

The smell not only excites the appetite, but directs to the object which can alone gratify that appetite. But by suggesting the direction towards that object, the Smell must necessarily suggest some notion of distance

and externality, which are necessarily involved in the idea of direction; in the idea of the line of motion by which the distance can best be overcome, and the mouth brought into contact with the unknown substance which is the object of the appetite. That the Smell should alone suggest any preconception of the shape or magnitude of the external body to which it directs, seems not very probable. The sensation of Smell seems to have no sort of affinity or correspondence with shape or magnitude; and whatever preconception the infant may have of these, (and it may very probably have some such preconception,) is likely to be suggested, not so much directly by the Smell, and indirectly by the appetite excited by that Smell; as by the principle which teaches the child to mould its mouth into the conformation and action of sucking, even before it reaches the object to which alone that conformation and action can be usefully applied.

The Smell, however, as it suggests the direction by which the external body must be approached, must suggest at least some vague idea or preconception of the existence of that body; of the thing to which it directs, though not perhaps of the precise shape and magnitude of that thing. The infant, too, feeling its mouth attracted and drawn as it were towards that external body, must conceive the Smell which thus draws and attracts it, as something belonging to or proceeding from that body, or what is afterwards denominated and obscurely understood to be as a sort of quality or attribute of that body.

The Smell, too, may very probably suggest some even tolerably distinct perception of the Taste of the food to which it directs. The respective objects of our different external senses seem, indeed, the greater part of them, to bear no sort of resemblance to one another. Colour bears no sort of resemblance to Solidity, nor to Heat, nor to Cold, nor to Sound, nor to Smell, nor to Taste. To this general rule, however, there seems to be one, and perhaps but one exception. The sensations of Smell and Taste seem evidently to bear some sort of resemblance to one another. Smell appears to have been given to us by Nature as the director of Taste. It announces, as it were, before trial, what is likely to be the Taste of the food which is set before us. Though perceived by a different organ, it seems in many cases to be but a weaker sensation nearly of the same kind with that of the Taste which that announces. It is very natural to suppose, therefore, that the Smell may suggest to the infant some tolerably distinct preconception of the Taste of the food which it announces, and may, even before experience, make its mouth, as we say, water for that food.

That numerous division of animals which Linnæus ranks under the class of worms, have, scarcely any of them, any head. They neither see nor hear, have neither eyes nor ears; but many of them have the power of self-motion, and appear to move about in search of their food. They can be directed in this search by no other sense than that of Smelling. The most accurate microscopical observations, however, have never been able to discover in such animals any distinct organ of Smell. They have a mouth and a stomach, but no nostrils. The organ of Taste, it is probable, has in them a sensibility of the same kind with that which the olfactory nerves have in more perfect animals. They may, as it were, taste at a distance, and be attracted to their food by an affection of the same organ by which they afterwards enjoy it; and Smell and Taste may in them be no otherwise distinguished than as weaker or stronger sensations derived from the same organ.

The sensations of Heat and Cold, when excited by the pressure of some body either heated or cooled beyond the actual temperature of our own organs, cannot be said, antecedently to observation and experience, instinctively to suggest any conception of the solid and resisting substance which excites them. What was said of the sense of Taste may very properly be said here. Before we can feel those sensations, the pressure of the external body which excites them must necessarily suggest, not only some conception, but the most distinct conviction of its own external and independent existence.

It may be otherwise, perhaps, when those sensations are either of them excited by the temperature of the external air. In a calm day when there is no wind, we scarcely perceive the external air as a solid body; and the sensations of Heat and Cold, it may be thought, are then felt merely as affections of our own body, without any reference to any thing external. Several cases, however, may be conceived, in which it must be allowed, I imagine, that those sensations, even when excited in this manner, must suggest some vague notion of some external thing or substance which excites them. A new-born animal, which had the power of self-motion, and which felt its body, either agreeably or disagreeably, more heated or more cooled on the one side than on the other, would, I imagine, instinctively and antecedently to all observation and experience, endeavour to move towards the side in which it felt the agreeable, and to withdraw from that in which it felt the disagreeable sensation. But the very desire of motion supposes some notion or preconception of externality; and the desire to move towards the side of the agreeable, or from that of the disagreeable sensation, supposes at least some vague

notion of some external thing or place which is the cause of those respective sensations.

The degrees of Heat and Cold which are agreeable, it has been found from experience, are likewise healthful; and those which are disagreeable, unwholesome. The degree of their unwholesomeness, too, seems to be pretty much in proportion to that of their disagreeableness. If either of them is so disagreeable as to be painful, it is generally destructive; and, that, too, in a very short period of time. Those sensations appear to have been given us for the preservation of our own bodies. They necessarily excite the desire of changing our situation when it is unwholesome or destructive; and when it is healthy, they allow us, or rather they entice us, to remain in it. But the desire of changing our situation necessarily supposes some idea of externality; or of motion into a place different from that in which we actually are; and even the desire of remaining in the same place supposes some idea of at least the possibility of changing. Those sensations could not well have answered the intention of Nature, had they not thus instinctively suggested some vague notion of external existence.

That Sound, the object of the sense of Hearing, though perceived itself as in the ear, and nowhere but in the ear, may likewise, instinctively, and antecedently to all observation and experience, obscurely suggest some vague notion of some external substance or thing which excites it, I am much disposed to believe. I acknowledge, however, that I have not been able to recollect any one instance in which this sense seems so distinctly to produce this effect, as that of Seeing, that of Smelling, and even that of Heat and Cold, appear to do in some particular cases. Unusual and unexpected Sound alarms always, and disposes us to look about for some external substance or thing as the cause which excites it, or from which it proceeds. Sound, however, considered merely as a sensation, or as an affection of the organ of Hearing, can in most cases neither benefit nor hurt us. It may be agreeable or disagreeable, but in its own nature it does not seem to announce any thing beyond the immediate feeling. It should not therefore excite any alarm. Alarm is always the fear of some uncertain evil beyond what is immediately felt, and from some unknown and external cause. But all animals, and men among the rest, feel some degree of this alarm, start, are roused and rendered circumspect and attentive by unusual and unexpected Sound. This effect, too, is produced so readily and so instantaneously that it bears every mark of an instinctive suggestion of an impression immediately struck by the hand of Nature, which does not

wait for any recollection of past observation and experience. The hare, and all those other timid animals to whom flight is the only defence, are supposed to possess the sense of Hearing in the highest degree of activeness. It seems to be the sense in which cowards are very likely to excel.

The three senses of Seeing, Hearing, and Smelling, seem to be given to us by Nature, not so much in order to inform us concerning the actual situation of our bodies, as concerning that of those other external bodies, which, though at some distance from us, may sooner or later affect the actual situation, and eventually either benefit or hurt us.

OF THE AFFINITY BETWEEN CERTAIN ENGLISH AND ITALIAN VERSES.

The measure of the verses, of which the octave of the Italians, their terzetti, and the greater part of their sonnets, are composed, seems to be as nearly the same with that of the English Heroic Rhyme, as the different genius and pronunciation of the two languages will permit.

The English Heroic Rhyme is supposed to consist sometimes of ten, and sometimes of eleven syllables: of ten, when the verse ends with a single, and of eleven, when it ends with a double rhyme.

The correspondent Italian verse is supposed to consist sometimes of ten, sometimes of eleven, and sometimes of twelve syllables, according as it happens to end with a single, a double, or a triple rhyme.

The rhyme ought naturally to fall upon the last syllable of the verse; it is proper likewise that it should fall upon an accented syllable, in order to render it more sensible. When, therefore, the accent happens to fall, not upon the last syllable, but upon that immediately before it, the rhyme must fall both upon the accented syllable and upon that which is not accented. It must be a double rhyme.

In the Italian language, when the accent falls neither upon the last syllable, nor upon that immediately before it, but upon the third syllable from the end, the rhyme must fall upon all the three. It must be a triple rhyme, and the verse is supposed to consist of twelve syllables:

Forsè era ver, non perô credìbile, &c.
Triple rhymes are not admitted into English Heroic Verse.

In the Italian language the accent falls much more rarely, either upon the third syllable from the end of a word, or upon the last syllable, than it does upon the one immediately before the last. In reality, this second syllable from the end seems, in that language, to be its most common and natural place. The Italian Heroic Poetry, therefore, is composed principally of double rhymes, or of verses supposed to consist of eleven syllables. Triple rhymes occur but seldom, and single rhymes still more seldom.

In the English language the accent falls frequently upon the last syllable of the word. Our language, besides, abounds in words of one syllable, the greater part of which do (for there are few which do not)

admit of being accented. Words of one syllable are most frequently the concluding words of English rhymes. For both these reasons, English Heroic Rhyme is principally composed of single rhymes, or of verses supposed to consist of ten syllables. Double Rhymes occur almost as rarely in it, as either single or triple do in the Italian.

The rarity of double rhymes in English Heroic Verse makes them appear odd, and awkward, and even ludicrous, when they occur. By the best writers, therefore, they are reserved for light and ludicrous occasions; when, in order to humour their subject, they stoop to a more familiar style than usual. When Mr. Pope says;

Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunello;

he means, in compliance with his subject, to condescend a good deal below the stateliness of his diction on the Essay on Man. Double rhymes abound more in Dryden than in Pope, and in Butler's Hudibras more than in Dryden.

The rarity both of single and of triple rhyme in Italian Heroic Verse, gives them the same odd and ludicrous air which double rhymes have in English Verse. In Italian, triple rhymes occur more frequently than single rhymes. The slippery, or if I may be allowed to use a very low, but a very expressive word, the glib pronunciation of the triple rhyme (verso sotrucciolo) seems to depart less from the ordinary movement of the double rhyme, than the abrupt ending of the single rhyme (verso tronco e cadente), of the verse that appears to be cut off and to fall short of the usual measure. Single rhymes accordingly appear in Italian verse much more burlesque than triple rhymes. Single rhymes occur very rarely in Ariosto; but frequently in the more burlesque poem of Ricciardetto. Triple rhymes occur much oftener in all the best writers. It is thus, that what in English appears to be the verse of the greatest gravity and dignity, appears in Italian to be the most burlesque and ludicrous; for no other reason, I apprehend, but because in the one language it is the ordinary verse, whereas in the other it departs most from the movements of ordinary verse.

The common Italian Heroic Poetry being composed of double rhymes, it can admit both of single and of triple rhymes; which seem to recede from the common movement on opposite sides to nearly equal distances. The common English Heroic Poetry, consisting of single rhymes, it can admit of double; but it cannot admit of triple rhymes,

which would recede so far from the common movements as to appear perfectly burlesque and ridiculous. In English, when a word accented upon the third syllable from the end happens to make the last word of a verse, the rhyme falls upon the last syllable only. It is a single rhyme, and the verse consists of no more than ten syllables: but as the last syllable is not accented, it is an imperfect rhyme, which, however, when confined to the second verse of the couplet, and even there introduced but rarely, may have a very agreeable grace, and the line may even seem to run more easy and natural by means of it:

Bùt of this fràme, the beàrings, and the tìes.
The strìct connèctions, nìce depèndencies, &c.

When by a well accented syllable in the end of the first line of a couplet, it has once been clearly ascertained what the rhyme is to be, a very slight allusion to it, such as can be made by a syllable of the same termination that is not accented, may often be sufficient to mark the coincidence in the second line; a word of this kind in the end of the first line seldom succeeds so well:

Th’ inhabitants of old Jerusalem
Were Jebusites; the town so called from them.

A couplet in which both verses were terminated in this manner, would be extremely disagreeable and offensive.

In counting the syllables, even of verses which to the ear appear sufficiently correct, a considerable indulgence must frequently be given, before they can, in either language, be reduced to the precise number of ten, eleven, or twelve, according to the nature of the rhyme. In the following couplet, for example, there are, strictly speaking, fourteen syllables in the first line, and twelve in the second.

And many a hŭmoŭrous, many an amorous lay,
Was sung by many a bard, on many a day.

By the rapidity, however, or, if I may use a very low word a second time, by the glibness of the pronunciation, those fourteen syllables in the first line, and those twelve in the second, appear to take up the time but of ten ordinary syllables. The words many a, though they plainly consist of three distinct syllables, or sounds, which are all pronounced successively, or the one after the other, yet pass as but two syllables; as do likewise these words, hŭmoŭroŭs, and amorous. The words heaven

and given, in the same manner, consist each of them of two syllables, which, how rapidly so ever they may be pronounced, cannot be pronounced but successively, or the one after the other. In verse, however, they are considered as consisting but of one syllable.

In counting the syllables of the Italian Heroic Verse, still greater indulgences must be allowed: three vowels must there frequently be counted as making but one syllable, though they are all pronounced, rapidly indeed, but in succession, or the one after the other, and though no two of them are supposed to make a diphthong. In these licenses too, the Italians seem not to be very regular, and the same concourse of vowels which in one place makes but one syllable, will in another sometimes make two. There are even some words which in the end of a verse are constantly counted for two syllables, but which in any other part of it are never counted for more than one; such as the words suo, tuo, suoi, tuoi.

Ruscelli observes, that in the Italian Heroic Verse the accent ought to fall upon the fourth, the sixth, the eighth, and the tenth syllables; and that if it falls upon the third, the fifth, the seventh, or the ninth syllables, it will spoil the verse.

In English, if the accent falls upon any of the above-mentioned odd syllables, it equally spoils the verse.

Bow’d their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,

though a line of Milton, has not the ordinary movement of an English Heroic Verse, the accent falls upon the third and sixth syllables.

In Italian frequently, and in English sometimes, an accent is with great grace thrown upon the first syllable, in which case it seldom happens that any other syllable is accented before the fourth:

Cánto l’armé pietóse e’l capitáno.

Fírst in these fiélds I trý the sýlvan stráins.

Both in English and in Italian the second syllable may be accented with great grace, and it generally is so when the first syllable is not accented:

E iu van l’inferno a’ lui s’ oppose; e in vano
S’ armó d’ Asia, e di Libia il popol misto, &c.

Let us, since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us, and to die, &c.

Both in English and in Italian Verse, an accent, though it must never be misplaced, may sometimes be omitted with great grace. In the last of the above-quoted English Verses there is no accent upon the eighth syllable; the conjunction and not admitting of any. In the following Italian Verse there is no accent upon the sixth syllable:

O Musa, tu, che di caduchi allori, &c.

The preposition di will as little admit of an accent as the conjunction and. In this case, however, when the even syllable is not accented, neither of the odd syllables immediately before or behind it must be accented.

Neither in English nor in Italian can two accents running be omitted.

It must be observed, that in Italian there are two accents, the grave and the acute: the grave accent is always marked by a slight stroke over the syllable to which it belongs; the acute accent has no mark.

The English language knows no distinction between the grave and the acute accents.

The same author observes, that in the Italian Verse the Pause, or what the grammarians call the Cesura, may with propriety be introduced after either the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, or the seventh syllables. The like observations have been made by several different writers upon the English Heroic Verse. Dobie admires particularly the verse in which there are two pauses; one after the fifth, and another after the ninth syllable. The example he gives is from Petrarch:

Nel dolce tempo de la prima etade, &c.

In this verse, the second pause, which he says comes after the ninth syllable, in reality comes in between the two vowels, which, in the Italian way of counting syllables, compose the ninth syllable. It may be doubtful, therefore, whether this pause may not be considered as coming after the eighth syllable. I do not recollect any good English Verse in which the pause comes in after the ninth syllable. We have many in which it comes in after the eighth:

Yet oft, before his infant eyes, would run, &c.

In which verse there are two pauses; one after the second, and the other after the eighth syllable. I have observed many Italian Verses in which the pause comes after the second syllable.

Both the English and the Italian Heroic Verse, perhaps, are not so properly composed of a certain number of syllables, which vary according to the nature of the rhyme; as of a certain number of intervals, (of five invariably,) each of which is equal in length, or time, to two

ordinary distinct syllables, though it may sometimes contain more, of which the extraordinary shortness compensates the extraordinary number. The close frequently of each of those intervals, but always of every second interval, is marked by a distinct accent. This accent may frequently, with great grace, fall upon the beginning of the first interval; after which, it cannot, without spoiling the verse, fall any where but upon the close of an interval. The syllable or syllables which come after the accent that closes the fifth interval are never accented. They make no distinct interval, but are considered as a sort of excrescence of the verse, and are in a manner counted for nothing.

The Lectures



Smith studied social philosophy at Balliol College, Oxford, where he was one of the first students to benefit from scholarships set up by fellow Scot, John Snell.

LECTURES ON JUSTICE, POLICE, REVENUE AND ARMS REPORTED BY A STUDENT IN 1763



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PREFACE

The history of the manuscript now made public and the principles which I have followed in editing it are fully dealt with in the Introduction.

I have here only to express my gratitude to Mr. Thomas Raleigh, who, when I first took the work in hand, was Reader in English Law at Oxford and a Delegate of the University Press, and is now Registrar to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Besides reading through the text, and making observations on passages which he thought corrupt or in need of explanation, he has since answered from time to time, with unwearied patience, the inquiries I have addressed to him on legal points, many of which must have appeared trivial to any one except an editor desirous of believing himself to be conscientious. It must be understood, however, that, as he has had no opportunity of seeing what use I have made of the information derived from him, he is no more responsible for anything which actually occurs in the notes than Mr. Serjeant Hawkins or any other legal authority whom I have consulted.

EDWIN CANNAN.

Oxford,

August 1896

EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION

Chapter I: History of the Report.

‘Of Mr. Smith’s lectures while a professor at Glasgow, no part has been preserved, excepting what he himself published in the Theory of Moral Sentiments and in the Wealth of Nations.’ This statement was made by Dugald Stewart in the ‘Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith,’ which he read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh early in 1793. He allowed it to be printed in the Transactions of the society in 1794, and to be reprinted both in 1795 and in 1811 without alteration. For a little more than a century it has remained unquestioned, and, so far as Adam Smith’s own lecture-notes are concerned, it is doubtless correct.

When setting out for London in April, 1773, Adam Smith wrote a letter to Hume, whom he had made his literary executor, giving instructions as to the disposal of his papers in case of his death. Except those which he carried along with him, that is to say, the manuscript of the Wealth of Nations, there were none, he said, worth publication, unless perhaps the fragment on the history of astronomical systems, to be found in a certain desk, might be printed as a portion ‘of an intended juvenile work.’ ‘All the other loose papers which you will find in that desk,’ the letter continues, ‘or within the glass folding doors of a bureau which stands in my bedroom, together with about eighteen thin folio paper books which you will likewise find within the same glass folding doors, I desire may be destroyed without any examination.’ Fourteen years later, when again contemplating a visit to London, Adam Smith ‘enjoined his friends to whom he had entrusted the disposal of his manuscripts, that in the event of his death, they should destroy all the volumes of his lectures, doing with the rest of his manuscripts what they pleased.’ In July, 1790, ten days or a fortnight before he died, ‘he spoke to his friends again upon the same subject. They entreated him to make his mind easy, as he might depend upon their fulfilling his desire. He was then satisfied. But some days afterwards, finding his anxiety not entirely removed, he begged one of them to destroy the volumes immediately. This accordingly was done, and his mind was so much relieved that he was able to receive his friends in the evening with his usual complacency.’ He was unable, however, to sit up with them as usual, and retired to bed before supper, taking leave with the words, ‘I believe we must adjourn this meeting to some other place’.

Dr. James Hutton, the narrator of this story, was one of the two friends to whom Adam Smith had entrusted the disposal of his manuscripts, Dr. Joseph Black being the other. From his cautious use of the phrase ‘one of them,’ and the impersonal ‘this was done,’ most readers would infer that Hutton himself was the destroyer of the manuscripts, but Mackenzie, who was present at the supper, is reported to have told Samuel Rogers that Black did the deed. No one who has tried to burn some hundreds of leaves of folio manuscript will feel any surprise that Adam Smith, in his feeble state, should have shrunk from attempting the task with his own hands, even if he was sitting up and had a fire on that July morning. What is suggested, however, by the wording of the narrative, taken in conjunction with the letter to Hume already quoted, is that Smith was in bed in the morning when his friend called on him, and that the ‘thin folio paper books’ were still, as they had been seventeen years before at Kirkcaldy, ‘within the glass folding doors of a bureau’ in his bedroom, and thus in his sight, but, while he was so ill, before his revival in the evening, altogether out of his reach. Nothing could be more natural in these circumstances than that he should ask his visitor to take the manuscripts out of the bureau and destroy them at once, whether before his eyes in the bedroom or elsewhere.

The manuscripts having thus perished, three generations have been obliged to content themselves with the account of the lectures which Dugald Stewart obtained from John Millar, who seems to have heard all or most of the lectures himself: —

‘In the professorship of Logic, to which Mr. Smith was appointed on his first introduction into this University, he soon saw the necessity of departing widely from the plan that had been followed by his predecessors, and of directing the attention of his pupils to studies of a more interesting and useful nature than the logic and metaphysics of the schools. Accordingly, after exhibiting a general view of the powers of the mind, and explaining so much of the ancient logic as was requisite to gratify curiosity with respect to an artificial method of reasoning which had once occupied the universal attention of the learned, he dedicated all the rest of his time to the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles lettres. . . .

About a year after his appointment to the professorship of Logic, Mr. Smith was elected to the chair of Moral Philosophy. His course of lectures on this subject was divided into four parts. The first contained Natural Theology, in which he considered the proofs of the being and the attributes of God, and those principles of the human mind upon which

religion is founded. The second comprehended Ethics strictly so called, and consisted chiefly of the doctrines which he afterwards published in his “Theory of Moral Sentiments.” In the third part he treated at more length of that branch of morality which relates to justice, and which, being susceptible of precise and accurate rules, is for that reason capable of a full and particular explanation.

Upon this subject he followed the plan that seems to be suggested by Montesquieu; endeavouring to trace the gradual progress of jurisprudence, both public and private, from the rudest to the most refined ages, and to point out the effects of those arts which contribute to subsistence and to the accumulation of property, in producing corresponding improvements or alterations in law and government. This important branch of his labours he also intended to give to the public; but this intention, which is mentioned in the conclusion of the “Theory of Moral Sentiments” he did not live to fulfil.

In the last part of his lectures, he examined those political regulations which are founded not upon the principle of justice, but that of expediency, and which are calculated to increase the riches, the power and the prosperity of a state. Under this view, he considered the political institutions relating to commerce, to finances, to ecclesiastical and military establishments. What he delivered on these subjects contained the substance of the work he afterwards published under the title of “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations” ‘.

From a purely biographical point of view it would doubtless be extremely interesting to have before us the text or a full report of Adam Smith’s lectures on rhetoric, belles lettres and natural theology. But these are not of historical importance. However excellent any of them may have been, they had not the opportunity of exercising a very wide influence in their own time, and it is of course idle to expect that anything first printed a century and a half after it was written will ever have much influence on human thought or action. Each generation requires to be addressed from a particular standpoint, and arguments which would have been convincing in 1763 will fall perfectly flat in 1896. There are indeed some classics which have been lost or have suffered total eclipse for a time and yet seem to have exercised an influence after their reappearance, but it will always be found on examination that the influence is really that of their commentators and critics, or even in some cases of their translators.

To the second part of Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy course, his lectures on 'Ethics strictly so called,' very little interest attaches, either for the historian or the biographer. There is no reason to doubt Millar's statement that it consisted chiefly of the doctrines contained in the Theory of Moral Sentiments, and as that work was published in 1759, while Smith still occupied the professorial chair, and only seven years after his appointment, it is scarcely possible that the publication of the lectures could add anything of much value to the history either of the lecturer or of his subject.

But the third and fourth parts of the Moral Philosophy course occupy an entirely different position. The influence of the Wealth of Nations in politics has been so great that every inquirer into the history of political science must have regretted that he had no access to the third part, in which Adam Smith 'endeavoured to trace the gradual progress of jurisprudence, both public and private, from the rudest to the most refined ages, and to point out the effects of those arts which contribute to subsistence and to the accumulation of property, in producing corresponding improvements or alterations in law and government.' The fourth part of the course resembles the second in being said to have served as the foundation for a published book. But that book — the Wealth of Nations — was of incomparably greater importance than the Moral Sentiments, and it was not published till more than twelve years after Smith had ceased lecturing. Of this period a portion is known to have been spent in communion with the French Économistes, and nearly all the rest in research. There has consequently been good reason to believe that the lectures, if they could be obtained, would show exactly how certain economic ideas which were eventually received into public favour, grew up in the mind of the man who did most to commend them to the world.

No one could have been more sensible of the historical value of the last two parts of the lectures than I, but I can not claim any credit for having discovered the manuscript which is now published. On April 21, 1895, Mr. Charles C. Maconochie, Advocate, whom I then met for the first time, happened to be present when, in course of conversation with the literary editor of the Oxford Magazine, I had occasion to make some remark about Adam Smith. Mr. Maconochie thereupon immediately said that he possessed a manuscript report of Adam Smith's lectures on jurisprudence, which he regarded as of considerable interest.

This manuscript, which is copied in the present volume, forms an octavo book 9 in. high, 7½ in. broad and 1⅛ in. thick. It has a substantial

calf binding, the sides of which, however, have completely parted company with the back, apparently, as often happens in the case of calf-bound books a century old, from age rather than from use. On the back there is some gilt-cross-hatching and the word juris prudence (thus divided between two lines) in gilt letters on a red label. There are in all 192 leaves. Two of these are fly-leaves of dissimilar paper and have their fellows pasted on the insides of the cover, front and back. The rest all consist of paper of homogeneous character, water-marked ‘L. V. Gerrevink.’

The manuscript is written on both sides of the paper in a rectangular space formed by four red ink lines previously ruled, which leave a margin of about three-quarters of an inch. Besides the fly-leaves there are three blank leaves at the end and two at the beginning.

There is nothing to show conclusively whether the writing was first executed on separate sheets subsequently bound up, or in a blank note-book afterwards rebound, or in the book as it appears at present.

No characteristic of the orthography, handwriting or paper affords any reason for suspecting that the manuscript is of a later date than that which it bears on its title-page, namely, 1766. Mr. Falconer Madan of the Bodleian Library, before seeing that date, conjectured the handwriting to be as early as the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Paper watermarked ‘L. V. Gerrevink’ was in use fifteen years before, as is shown by the fact that there is in the Glasgow University Library a letter from Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Bangor, to Professor Rosse, written on such paper under the date June 20, 1751.

Inside the front cover, written large with a very thick pen, is the inscription ‘J. A. Maconochie 1811,’ near the top, and in the middle the same signature, without the date, is written small with a very fine pen over the remains of a book plate which has been unfortunately so ruthlessly cut away with a knife that nothing except the discovery of another copy would make identification possible. There is also Mr. C. C. Maconochie’s signature with the date 1876. On the inside of the first blank-leaf ‘1/2’ is marked in the top left-hand corner in ink as faded as that of the manuscript.

Mr. Maconochie gives the following account of the way in which the manuscript came into his possession: —

Charles C. Maconochie
June 12, 1896
Edinburgh
Edwin Cannan

65 Northumberland Street,
Edinburgh,

June 12, 1896

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My dear Cannan,

I am sorry to say that I have entirely failed to trace the source from which the MS. of Adam Smith's lectures passed into the hands of my grand-uncle, James Allan Maconochie. It is not possible, looking to dates and other facts, that either he, his father, the first Lord Meadowbank, or his brother, the second judge of that name, took the notes which were subsequently copied out, and I am inclined to think that the book must have been bought at a sale or elsewhere, as I cannot find at Meadowbank House any copy of a bookplate the scroll work of which at all resembles that of the obliterated plate on the cover of the MS.

James Allan Maconochie, who was an advocate and Sheriff of Orkney, died in 1845 unmarried. Many of his books are still at Meadowbank, where law books naturally accumulated in large numbers, as two judges and a Professor in the Faculty of Law in Glasgow University have been among the proprietors of the estate during the last hundred and thirty years, and several other members of the family, as well as J. A. Maconochie, have been in the legal profession. A large number of these books, some of which were very bulky, had from time to time been stacked in heaps on the floor of a garret room, and in 1876, immediately before I was called to the Bar, I was given permission to take away such of them as I thought would be useful to me. Amongst others I took the MS. in question, and it has been in my possession since that date.

Believe me,
Yours very truly,

Charles C. Maconochie.

That the manuscript is a fair copy and not the original notes taken at the lectures is shown, first, by the fact that the date on the title-page is 'MDCCLXVI,' whereas Adam Smith relinquished his professorial chair in January, 1764; secondly, by its clean and well-written character and the almost entire absence of abbreviations, coupled with the fact that the report is often obviously verbatim, and, thirdly, by the circumstance that

some of the mistakes are evidently caused by misreading and not by mishearing.

That the fair copy was not made by the person who took the original notes is shown by the fact that though the original note-taker must have been able and intelligent, the transcription is evidently the work of a person who often did not understand what he was writing. For example, at a place where the context obviously requires ‘one’ he writes ‘me,’ simply because the initial letter of ‘one,’ written narrow or blind, resembles the first part of the initial letter of ‘me,’ carelessly written with a loop. In other places he substitutes ‘shop’ for ‘ship’ and ‘corn’ for ‘coin,’ regardless of the sense. He habitually makes nonsense of the argument by dividing sentences and paragraphs at the wrong place. Moreover, his somewhat elaborate and characterless handwriting suggests the professional copyist of mature years rather than the young man who has just completed his academical course.

It does not seem possible to give a decided answer to the question whether the copyist copied directly from the original notes or from a fair copy made by the original note-taker. It is evident throughout the manuscript that he takes pains to make his pages correspond with the pages from which he was copying. He constantly spreads out or compresses his handwriting as he approaches the end of a page, and when unsuccessful in filling the page exactly, he does not scruple to leave the last line partially blank. For example, the last two lines on and the first on of the manuscript are written thus:

‘a better chance for its being abolished, Because
One Single Person is Lawgiver
And the Law will not extend to him nor diminish — —’

and the last two lines on and the first on appear as follows:

‘progress of Opulence both in Ancient and
Modern Times,
Which Causes shall be shown either to Affect — —’

The amounts contained in a page are very unequal. Page 104, for instance, contains twenty-six lines of manuscript which occupy twenty-five of print, while page 106 contains only twenty lines of manuscript, equal to nineteen lines of print, two of which, owing to the chances of paragraphing, are more nearly empty than any in the manuscript. Such great inequality makes it appear probable that the pagination of the original notes is followed, and this would scarcely have been the case unless an index existed to the original notes. Now it seems improbable that a student who was likely to make a fair copy of his notes would have

made the index before instead of after making the fair copy, so that we might infer that the copyist copied directly from the original notes. But, on the other hand, it seems improbable that any rough notes, almost necessarily full of abbreviations, could have been clear enough for a not very intelligent copyist to reproduce without many more obvious blunders than are to be found in the manuscript.

The original notes were probably destroyed after the fair copy was made, and if the manuscript was copied from them direct, it may have been always unique, but in any case it is quite possible, and even probable, that there were at one time several copies in existence. ‘In those days manuscript copies of a popular professor’s lectures, transcribed from his students’ note-books, were often kept for sale in the booksellers’ shops. Blair’s lectures on rhetoric, for example, were for years in general circulation in this intermediate state’. There can, however, scarcely have been many copies, or Adam Smith himself and his literary executors would have become aware of the fact. The description of the burning of the manuscripts before Adam Smith’s death makes it certain that none of the three parties concerned suspected such a thing.

Adam Smith lectured at Glasgow as Professor of Moral Philosophy from 1752 to the end of December, 1763, and perhaps for a few days at the beginning of January, 1764. Internal evidence enables us to attribute the report of the lectures to the end of this period. Frequent references to the Seven Years’ War as ‘the late’ or ‘the last’ war indicate a date certainly not earlier than the beginning of the academical session of 1762-3, when negotiations were proceeding, and almost certainly not earlier than the signature of the treaty of Fontainebleau on November 3, 1762. If this indication of date be rejected on the ground that it would be natural after the conclusion of peace for the reporter or the transcriber to alter ‘the war’ or ‘the present war’ into ‘the late war,’ and if the correspondence of the price of wheat, mentioned on , with the price quoted in the newspapers for February, 1763, be rejected for the very good reason that it is too slender a foundation on which to build, we are driven back upon the reference to 1760 or 1761 contained in the statement that ‘a late minister of state raised twenty-three millions in one year,’ and upon the account of the ransom of the Litchfield prisoners, which was not settled till April, 1760. It is accordingly probable that the actual lectures from which the notes were taken were delivered either in the portion of the academical session of 1763-4 which preceded Adam Smith’s departure, or in the session of 1762-3, almost certain that they

were not delivered before 1761-2, and absolutely certain that they were not delivered before 1760-1.

In the present edition the punctuation of the manuscript has been entirely disregarded, the spelling has been modernized and sectional headings have been added. To have followed the punctuation of the manuscript would have been simply ridiculous, and would have made the work almost unreadable. If the spelling had been merely archaic, it would of course have been right to retain it, but in fact it is not so much archaic as outrageously erratic and inconsistent, even when judged by the easy standard prevailing in the middle of the eighteenth century; to spell as Adam Smith himself would have spelled in 1763 was a counsel of perfection which soon in practice proved impossible to carry out with sufficient success to make the laborious task worth attempting. Without the addition of new headings and divisions, the work would have been in tediously long blocks, and the reader would have found it difficult to find his way, owing to the abrupt changes of subject not indicated by any outward marks. So far as possible, the new headings have been adapted from words used in the text and modelled on the headings in the Moral Sentiments and the Wealth of Nations. The added headings are distinguished from those which occur in the manuscript by being enclosed in square brackets.

No attempt has been made to amend the report itself, much less the lectures, but mere clerical errors of the copyist have been amended wherever there appeared to be no reasonable doubt as to the correct reading. In every such case, however trivial, the reading of the manuscript is placed on record, words left out or altered being printed in the notes, and words added being enclosed in square brackets.

The notes are purely explanatory and historical. They are intended to help the reader to understand the text, to judge of the accuracy of the report, and to compare it with the authorities open to Adam Smith and with the subsequent development of his thought in the Wealth of Nations. The most conscientious effort has been made to resist the temptation to which commentators on the Wealth of Nations have generally succumbed, of using the text as a mere clothesline on which to hang editorial opinions on economic theory.

To estimate in every case the degree of the probability that Adam Smith used a particular work would have occupied too much space. Consequently, as a rule, the passages in earlier authors which he may possibly have used, and those which he almost certainly did use, are alike simply quoted or referred to without comment.

Except in a few cases where practical difficulties stood in the way, the references to earlier authors have been made to that edition of each work which Adam Smith is most likely to have used in 1763. The volume and page references to the Wealth of Nations (abbreviated to ‘W. of N.’) are to Thorold Rogers’ edition published by the Oxford University Press (2nd ed. 1880).

Chapter II: Value of the Report.

Doubts may well be felt as to whether it is right to publish a report of lectures which has been made by a University student. A lecturer generally finds that his apparently most incorruptible ideas have considerably deteriorated when they have passed through the minds and note-books of his pupils. But, after all, the doctrines of more than one of the greatest teachers of antiquity have come down to us in no other way than by means of the records left by disciples who had listened to their oral instruction. If we were to reject all that has been transmitted to us in this way, we should be left with some very considerable gaps both in philosophy and religion. In the present case we know that the disciple was both faithful and intelligent. We have most unusual means for judging of the accuracy of his work, and we find that it stands the severest tests in a manner which might be envied by a modern reporter with the advantage of shorthand. It is unnecessary to give examples here. A reader who will take the trouble to look out a few of the hundred references to the Wealth of Nations, and of the four hundred other references given in the notes, may easily satisfy himself on the point.

Granting that the report is satisfactory in itself, the further objection to its publication may be made that it is an act of impiety towards Adam Smith's memory. It is an evasion of his last wishes, and if Black and Hutton had not honestly complied with those wishes, we should be inclined to condemn their action, even if we could not profess to regret it. Adam Smith himself, however, would not have judged harshly of disregard of wishes more than a century old. He did not trust even his good friends Black and Hutton to fulfil their solemn promise to destroy his manuscripts immediately after his death, and thirty years before he had taught the Glasgow students that 'piety to the dead can only take place when their memory is fresh in the minds of men: a power to dispose of estates for ever is manifestly absurd.'

Moreover it is probable that if he had been acquainted with the criticisms which were to be passed upon his work, he would have withdrawn all objection to the publication of his lectures.

Du Pont de Nemours said, in his haste, of the Wealth of Nations, 'everything that is true in this respectable but tedious work in two fat quarto volumes is to be found in Turgot's Reflexions on the Formation and Distribution of Riches; everything added by Adam Smith is

inaccurate, not to say incorrect.' At a later period he repented of this outbreak, and confessed to a certain want of knowledge of the English tongue which had prevented him from appreciating Smith's work as he ought to have done. But down to quite recent times, if not to the present day, writers of authority have often expressed belief that the Wealth of Nations owes much to Turgot's Réflexions. Du Pont's learned and able biographer, as lately as 1888, permitted himself to speak of 'the care with which' Adam Smith 'omits to quote' the principal works of the physiocrats and 'especially that of Turgot.'

For the particular accusation, indeed, that Adam Smith does not acknowledge his obligations to Turgot, there never was much foundation. He certainly does not acknowledge obligations; but had he any to acknowledge? Turgot's book, though written in 1766, was only published six years before the Wealth of Nations, and then only in the periodical Éphémérides du Citoyen. As this was not in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh in 1776, and is not among the collections of Adam Smith's books which Dr. James Bonar has catalogued, we are not justified in assuming that Adam Smith had so much as seen the work. The internal evidence is of the weakest possible character. To rely on general similarities of doctrine in such a case is childish. Such similarities are constantly found in the writings of contemporary authors who cannot possibly have been acquainted with each other's works. The coincidence is to be explained simply by the fact that in literature, as in everything else, the same effects produce the same causes. There is surely nothing surprising in the fact that two men who have read the same books and observed the same events, should occasionally use the same arguments and arrive at the same conclusions. Something much more definite is needed, and no serious attempt has ever been made to supply it by pointing out particular passages in the Wealth of Nations which appear to owe anything to the Réflexions.

Myths of this kind, however, die hard, and if the lectures had remained unknown, the statement that Adam Smith made much use of the Réflexions would probably have been repeated from text-book to text-book for at least another half-century. But as it now appears that the resemblance between the Réflexions and the lectures is just as close as that between the Réflexions and the Wealth of Nations, and as the Réflexions were not even written till after Adam Smith had ceased lecturing and had seen and conversed with Turgot, it may be supposed that the enthusiasts of plagiarism will now seek to show that instead of Smith stealing from Turgot, the truth was that Turgot stole from Smith.

But the report of the lectures does much more in regard to the Wealth of Nations than merely dispose finally of the Turgot myth. It enables us to follow the gradual construction of the work almost from its very foundation, and to distinguish positively between what the original genius of its author created out of British materials on the one hand and French materials on the other.

In the work of professors, as in many other things, a kind of atavism is often observable. A professor has rarely been a student under his immediate predecessor in the chair. While he has been obtaining experience in a less dignified post, or has been absent acquiring the honour which it is proverbially difficult for a prophet to obtain in his own country, his master has died or retired and been succeeded by a man of an intermediate generation, and probably of intermediate views, whom he very likely regards with that slight dash of contempt which men are apt to feel for those who are older than themselves, but yet not old enough to obtain from them the respect universally and fortunately accorded to the surviving lights of a past age and an ‘old school,’ whose virtues have become uncommon, and whose weaknesses and eccentricities, instead of annoying or disgusting, afford kindly amusement. We should do well therefore to look in Adam Smith’s work for important traces of the influence of Francis Hutcheson, who was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow from 1729 to 1746, even if Hutcheson had been but an undistinguished member of the series of professors, instead of a teacher of unusual ability and originality, to whom Adam Smith acknowledged obligations, and of whom he used warm words of praise.

In 1745 Hutcheson published in Latin a little volume entitled Philosophiae moralis institutio compendiaria libris III. ethices et iurisprudentiae naturalis elementa continens. Of this he authorised a translation, published in 1747 as A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy in three books, containing the Elements of Ethicks and the Law of Nature. From it we may gather with sufficient accuracy what Smith was taught as a boy in the class-room at Glasgow before he left, at the age of barely seventeen, for his long stay at Oxford.

The address ‘to the students in Universities,’ which forms the preface to the work, opens thus: —

‘The celebrated division of philosophy among the ancients was into the rational or logical, the natural, and the moral. Their moral philosophy contained these parts, ethicks taken more strictly, teaching the nature of virtue and regulating the internal dispositions; and the knowledge of the

law of nature. This latter contained, 1. the doctrine of private rights, or the laws obtaining in natural liberty. 2. Oeconomicks, or the laws and rights of the several members of a family; and 3. Politicks, shewing the various plans of civil government, and the rights of states with respect to each other.'

The three Books are accordingly headed: 'The Elements of Ethicks,' 'Elements of the Law of Nature' (in the Latin 'Iurisprudentia privata') and the 'Principles of Oeconomicks and Politicks.' The part of Smith's course which eventually grew into the Theory of Moral Sentiments obviously corresponds with Book I; 'Private Law,' the third division of his 'Justice,' corresponds with Book II; while 'Domestic Law' and 'Public Jurisprudence,' the first two divisions of his 'Justice,' correspond with Book III. The mode of treatment is very different, as Adam Smith goes into legal particularities in a way quite foreign to Hutcheson, but the main subjects treated are, roughly speaking, the same. The Law of Nations is divided in Hutcheson between chapter xv of Book II, 'Rights arising from Damage done and the Laws of War,' and the last two chapters of Book III, on the 'Laws of War' and 'Of Treaties, and Ambassadors, and the entire dissolution of States.' Neither Smith's 'Revenue' nor his 'Arms' correspond to anything in Hutcheson, and nearly as much may be said of his 'Police.' Hutcheson has, however, a short chapter in Book II (ch. xii), 'Concerning the Values or Prices of Goods,' in which the causes of high and low price and the characteristics of good money are discussed.

Probably it is in this chapter that the germ of the Wealth of Nations is to be found. In writing the chapter Hutcheson simply followed Pufendorf, and he does not make its connexion with the adjoining chapters, 'Of Oaths and Vows,' and 'Of the Several Sorts of Contracts,' very distinct and obvious, so that Adam Smith may well have thought, when he began his lectures, that it would be an improvement in logical arrangement to transfer the whole to a new heading, 'Police,' since the regulation of prices and the creation of money by the state both came under the head of 'Police,' as the word was understood in his time. As he lectured year by year, however, he would be led from this by two ways towards the consideration of the question what constitutes opulence or wealth. He would perceive both that regulations which interfere with natural prices diminish plenty or opulence, and that mere additions to a nation's stock of money do not increase its opulence, as some at least of the more extreme mercantilists really believed, and as all of them to some extent tacitly or explicitly assumed. Observing the overwhelming

importance of this question, he was not the man to be deterred by considerations as to the symmetry of his general scheme of arrangement from putting it in the principal place and allowing it to introduce various subjects which cannot possibly be regarded as part of police.

In some such way as this the second and only considerable portion of ‘Police’ assumed its present form, in which it consists of, first, a discussion of the material wants of mankind and of the great cause, division of labour, which enables them to be better satisfied in a civilized than in an uncivilized nation (§§ 1-6); next, the traditional inquiry as to prices and money (§§ 7, 8) with a large appendix explaining various evil consequences of the notion that money alone constitutes opulence (§§ 9-13) and corollaries as to interest (§ 14) and exchange (§ 15); thirdly, a dissertation on the causes why opulence does not increase as fast as might be expected (§ 16); and, lastly, a description of the influence of commerce (which, in consequence of the effects of the division of labour, is the great cause of opulence) on manners (§ 17). Even the Third Part of the whole scheme, ‘Of Revenue,’ is brought in as one of the causes of the slow progress of opulence. The portion of ‘Jurisprudence’ dealing with ‘Police’ thus became, with the exception of a scrap about security and a bare mention of sanitation, an ‘Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.’

If the Contents of the Wealth of Nations and those of the lectures on ‘Police,’ ‘Revenue,’ and ‘Arms’ be compared, a close correspondence between them is observable. The first three chapters of the first book of the Wealth of Nations, on the division of labour, correspond with §§ 3-6 of ‘Cheapness or Plenty’ in the lectures; chapter iv, on money, corresponds with § 8, and chapters v, vi and vii, on prices, correspond with § 7; Book II, chapter iv, on stock lent at interest, corresponds with § 14; Book III, on the different progress of opulence in different nations, has practically the same subject as § 16; the first eight chapters of Book IV, on the mercantile system, treat of the same matter as §§ 9-12; Book V, on revenue, corresponds with Part III of the lectures, and also absorbs much of Part IV, ‘Of Arms.’

Looking at the question first from the side of the lectures, we see that this leaves §§ 1, 2, 13, 15 and 17 of ‘Cheapness or Plenty’ unaccounted for. It is not easy to explain why the first two sections were omitted from the Wealth of Nations, and the fact will be regretted by those who ask for a theory of consumption as a preliminary to the other parts of political economy. The explanation of the omission of § 13 is given by Adam Smith himself. It was simply that the Mississippi scheme had been

‘explained so fully, so clearly, and with so much order and distinctness by Mr. Du Verney’ that it was unnecessary to give any account of it. A mere summary of Duverney’s description, however well suited for an academical lecture, could not properly appear in a great book. Exchange (§ 15) was doubtless omitted as too elementary, and § 17, on the influence of commerce on manners, finds no special place, because most of it was absorbed in Book V, chapter i. article ii. ‘Of the Expense of the Institutions for the Education of Youth.’

Turning now to the consideration of the question from the side of the Wealth of Nations, we are at once struck by the fact that not only chapter ix of Book IV, on the system of the Économistes or physiocrats, but also chapter viii of Book I, on wages, chapter ix, on profits, chapter x, on differences of wages and profits, and chapter xi, on rent, are as yet unaccounted for. Further examination shows that the main ideas and many of the illustrations of chapter viii, of chapter ix, and still more of chapter x, are contained in the section of the lectures which deal with prices, but that there is no trace whatever in the lectures of the scheme of distribution which the Wealth of Nations sets forth. The main body of Book II, ‘Of the Nature, Accumulation and Employment of Stock,’ is also entirely unaccounted for. There is nothing at all about capital in the lectures, and stock is not given an important place, while there is no mention whatever of that distinction between productive and unproductive labour which is fundamental in the Wealth of Nations, and to which a large portion of Book II is devoted.

When Adam Smith went to France he found ‘a few men of great learning and ingenuity’ whose leader had constructed an elaborate table containing an arithmetical example of ‘three sorts of expenses, their source, their advances, their distribution, their effects, their reproduction, their relation to each other, to population, to agriculture, to manufactures, to commerce, and to the general riches of a nation.’ This table was regarded by the sect with extraordinary veneration, and doubtless every possible effort was made to explain it to Adam Smith. Its three sorts of expenses are productive expenses, expenses of revenue and sterile expenses, but of these three the middle one, expenses of revenue, is almost immediately divided between the other two. Productive expenses are annual advances in agriculture, and sterile expenses are annual advances in other industries. The Reproduit totale, estimated at the bottom of the table, is altogether the result of the productive expenses and operations, and not at all of the sterile. It is distributed between three classes, the productive class, the sterile class and the proprietors of land.

To us at the present day the table, with its tangle of zigzag lines, appears an almost childish toy, and its recent republication by the British Economic Association excited very little interest. Nevertheless, in the fact that it attempts to give a comprehensive view of the total results of the industry of a year, it marks an enormous advance in economic theory, and we can easily imagine that an acute mind like Adam Smith's would immediately grasp its importance. To accept it as it stood he was not prepared, but he adopted the point of view of its author, and accordingly we find in the Wealth of Nations something which is absent from the lectures, namely, a definite conception of labour set in motion by a particular kind of expenditure and producing an aggregate annual produce which is 'distributed' into several large categories. The particular kind of expenditure which sets productive labour in motion is identified with the laying out of capital stock. It is assumed that all labour set in motion by this laying out of capital produces vendible objects, and argued that all such labour, and no other, is properly called productive. This new doctrine forms the main body of Book II, 'Of the Nature, Accumulation, and Employment of Stock' in the Wealth of Nations.

If the theory were thoroughly believed in, it would appear that Book II ought logically to have been placed first. According to the Introduction and Plan, the average produce per head of population 'must in every nation be regulated by two different circumstances; first, by the skill, dexterity, and judgement with which its labour is generally applied; and, secondly, by the proportion between the number of those who are employed in useful labour and that of those who are not so employed.' These two circumstances are evidently in the wrong order. We ought to consider what proportion of the population is employed in useful labour before we consider how skilfully and dexterously they work. 'The number of useful and productive labourers,' we are assured, 'is everywhere in proportion to the quantity of capital stock which is employed in setting them to work, and to the particular way in which it is so employed,' and if this be so, an economic treatise ought surely to begin with a dissertation on capital. But Adam Smith had already, in his lectures, begun his treatment of the subject with his dissertation on the productive powers of labour, and had incidentally treated of stock in store not as something indispensable before labour can be set in motion, but merely as something required 'after the ages of hunting and fishing,' or 'when manufactures were introduced' and 'a great deal of time' required. It would have been astonishing if he had been willing to

relegate his own excellent disquisition on the division of labour to the second place, and consequently no surprise need be felt that capital is treated only in the second Book, in spite of the adoption of the view of the Tableau as to its function in governing the amount of productive labour.

It has always been obvious that in spite of the mention of the problem of distribution in the title of Book I of the Wealth of Nations, ‘Adam Smith’s theory of distribution, instead of being made one of the main subjects of the Book, is inserted in the middle of the chapter on prices as a mere appendage or corollary of his doctrine of prices’. By way of explaining the discrepancy, it was possible to conjecture that ‘in all probability the Book existed in a fairly complete form before Adam Smith became acquainted with the physiocratic doctrine,’ and that when that event took place ‘he may very well have thought that his theory of prices and his observations on wages, profit and rent made a very good theory of what the physiocrats called “distribution,” and thus have been led to affix the present title of the Book and to interpolate the passage about the whole produce being parcelled out and distributed as wages, profit and rent’. This conjecture is now shown to be substantially correct. The dissertations on the division of labour, money, prices, and the causes of the differences of wages in different employments, evidently existed very nearly in their present form before Adam Smith went to France, and the scheme of distribution, on the other hand, was wholly absent. It is plain that Smith acquired the idea of the necessity of a scheme of distribution from the physiocrats, and that he tacked his own scheme (very different from theirs) on to his already existing theory of prices.

Besides thus elucidating the composition of the Wealth of Nations, the lectures serve to settle the doubtless far less important but still interesting question of the nature of Adam Smith’s proposed work on Justice, or that portion of jurisprudence not dealt with in the Wealth of Nations.

Millar, in the account of the Glasgow lectures quoted above, says that Smith intended to give to the public the substance of the third part of his course, the lectures on Justice, and that he mentioned this intention in the conclusion of the Theory of Moral Sentiments. Turning to the passage referred to, which is the same in the sixth as in the first edition, we find Adam Smith first condemning casuistry, and then declaring that the two useful parts of moral philosophy are ethics and jurisprudence. ‘Every system of positive law,’ he says, ‘may be regarded as a more or less imperfect attempt towards a system of natural jurisprudence, or towards

an enumeration of the particular rules of justice.' But, owing to various difficulties which he enumerates, the attempt is never perfectly successful. 'The reasonings of lawyers upon the different imperfections and improvements of the laws of different countries' might have been expected to 'have led them to aim at establishing a system of what might properly be called natural jurisprudence, or a theory of the general principles which ought to run through and be the foundation of the laws of all nations.' However, 'it was very late in the world before any such general system was thought of, or before the philosophy of law was treated by itself and without regard to the particular institutions of any one nation.'

'Grotius,' Adam Smith concludes, 'seems to have been the first who attempted to give the world anything like a system of those principles which ought to run through and be the foundation of the laws of all nations; and his treatise of the laws of war and peace, with all its imperfections, is perhaps at this day the most complete work that has yet been given upon this subject. I shall in another discourse endeavour to give an account of the general principles of law and government and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in what concerns justice, but in what concerns police, revenue and arms, and whatever else is the object of law. I shall not, therefore, at present enter into any further detail concerning the history of jurisprudence.'

In the Preface to the sixth edition of the Moral Sentiments, published in 1790, after quoting from this passage the promise of 'another discourse,' Adam Smith says —

'In the Enquiry concerning the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, I have partly executed this promise; at least so far as concerns police, revenue and arms. What remains, the theory of jurisprudence, which I have long projected, I have hitherto been hindered from executing by the same occupations which had till now prevented me from revising the present work.'

It has always appeared somewhat strange that the publication of the Wealth of Nations should have been regarded by Adam Smith as a partial fulfilment of a promise to give an account of the general principles of law and government and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society in what concerns police, revenue and arms, even when we remember the wide sense then borne by the word 'police.' Nor has it been altogether clear how the Wealth of Nations fitted into the 'history of jurisprudence.'

The report clears up every difficulty. The lectures included in it are obviously the third and fourth part of the moral philosophy course described by Millar, and they are also the draft of the ‘account of the general principles of law and government’ or ‘history of jurisprudence’ contemplated as a future work by Adam Smith when he wrote the last page of the Moral Sentiments in 1759. Part I, ‘Of Justice,’ with perhaps the fifth part, entitled ‘Of the Laws of Nations,’ is the third part in Millar’s description of the whole course, and is also the ‘account of the general principles of law and government in what concerns justice’ mentioned in 1759 ‘and the theory of jurisprudence’ mentioned in 1790. Parts II, III and IV ‘Of Police, Revenue and Arms,’ are the fourth part in Millar’s description of the course; serving as the first draft of the Wealth of Nations, they induced Adam Smith to say that he had fulfilled his promise as regards police, revenue and arms, though no one unacquainted with the lectures would have described the Wealth of Nations as a treatise on those three subjects in that order.

It does not seem probable that Adam Smith ever made much progress with the projected work on Justice. Mackenzie, if Rogers reports him correctly, seems to have believed that the manuscripts which were burnt by Black and Hutton consisted of this book in a nearly completed condition. Before he came that evening, he says, Adam Smith, with the assistance of Dr. Black, ‘had burnt sixteen volumes in manuscript on Jurisprudence — the sum of one course of his lectures at Glasgow, as was the Wealth of Nations of another; but these had not received his last corrections, and from what he had seen he had formed a mean opinion of posthumous publications in general.’ Little importance, however, need be attached to this, since, according to Rogers, Mackenzie also described Adam Smith, an only child, as ‘an affectionate brother,’ and stated that he died ‘a few hours after’ the supper, though he lived as a matter of fact for six days. After the publication of the Wealth of Nations he must have had far greater distractions than before, and his official duties at the Board of Customs must have occupied a portion of his time. In November, 1785, after mentioning a new edition of the Moral Sentiments, he wrote: ‘I have likewise two other great works upon the anvil; the one is a sort of Philosophical History of all the different branches of Literature, of Philosophy, Poetry and Eloquence; the other is a sort of theory and History of Law and Government.’ He had, it thus appears, failed to concentrate his energies on one work, and he could only say of the two that ‘the materials of both are in a great measure collected, and some part of both is put into tolerable good order.’ That

he did indeed ‘struggle violently’ against ‘the indolence of old age,’ which he felt ‘coming fast upon’ him, we can well believe, but the failure of his health which took place soon afterwards forbids the supposition that he could have done much more before his death in 1790. It is therefore unlikely that the unfinished work ever consisted of very much more than those parts of the lectures on Justice which were not incorporated in the Wealth of Nations. What these parts were the reader has now the opportunity of judging for himself.

JURISPRUDENCE

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. Of Works on Natural Jurisprudence.

Jurisprudence is that science which inquires into the general principles which ought to be the foundation of the laws of all nations. Grotius seems to have been the first who attempted to give the world anything like a regular system of natural jurisprudence, and his treatise On the Laws of War and Peace, with all its imperfections, is perhaps at this day the most complete work on this subject. It is a sort of casuistical book for sovereigns and states, determining in what cases war may justly be made and how far it may be carried on. As states have no common sovereign and are with respect to one another in a state of nature, war is their only method of redressing injuries. He determines war to be lawful in every case where the state receives an injury which would be redressed by an equitable civil magistrate. This naturally led him to inquire into the constitution of states and the principles of civil laws; into the rights of sovereigns and subjects; into the nature of crimes, contracts, property, and whatever else was the object of law, so that the two first books of his treatise, which are upon this subject, are a complete system of jurisprudence.

The next writer of note after Grotius was Mr. Hobbes. He had conceived an utter abhorrence of the ecclesiastics, and the bigotry of his times gave him occasion to think that the subjection of the consciences of men to ecclesiastic authority was the cause of the dissensions and civil wars that happened in England during the times of Charles I and of Cromwell. In opposition to them he endeavoured to establish a system of morals by which the consciences of men might be subjected to the civil power, and which represented the will of the magistrate as the only proper rule of conduct. Before the establishment of civil society, mankind, according to him, were in a state of war; and in order to avoid the ills of a natural state, men entered into contract to obey one common sovereign who should determine all disputes. Obedience to his will, according to him, constituted civil government, without which there could be no virtue, and consequently it too was the foundation and essence of virtue.

The divines thought themselves obliged to oppose this pernicious doctrine concerning virtue, and attacked it by endeavouring to show that a state of nature was not a state of war, but that society might subsist, though not in so harmonious a manner, without civil institutions. They

endeavoured to show that man in this state has certain rights belonging to him, such as a right to his body, to the fruits of his labour, and the fulfilling of contracts. With this design Puffendorf wrote his large treatise. The sole intention of the first part of it is to confute Hobbes, though it in reality serves no purpose to treat of the laws which would take place in a state of nature, or by what means succession to property was carried on, as there is no such state existing.

The next who wrote on this subject was the Baron de Cocceii, a Prussian. There are five volumes in folio of his works published, many of which are very ingenious and distinct, especially those which treat of laws. In the last volume he gives an account of some German systems.

Besides these there are no systems of note upon this subject.

§ 2. Of the Division of the Subject.

Jurisprudence is the theory of the general principles of law and government.

The four great objects of law are justice, police, revenue, and arms.

The object of justice is the security from injury, and it is the foundation of civil government.

The objects of police are the cheapness of commodities, public security and cleanliness, if the two last were not too minute for a lecture of this kind. Under this head we will consider the opulence of a state.

It is likewise necessary that the magistrate who bestows his time and labour in the business of the state should be compensated for it. For this purpose, and for defraying the expenses of government, some fund must be raised. Hence the origin of revenue. The subject of consideration under this head will be the proper means of levying revenue, which must come from the people by taxes, duties, &c. In general, whatever revenue can be raised most insensibly from the people ought to be preferred; and in the sequel it is proposed to be shown, how far the laws of Britain and of other European nations are calculated for this purpose.

As the best police cannot give security unless the government can defend themselves from foreign injuries and attacks, the fourth thing appointed by law is for this purpose; and under this head will be shown the different species of arms with their advantages and disadvantages, the constitution of standing armies, militias, &c.

After these will be considered the laws of nations, under which are comprehended the demands which one independent society may have upon another, the privileges of aliens, and proper grounds for making war.

PART I: OF JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION

The end of justice is to secure from injury. A man may be injured in several respects:

First, as a man.

Secondly, as a member of a family.

Thirdly, as a member of a state.

As a man he may be injured in his body, reputation, or estate.

As a member of a family he may be injured as a father, as a son, as a husband or wife, as a master or servant, as a guardian or pupil. For the two last are to be considered in a family relation, till such time as the pupil can take care of himself.

As a member of a state, a magistrate may be injured by disobedience, or a subject by oppression, &c.

A man may be injured:

First, in his body by wounding, maiming, murdering, or by infringing his liberty.

Secondly, in his reputation, either by falsely representing him as a proper object of resentment or punishment, as by calling him a thief or robber, or by depreciating his real worth, and endeavouring to degrade him below the level of his profession. A physician's character is injured when we endeavour to persuade the world he kills his patients instead of curing them, for by such a report he loses his business. We do not however injure a man when we do not give him all the praise that is due to his merit. We do not injure Sir Isaac Newton or Mr. Pope when we say that Sir Isaac was no better philosopher than Descartes, or that Mr. Pope was no better poet than the ordinary ones of his own time. By these expressions we do not bestow on them all the praise that they deserve, yet we do them no injury, for we do not throw them below the ordinary rank of men in their own professions. These rights which a man has to the preservation of his body and reputation from injury are called natural, or as the civilians express them iura hominum naturalia.

Thirdly, a man may be injured in his estate. His rights to his estate are called acquired or iura adventitia, and are of two kinds, real and personal.

A real right is that whose object is a real thing and which can be claimed a quocumque possessore. Such are all possessions, houses, furniture.

Personal rights are such as can be claimed by a law-suit from a particular person, but not a quocumque possessore. Such are all debts and contracts, the payment or performance of which can be demanded only from one person. If I buy a horse and have him delivered to me, though the former owner sell him to another, I can claim him a quocumque possessore; but if he was not delivered to me I can only pursue the seller.

Real rights are of four kinds, property, servitudes, pledges, and exclusive privileges.

Property is our possessions of every kind, which if any way lost, or taken from us by stealth or violence, may be redemanded a quocumque possessore.

Servitudes are burdens upon the property of another. Thus I may have a liberty of passing through a field belonging to another which lies between me and the highway, or if my neighbour have plenty of water in his fields and I have none in mine for my cattle, I may have a right to drive them to his. Such burdens on the property of another are called servitudes. These rights were originally personal, but the trouble and expense of numerous lawsuits in order to get possession of them, when the adjacent property which was burdened with them passed through a number of hands, induced legislators to make them real and claimable a quocumque possessore. Afterwards the property was transferred with these servitudes upon it.

Pledges, which include all pawns and mortgages, are securities for something else to which we have a right. The laws of most civilized nations have considered them as real rights, and give a liberty to claim them as such.

Exclusive privileges are such as that of a bookseller to vend a book for a certain number of years, and to hinder any other person from doing it during that period. These rights are for the most part creatures of the civil law, though some few of them are natural, as in a state of hunters even before the origin of civil government, if a man has started a hare and pursued her for some time, he has an exclusive privilege to hunt her, by which he can hinder any other to come in upon her with a fresh pack of hounds.

An heir has also an exclusive privilege of hindering any person to take possession of the inheritance left him while he is deliberating whether or not it will be for his interest to take possession of it and pay off the debts with which it is burdened.

Personal rights are of three kinds, as they arise from contract, quasi contract, or delinquency.

The foundation of contract is the reasonable expectation, which the person who promises raises in the person to whom he binds himself; of which the satisfaction may be extorted by force.

Quasi contract is the right which one has to a compensation for necessary trouble and expense about another man’s affairs. If a person finds a watch in the highway he has a claim to a reward, and to the defraying of his expenses in finding out the owner. If a man lend me a sum of money, he has a right not only to the sum, but to interest also.

Delinquency is founded upon damage done to any person, whether through malice or culpable negligence. A person has a right to claim these only from a certain person.

The objects of these seven rights make up the whole of a man’s estate.

The origin of natural rights is quite evident. That a person has a right to have his body free from injury and his liberty free from infringement unless there be a proper cause, nobody doubts. But acquired rights such as property require more explanation. Property and civil government very much depend on one another. The preservation of property and the inequality of possession first formed it, and the state of property must always vary with the form of government. The civilians begin with considering government and then treat of property and other rights. Others who have written on this subject begin with the latter and then consider family and civil government. There are several advantages peculiar to each of these methods, though that of the civil law seems upon the whole preferable.

DIVISION I. OF PUBLIC JURISPRUDENCE

§ 1. Of the Original Principles of Government.

There are two principles which induce men to enter into a civil society, which we shall call the principles of authority and utility. At the head of every small society or association of men, we find a person of superior abilities. In a warlike society he is a man of superior strength, and in a polished one of superior mental capacity. Age and a long possession of power have also a tendency to strengthen authority. Age is naturally in our imagination connected with wisdom and experience, and a continuance in power bestows a kind of right to the exercise of it. But superior wealth still more than any of these qualities contributes to confer authority. This proceeds not from any dependence that the poor have upon the rich, for in general the poor are independent, and support themselves by their labour, yet, though they expect no benefit from them, they have a strong propensity to pay them respect. This principle is fully explained in the Theory of Moral Sentiments, where it is shown that it arises from our sympathy with our superiors being greater than that with our equals or inferiors: we admire their happy situation, enter into it with pleasure, and endeavour to promote it.

Among the great, as superior abilities of body and mind are not so easily judged of by others, it is more convenient, as it is more common, to give the preference to riches. It is evident that an old family, that is, one which has been long distinguished by its wealth, has more authority than any other. An upstart is always disagreeable, we envy his superiority over us and think ourselves [as] well entitled to wealth as he. If I am told that a man's grandfather was very poor and dependent on my family, I will grudge very much to see his grandson in a station above me, and will not be much disposed to submit to his authority. Superior age, superior abilities of body and of mind, ancient family and superior wealth seem to be the four things that give one man authority over another.

The second principle which induces men to obey the civil magistrate is utility. Every one is sensible of the necessity of this principle to preserve justice and peace in the society. By civil institutions the poorest may get redress of injuries from the wealthiest and most powerful; and though there may be some irregularities in particular cases, as undoubtedly there are, yet we submit to them to avoid greater evils. It is

the sense of public utility, more than of private, which influences men to obedience. It may sometimes be for my interest to disobey, and to wish government overturned, but I am sensible that other men are of a different opinion from me, and would not assist me in the enterprise. I therefore submit to its decision for the good of the whole.

If government has been of a long standing in a country, and if it be supported by proper revenues, and be at the same time in the hands of a man of great abilities, authority is then in perfection.

In all governments both these principles take place in some degree, but in a monarchy the principle of authority prevails, and in a democracy that of utility. In Britain, which is a mixed government, the factions formed some time ago, under the names of Whig and Tory, were influenced by these principles, the former submitted to government on account of its utility and the advantages which they derived from it, while the latter pretended that it was of divine institution, and to offend against it was equally criminal as for a child to rebel against its parent. Men in general follow these principles according to their natural dispositions. In a man of a bold, daring and bustling turn the principle of utility is predominant, and a peaceable easy turn of mind usually is pleased with a tame submission to superiority.

It has been a common doctrine in this country that contract is the foundation of allegiance to the civil magistrate. But that this is not the case will appear from the following reasons.

In the first place the doctrine of an original contract is peculiar to Great Britain, yet government takes place where it was never thought of, which is even the case with the greater part of people in this country. Ask a common porter or day-labourer why he obeys the civil magistrate, he will tell you that it is right to do so, that he sees others do it, that he would be punished if he refused to do it, or perhaps that it is a sin against God not to do it. But you will never hear him mention a contract as the foundation of his obedience.

Secondly, when certain powers of government were at first entrusted to certain persons upon certain conditions, it is true that the obedience of those who entrusted it might be founded on a contract, but their posterity have nothing to do with it, they are not conscious of it, and therefore cannot be bound by it. It may indeed be said that by remaining in the country you tacitly consent to the contract and are bound by it. But how can you avoid staying in it? You were not consulted whether you should be born in it or not. And how can you get out of it? Most people know no other language nor country, are poor, and obliged to stay not far from the

place where they were born, to labour for a subsistence. They cannot, therefore, be said to give any consent to a contract, though they may have the strongest sense of obedience. To say that by staying in a country a man agrees to a contract of obedience to government is just the same with carrying a man into a ship and after he is at a distance from land to tell him that by being in the ship he has contracted to obey the master. The foundation of a duty cannot be a principle with which mankind is entirely unacquainted. They must have some idea, however confused, of the principle upon which they act.

But again, upon the supposition of an original contract, by leaving the state you expressly declare that you will no longer continue a subject of it and are freed from the obligation which you owed it. Yet every state claims its own subjects and punishes them for such practices, which would be the highest injustice if their living in the country implies a consent to a former agreement. Again, if there be such a thing as an original contract, aliens who come into a country, preferring it to others, give the most express consent to it. Yet a state always suspects aliens as retaining a prejudice in favour of their mother country, and they are never so much depended upon as free-born subjects. So much is the English law influenced by this principle that no alien can hold a place under the government, even though he should be naturalized by act of parliament. Besides, if such a contract were supposed, why should the state require an oath of allegiance, whenever a man enters on any office? For if they supposed a previous contract, what occasion is there for renewing it? Breach of allegiance or high treason is a much greater crime, and more severely punished, in all nations, than breach of contract, in which no more but fulfilment is required. They must, therefore, be on a different footing, the less can by no means involve in it the greater contract. Contract is not therefore the principle of obedience to civil government, but the principles of authority and utility formerly explained.

§ 2. Of the Nature of Government and its Progress in the first Ages of Society.

We shall now endeavour to explain the nature of government, its different forms, what circumstances gave occasion for it, and by what it is maintained.

The forms of government, however various, may not improperly be reduced to these three, monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical. These may be blended in a great number of ways, and we usually denominate the government from that one which prevails.

Monarchical government is where the supreme power and authority is vested in one who can do what he pleases, make peace and war, impose taxes, and the like.

Aristocratical government is where a certain order of people in the state, either of the richest or of certain families, have it in their power to choose magistrates who are to have the management of the state.

Democratical government is where the management of affairs belongs to the whole body of the people together.

These two last forms may be called republican, and then the division of government is into monarchical and republican.

To acquire proper notions of government it is necessary to consider the first form of it, and observe how the other forms arose out of it.

In a nation of hunters there is properly no government at all. The society consists of a few independent families who live in the same village and speak the same language, and have agreed among themselves to keep together for their mutual safety, but they have no authority one over another. The whole society interests itself in any offence; if possible they make it up between the parties, if not they banish from their society, kill or deliver up to the resentment of the injured him who has committed the crime. But this is no regular government, for though there may be some among them who are much respected, and have great influence in their determinations, yet he never can do anything without the consent of the whole.

Thus among hunters there is no regular government, they live according to the laws of nature.

The appropriation of herds and flocks which introduced an inequality of fortune, was that which first gave rise to regular government. Till there be property there can be no government, the very end of which is to

secure wealth, and to defend the rich from the poor. In this age of shepherds, if one man possessed 500 oxen, and another had none at all, unless there were some government to secure them to him, he would not be allowed to possess them. This inequality of fortune, making a distinction between the rich and the poor, gave the former much influence over the latter, for they who had no flocks or herds must have depended on those who had them, because they could not now gain a subsistence from hunting, as the rich had made the game, now become tame, their own property. They therefore who had appropriated a number of flocks and herds, necessarily came to have great influence over the rest; and accordingly we find in the Old Testament that Abraham, Lot, and the other patriarchs were like little petty princes. It is to [be] observed that this inequality of fortune in a nation of shepherds occasioned greater influence than in any period after that. Even at present, a man may spend a great estate, and yet acquire no dependents. Arts and manufactures are increased by it, but it may make very few persons dependent. In a nation of shepherds it is quite otherways. They have no possible means of spending their property, having no domestic luxury, but by giving it in presents to the poor, and by this means they attain such influence over them as to make them, in a manner, their slaves.

We come now to explain how one man came to have more authority than the rest, and how chieftains were introduced. A nation consists of many families who have met together, and agreed to live with one another. At their public meetings there will always be one of superior influence to the rest, who will in a great measure direct and govern their resolutions, which is all the authority of a chieftain in a barbarous country. As the chieftain is the leader of the nation, his son naturally becomes the chief of the young people, and on the death of his father succeeds to his authority. Thus chieftainship becomes hereditary. This power of chieftainship comes in the progress of society to be increased by a variety of circumstances. The number of presents which he receives, increase his fortune, and consequently his authority; for amongst barbarous nations nobody goes to the chieftain, or makes any application for his interest, without something in his hand. In a civilized nation the man who gives the present is superior to the person who receives it, but in a barbarous nation the case is directly opposite.

We shall now consider the different powers which naturally belong to government, how they are distributed, and what is their progress in the

first periods of society.

The powers of government are three, to wit, the legislative, which makes laws for the public good: the judicial, or that which obliges private persons to obey these laws, and punishes those who disobey: the executive, or as some call it, the federal power, to which belongs the making war and peace.

All these powers in the original form of government belonged to the whole body of the people. It was indeed long before the legislative power was introduced, as it is the highest exertion of government to make laws and lay down rules to bind not only ourselves, but also our posterity, and those who never gave any consent to the making them. As for the judicial power, when two persons quarrelled between themselves, the whole society naturally interposed, and when they could not make up matters, turned them out of the society. During this early age crimes were few, and it was long before the punishment was made equal to the crime.

Cowardice and treason were the first crimes punished, for cowardice among hunters is considered as treason, because when they went out in small numbers, if their enemy attacked them, and some of their party deserted them, the rest might suffer by it, and therefore they who deserted were punished for treason.

The priest generally inflicted the punishment, as it were by command of the gods, so weak at that time was government. The power of making peace and war in like manner belonged to the people, and all the heads of families were consulted about it.

Though the judicial power which concerns individuals was long precarious, the society first interposing as friends and then as arbitrators, the executive power came very soon to be exerted absolutely. When any private quarrel happens concerning the property of this cow, or of that ox, society is not immediately concerned, but it is deeply interested in making peace and war. In the age of shepherds this power is absolutely exerted. In Great Britain we can observe vestiges of the precariousness of the judicial power, but none of the executive. When a criminal was brought to trial, he was asked how he would choose that his cause should be decided, whether by combat, the ordeal trial, or the laws of his country. The society only obliged him not to disturb them in the decision. In England the question still remains, though the answer is not now arbitrary. It was very common in the ruder ages to demand a trial by dipping their hands in boiling water, by means of which almost every one was found innocent, though now scarce any one would escape by this means. When people were constantly exposed to the weather, boiling

water could have little effect upon them, though now, when we are quite covered, it must have a contrary effect. This choice of trial shows the weakness of the judicial laws. We find that the judicial combat continued in England as late as the days of Queen Elizabeth. It has now worn out gradually and insensibly without so much as a law or a rule of court made against it.

In the periods of hunters and fishers, and in that of shepherds, as was before observed, crimes are few; small crimes passed without any notice. In those ages no controversies arose from interpretations of testaments, settlements, contracts, which render our law-suits so numerous, for these were unknown among them. When these took place and difficult trades began to be practised, controversies became more frequent, but as men were generally employed in some branch of trade or another, without great detriment to themselves they could not spare time to wait upon them. All causes must be left undecided, which would be productive of every inconvenience, or they must fall upon some other method more suitable to the several members of society. The natural means they would fall upon would be to choose some of their number to whom all causes should be referred. The chieftain who was before this distinguished by his superior influence, when this comes to be the case, would preserve his wonted precedence, and would naturally be one of those who were chosen for this purpose. A certain number would be chosen to sit along with him, and in the first ages of society this number was always considerable. They would be afraid to trust matters of importance to a few, and accordingly we find that at Athens there were 500 judges at the same time. By this means the chieftain would still further increase his authority, and the government would appear in some degree monarchical. But this is only in appearance, for the final decision is still in the whole body of the people, and the government is really democratical.

The power of making peace and war, as was before observed, was at first lodged in the whole body of the people. But when society advanced [and] towns were fortified, magazines prepared, stocks of money got together, generals and officers appointed, the whole body of the people could not attend to deliberations of this kind. This province would either fall to the court of justice, or there would be another set of people appointed for this purpose, though it would naturally at first fall to the court of justice. This is properly called the senatorial power, which at Rome took care of the public revenue, public buildings, and the like. But afterwards at Rome, the court of justice and the senatorial one became quite distinct. The same may be said of the Areopagite court at Athens.

We shall now make some observations on nations in the two first periods of society. Those, viz. of hunters and shepherds.

In a nation of hunters and fishers few people can live together, for in a short time any considerable number would destroy all the game in the country, and consequently would want a means of subsistence. Twenty or thirty families are the most that can live together, and these make up a village. But as they live together for their mutual defence, and to assist one another, their villages are not far distant from each other. When any controversy happens between persons of different villages, it is decided by a general assembly of both villages. As each particular village has its own leader, so there is one who is the leader of the whole nation. The nation consists of an alliance of the different villages, and the chieftains have great influence on their resolutions, especially among shepherds. In no age is antiquity of family more respected than in this. The principle of authority operates very strongly, and they have the liveliest sense of utility in the maintenance of law and government.

The difference of the conduct of these nations in peace and war is worth our observation.

The exploits of hunters, though brave and gallant, are never very considerable. As few of them can march together, so their number seldom exceeds 200 men, and even these cannot be supported above fourteen days. There is therefore very little danger from a nation of hunters. Our colonies are much afraid of them without any just grounds. They may indeed give them some trouble by their inroads and excursions, but can never be very formidable. On the other hand a much greater number of shepherds can live together. There may be a thousand families in the same village. The Arabs and Tartars, who have always been shepherds, have on many occasions made the most dreadful havoc. A Tartar chief is extremely formidable, and when one of them gets the better of another, there always happens the most dreadful and violent revolutions. They take their whole flocks and herds into the field along with them, and whoever is overcome loses both his people and wealth. The victorious nation follows its flocks, and pursues its conquest, and if it comes into a cultivated country with such numbers of men, it is quite irresistible. It was in this manner that Mahomet ravaged all Asia.

There is a very great difference betwixt barbarous nations and those that are a little civilized. Where the land is not divided, and the people live in huts which they carry about with them, they can have no attachment to the soil, as all their property consists in living goods which they can easily carry about with them. On this account barbarous nations

are always disposed to quit their country. Thus we find such migrations among the Helvetii, Teutones, and Cimbrians. The Huns, who dwelt for a long time on the north side of the Chinese wall, drove out the Astrogoths on the other side of the Palus Maeotis, they again the Wisigoths, &c.

§ 3. How Republican Governments were introduced.

Having considered the original principles of government, and its progress in the first ages of society, having found it in general to be democratical, we come now to consider how republic[an] governments were introduced.

It is to be observed in general that the situation of a country, and the degree of improvement of which it is susceptible, not only in the cultivation of the land, but in other branches of trade, is favourable to the introduction of a republican government. There is little probability that any such government will ever be introduced into Tartary or Arabia, because the situation of their country is such that it cannot be improved. The most part of these is hills and deserts which cannot be cultivated, and is only fit for pasturage. Besides, they are generally dry, and have not any considerable rivers. The contrary of this is the case in those countries where republican governments have been established, and particularly in Greece. Two-thirds of Attica are surrounded by sea, and the other side by a ridge of high mountains. By this means they have a communication with their neighbouring countries by sea, and at the same [time] are secured from the inroads of their neighbours. Most of the European countries have most part of the same advantages. They are divided by rivers and branches of the sea, and are naturally fit for the cultivation of the soil and other arts. We shall now see how favourable this is to the reception of a republican government. We may suppose the progress of government in Attica in the infancy of the society to have been much the same with that in Tartary and the other countries we have mentioned, and we find in reality that at the time of the Trojan war it was much in the same situation, for then there was little or no cultivation of the ground, and cattle was the principal part of their property. All the contests about property in Homer regard cattle. Here, as in every other country in the same period, the influence of the chieftain over his own vassals was very considerable. A people inhabiting such a country, when the division of land came to take place and the cultivation of it to be generally practised, would naturally dispose of the surplus of their product among their neighbours, and this would be a spur to their industry. But at the same time it would be a temptation to their neighbours to make inroads upon them. They must therefore fall upon

some method to secure themselves from danger, and to preserve what it formerly cost them so much trouble to procure. It would be more easy to fortify a town in a convenient place than to fortify the frontiers of the whole country, and accordingly this was the method they fell upon. They built fortified towns in the most convenient places, and whenever they were invaded took shelter in them with their flocks and moveable goods, and here they cultivated the arts and sciences. Agreeable to this, we find that Theseus fortified Athens and made the people of Attica carry into it all their goods, which not only increased his power over them, but also the authority of that state above others. When people agreed in this manner to live in towns, the chieftains of the several clans would soon lose their authority, and the government would turn republican, because their revenue was small, and could not make them so conspicuous and distinguished above others as to retain them in dependence. The citizens gradually increase in riches, and coming nearer the level of the chieftain, become jealous of his authority. Accordingly we find that Theseus himself was turned out. After this nine regents were set up who were at first to have authority for life, but were afterwards continued only for ten years. Thus Athens, and in like manner all the Greek states, came from a chieftainship to something like monarchy, and from thence to aristocracy. In general, as was before observed, the revenue becomes insufficient to support the authority of a number of chieftains, but a few, getting into their hands superior wealth, form an aristocracy.

It is to be observed that there is a considerable difference between the ancient and modern aristocracies. In the modern republics of Venice, Milan, &c., the government of the state is entirely in the hands of the hereditary nobility, who are possessed of all the three powers of government. Both in modern and ancient aristocracies the people had the choice of those in authority, but the difference is this, that only the nobility could be elected in modern times. The institution of slavery is the cause of this difference. When the free men had all their work done by slaves, they had it in their power to attend on public deliberations, but when the ground came to be cultivated by free men, the lower sort could not have it in their power to attend, but, consulting their interest, they would endeavour to avoid it. Agreeable to this we find that at Venice the populace desired to be free of it. In the same manner the towns in Holland voluntarily gave it up to the town council, which was, in consequence of this, vested with the whole power.

Nothing like this happened in the republics of Greece and Rome. In the early ages of these states, though the populace had the whole power,

they were called aristocracies, because they always chose their magistrate from among the nobility. They were not indeed hindered by any express law to do otherwise, but it was customary to do so, because the lower classes were maintained by the fortunes of the rich, and thereby became dependent on them, and gave their vote for him whose bounty they shared. The nobility might differ among themselves about elections, but would never propose the election of plebeians. Thus the influence of the nobility was the law, and not any express prohibition.

At Athens Solon enacted that none of the lower of the four classes into which the people were divided should be elected; but afterwards magistrates were elected out of all classes, and the government became democratical.

At Rome it was long before the power of being elected extended to the whole body of the people. After decemvirs were appointed, the power of the people began to encroach more and more upon the nobles, and still more when they got military tribunes elected. The cause of this was the improvement of arts and manufactures. When a man becomes capable of spending on domestic luxury what formerly supported an hundred retainers, his power and influence naturally decrease. Besides, the great usually had every trade exercised by their own slaves, and therefore the tailors and shoemakers, being no longer dependent on them, would not give them their votes. The popular leaders then endeavoured to get laws passed by which they might be allowed to be elected magistrates. It was long before the generality even of the plebeians would consent to this, because they thought it disagreeable to have their equals so far above them. In process of time, however, they got it enacted that there should be in authority an equal number of patricians and plebeians, viz., a consul chosen out of each.

§ 4. How Liberty was lost.

We have shown how republics arose, and how they again became democratical; we are next to show how this liberty was lost, and monarchy or something like it was introduced.

Considering these states in the situation above described, as possessed of their towns and a small territory in the adjacent country, they must either confine themselves within their ancient boundaries, or enlarge their territory by conquest. They must either be what may not improperly be called a defensive republic or a conquering one. The Grecian states are a good example of the former, and Rome and Carthage of the latter. We are to show how each of these lost their liberty: and first how the defensive states lost theirs.

When a country arrives at a certain degree of refinement it becomes less fit for war. When the arts arrive at a certain degree of improvement, the number of the people increases, yet that of fighting men becomes less. In a state of shepherds the whole nation can go out to war; and even when it becomes more refined, and the division of labour takes place, and everyone is possessed of a small farm, they can send out a great number. In such an age their campaigns are always in summer, and from seed time till harvest their young men have nothing ado but to serve in them. The whole business at home can be performed by the old men and women, and even these have sometimes beat the enemy in the absence of their soldiers. In a state where arts are carried on, and which consists chiefly of manufacturers, there cannot be sent out such numbers, because if a weaver or tailor be called away, nothing is done in his absence. Scarce one in an hundred can be spared from Britain and Holland. Of an hundred inhabitants fifty are women, and of fifty men twenty-five are unfit for war. In the last war Britain could not spare so many, as any one almost may be convinced, if he reflect whether among his acquaintances he missed one out of twenty-five. According to this principle Athens, though a small state, could once send out 30,000 fighting men, which made a very considerable figure; but after the improvement of arts, they could not send out more than 10,000, which was quite inconsiderable. Britain, notwithstanding the politeness and refinement at which it has arrived, on account of the largeness of its territories, can still send out a very formidable army, but a small state necessarily declines. However, there is one advantage attending slavery

in a small republic, which seems to be its only advantage, that it retards their declension. At Rome and Athens the arts were carried on by slaves, and the Lacedaemonians went so far as not to allow any freeman to be brought up to mechanic employments, because they imagined that they hurt the body. Accordingly we find that at the battle of Chaeronea, when the Athenians were come to a considerable degree of politeness, they were able to send out great numbers of men purely on this account, that all trades were carried on by slaves. We may observe that in the Italian republics, where slavery did not take place, they soon lost their liberty. When, in consequence of the improvement of arts, a state has become opulent, it must be reckoned a great hardship to go out to war, whereas among our ancestors it was thought no inconvenience to take the field. A knight (eques) was no more than a horseman, and a foot-soldier was a gentleman. They were inured to hardships at home, and therefore a campaign appeared no way dreadful. But when opulence and luxury increased, the rich would not take the field but on the most urgent account, and therefore it became necessary to employ mercenaries and the dregs of the people to serve in war. Such persons could never be trusted in war unless reduced to the form of a standing army, and subjected to rigid discipline, because their private interest was but little concerned, and therefore without such treatment they could not be expected to be very resolute in their undertakings. Gentlemen may carry on a war without much discipline, but this a mob can never do. As the citizens in Greece thought it below them to bear arms, and entrusted the republic to mercenaries, their military force was diminished, and consequently a means was provided for the fall of the government. Another cause of their declension was the improvement of the art of war, which rendered everything precarious. In early ages it was very difficult to take a city, as it could only be done by a long blockade. The siege of Troy lasted ten years, and Athens once could withstand for two years a siege both by land and sea. In modern times the besiegers have an advantage over the besieged, and a good engineer can force almost any town to surrender in six weeks. But it was not so once. Philip of Macedon made great improvements in this art, which at last occasioned the dissolution of all the Greek governments and their subjection to foreign powers. Rome stood out much longer than Greece because the number of its citizens was daily increasing. At Rome any person might be made a citizen, as this was of little advantage. But at Athens the right of citizenship was given to very few, as it was itself a little estate. However, Rome itself after opulence and luxury increased, shared the

fate of other republics, though the event was brought about in a different manner. Till the time of Marius, the better sort of free men went out to the field. Marius was the first that recruited [slaves]. He gathered the freed slaves into his army, and established a rigid military discipline. That army which before had consisted of gentlemen was now made up of runaway slaves and the lowest of the people. With such an army Marius conquered and kept in awe the provinces. He had the disposal of all offices and posts in this army. Every one among them owed his rise to him, and was consequently dependent upon him.

Whenever such a general was affronted he would naturally apply to his army for relief, who would easily be induced to side with their general against their own nation. This was the very expedient that Marius fell upon. By the influence of Sylla he was, in his absence, banished from Rome, and a price set upon him. Marius applied to his army, who were determined at all events to follow him, marched to Rome when Sylla was abroad on an expedition against Mithridates, took possession of the government and vanquished Sylla's party. Marius died soon after, and Sylla, having conquered Mithridates, returned to Rome, and in his turn beat the Marian party, changed the government into a monarchy, and made himself perpetual Dictator, though he afterwards had the generosity and magnanimity to resign it. About thirty or forty years afterwards the same thing happened between Caesar and Pompey. Caesar as well as Sylla got himself made perpetual Dictator, but had not enough of public spirit to resign it. His veteran troops which were settled in Italy, mindful of the favours which he conferred upon them, after his death gathered about Octavius, his adopted son, and invested him with the supreme authority. Much the same thing happened in our own country with respect to Oliver Cromwell. When the Parliament became jealous of this man, and disbanded the army, he applied to them in a manner indeed more canting than that of the Roman generals, and got the Parliament turned out and a new one appointed more suitable to his mind, with the whole authority vested in himself.

Thus we have seen how small republics, whether conquering or defensive, came at length to a dissolution from the improvements in mechanic arts, commerce, and the arts of war.

§ 5. Of Military Monarchy.

We are next to consider what form of government succeeded the republican.

When small republics were conquered by another state, monarchy, or whatever other government pleased the conquerors, was established, though they generally followed the model of their own country. The Athenians always established democracy, and the Spartans aristocracy. The Romans indeed more prudently divided their conquests into provinces which were governed pretty absolutely by persons appointed by [the] Senate for that purpose. The case is somewhat different when a state is conquered by its own subjects. Both the nature of the action and the instruments by which it is performed require a military monarchy, or a monarchy supported by military force, because it is as necessary to keep them in awe as to conquer them. This was the form of government that was established in Rome during the time of the emperors. These emperors took the whole executive power into their own hands, they made peace and war as they thought proper, and even named the magistrates either immediately themselves, or by means of a Senate of their own appointment. They did not, however, alter any institutions of the civil law; right and wrong were decided as formerly. Cromwell did the same in our own country, he kept the State in awe by an insignificant army, but he allowed the judge to determine right and wrong as formerly. Nay, he made such improvement in the civil law by taking away wardships, &c., that the first thing the Parliament of Charles II did was to confirm many of Cromwell’s laws.

The Roman authors tell us that justice was never better administered than under the worst of the emperors, Domitian and Nero. It is the interest of all new administrators to make few alterations in what the generality of people are much concerned and have been long accustomed to. They will more easily go into anything else, when they are indulged in this. It was particularly the interest of the emperors to keep up the ancient system of laws, and accordingly we find that all consuls who misbehaved in their respective provinces were severely punished. It was not so under the republic; the most scandalous crimes were committed by governors, as we learn from Cicero’s Orations. A military government allows the strictest administration of justice. Nobody indeed can have a fair trial where the Emperor is immediately concerned: then he will do as

he pleases; but where he is in no way interested it is his interest to adhere to the ancient laws.

It is to be observed that there was a very great difference between the military government established at Rome and those that were established in Asia. At Rome the conquerors and conquered were the same people. The conquerors themselves were sensible of the good effects of these laws, and were so far from being willing to abrogate them, that they made improvements upon them. It is not so with the Asiatic governments, though they are purely military. Turkey, Persia, and the other countries were conquered by Tartars, Arabians, and other barbarous nations who had no regular system of laws, and were entirely ignorant of their good effects. They established in all public offices their own people, who were entirely ignorant of all the duties of them. A Turkish bashaw or other inferior officer is decisive judge of everything, and is as absolute in his own jurisdiction as the Signior. Life and fortune are altogether precarious, when they thus depend on the caprice of the lowest magistrate. A more miserable and oppressive government cannot be imagined.

§ 6. How Military Monarchy was dissolved.

We have considered how the dissolution of small states was brought about, and what form of government succeeded them, by what means an imperial government was introduced into conquering republics, and what kind of administration this was. We come now to show how this military monarchy came to share that fated dissolution that awaits every state and constitution whatever.

In the time of the imperial governments at Rome they had arrived at a considerable degree of improvement both in arts and commerce. In proportion as people become acquainted with these and their consequence, domestic luxury, they become less fond of going out to war; and besides, the government finds that it would hurt its revenue [to call out] those employed in manufactures. If barbarous nations be in the neighbourhood, they can employ them as soldiers at an easier rate, and at the same time not hurt their own industry. Sensible of these things, the Romans recruited their armies in Germany, Britain, and the northern barbarous countries which bordered on the Roman Empire. They had the liberty of recruiting in these countries in the same manner that the Dutch did in Scotland before the beginning of the last war. After they had gone on for some time in this practice, they would find for several reasons that it would be much easier to make a bargain with the chieftains of these barbarous nations whom they employed, and give him so much money to lead out a number of men to this or that expedition.

Supposing then an institution of this kind, the barbarous chieftain, at the head of his own men, possessed the whole military authority of the people for whom he fought, and whenever the government in the least offended him, he could turn his arms against those who employed him, and make himself master of their country. We find that all the western provinces were taken possession of much in this manner. After they had by their practice given such invitations to the inroad of barbarians, we find that most of the Roman provinces were infested by them. In this country the Romans built a wall and kept garrisons to secure their province from the pillagers of the north. The garrisons which secured this station were called away to the defence of Gaul, which at that time was also infested. The historians tell us that the Britons then got leave to shake off the Roman yoke, but it could be no advantage to the Romans to give any country in Britain its liberty, and it was no favour done it to

have no protection from Rome, which the province in reality wanted to have continued. The Romans undoubtedly meant that they should take the trouble of defending themselves, as they were, for some time, to be otherwise employed. The Britons, however, did not like the proposal, but resolved to invite over a body of Saxons to their relief. Accordingly Hengist and Hursa came over with a considerable army which was frequently recruited, entirely drove out the Romans, and finding themselves masters of the whole country, took possession of it and founded the Saxon Heptarchy. In this manner fell the Western Empire of Europe, and military monarchy came to ruin. We find in the last hundred and fifty years of the Roman Empire this custom of recruiting in barbarous nations carried on, and many of their chieftains had greatly raised themselves. Patricius Ælias under Honorius, and many others, acquired great power. In the same manner all the Asiatic governments were dissolved. Their soldiers were hired from Tartary, arts and manufactures were carried on, the people made more by their trades than by going to war. The East India trade which Italy and some other nations carried on by the Red Sea had rendered them very opulent. Every nation as well as Rome was willing to make a bargain with the neighbouring barbarous princes to defend them, and this proved the ruin of the government.

§ 7. Of the Allodial Government.

Having now considered all the ancient forms of government of which we have any distinct accounts, we show next what form succeeded the fall of the Roman Empire, and give an account of the origin of the modern governments of Europe.

The government which succeeded this period was not altogether unlike the Tartar constitution formerly mentioned, though the Germans and others who, upon the fall of the Roman Empire, took possession of the western countries, had better notions of property, and were a little more accustomed to the division of lands. The king and the other chieftains, after they had become conquerors of the country, would naturally for their own purposes take possession of a great part of it. They would distribute it among their vassals and dependents, as they thought proper, and would leave but a very inconsiderable share to the ancient inhabitants. They did not, however, extirpate them entirely, but still paid them some little regard. Among the Franks who took possession of Gaul, the person who killed a Frank paid only five times the fine which was payable for killing one of the old inhabitants. As these nations were almost lawless, and under no authority, depredations were continually committed up and down the country, and all kinds of commerce stopped.

In consequence of this arose the allodial government, which introduced an inequality of fortune. All these chieftains held their lands allodially without any burden of cess, wardship, &c. One of these great lords was possessed of almost a county, but as he was unable himself to reap any advantage from so much of it, he found it necessary to parcel it out among vassals, who either paid a certain annuity, attended him in war, or performed some service of this nature. By this means his incomes became so great that, as there was then no domestic luxury, he could not consume them in any way but by maintaining a great number of retainers about his house. These were another species of dependents, who increased his authority and secured domestic peace, for they kept the tenants in awe and were kept in awe by the tenants. So great was the authority of these lords, that if any one claimed a debt from any of their vassals the king had no power to send a messenger into the lord’s dominions to force payment. He could only apply to the lord, and desire him to do justice. To them also lay the last resort in judging of all manner

of property under their own jurisdiction, the power of life and death, of coining money, and of making bye-laws and regulations in their own territories. But besides this power of government, which in a great measure was betwixt the king and the great lords, if there had been no other the balance would not have been properly kept. But besides the allodial lords there was a great number of free people who were allowed to consult about justice in their own spheres. Every county was divided into hundreds and subdivided into tens. Each of these had their respective court, viz: — the decennary court, the hundred court. Over those was placed the Wittenagemot or assembly of the whole people. Appeals were brought from the ten to the hundred, and from it to [the] county court. An appeal could be brought to the king's court in case the inferior court denied justice by refusing to hear a cause, or if it was protracted by unreasonable delays. Appeals were also sometimes carried to the Wittenagemot, which was made up of the king, allodial lords, aldermen or earls, bishops, abbots, &c. This was the first form of government in the West of Europe, after the downfall of the Roman Empire.

§ 8. Of the Feudal System.

We are next to show how the allodial government was overturned and the feudal system introduced.

As these great lords were continually making war upon one another, in order to secure the attendance of their tenants, they gave them leases of the lands which they possessed from year to year, which afterwards, for the same reasons, came to be held for life.

When they were about to engage in any very hazardous enterprise, that, in case of the worst consequences, the families of their vassals who went along with them might not be left destitute, and that they might still be more encouraged to follow them, they extended this right to the life of the son and grandson: as it was thought cruel to turn out an old possessor, the right became at last hereditary, and was called feuda. The feudal tenant was bound to certain offices, but service in war was the chief thing required, and if the heir was not able to perform it, he was obliged to appoint one in his place. It was in this manner that wardships were introduced. When the heir female succeeded, the feudal baron had a right to marry her to whomever he pleased, because it was thought reasonable that he should have a vassal of his own choosing. The prima seizin was another emolument of the master. When the father died the son had no right to the estate till he publicly declared his willingness to accept of it; and on this account the lord sometimes had the estate in his own hand, and enjoyed the profits of it for some time. The heir paid a sum to get it back, which was called relief. There was still another emolument belonging to the lord, called escheat; that is, after the estate became hereditary, if there was no heir of the family to succeed, it returned to the lord. The same thing happened if the heir failed of performing the services for which he had the tenure. There were besides these some small sums due to the superior on redeeming his son when taken prisoner, or on knighting him, and on the marriage of his daughter, and some such occasions.

The same causes that made allodial lords give away their lands to their vassals on leases which afterwards became hereditary, made the king give away the greater part of his lands to be held feudally: and what a tenant possessed in feu was much the same with real property. They were indeed subject to the above-mentioned emoluments, but they possessed their lands for themselves and posterity. Feudal property may

in some respects be inferior to allodial, but the difference is so inconsiderable that allodial lordships soon become to be held feudally. About the tenth century all estates came to be held feudally, and the allodial lords, that they might enjoy the king's protection, exchanged their rights for a feudal tenure.

It is to be observed that those historians who give an account of the origin of feudal laws from the usurpation of the nobility are quite mistaken. They say that the nobility wanted to have those lands which they held at pleasure of the king to be hereditary, that it might not be in his power to turn them out, and that the feudal law was introduced on account of the diminution of the king's power. But it was actually the contrary; it was on account of the increase of his power, and it required great influence in the king to make the lords hold their lands feudally. The best proof of this is that William the Conqueror changed all the allodial lordships in England into feudal tenures and Malcolm Kenmure did the same in Scotland.

The introduction of the feudal system into all Europe took away everything like popular government. The popular courts were all removed. Neither decennary, hundred, nor county courts were allowed. All public affairs were managed by the king and the great feudal lords. No commoners, none but hereditary lords had a right to sit in parliament. Those great lords who held immediately of the king were considered as his companions, pares convivii comites. They advised concerning public affairs, and nothing of importance could be done without them. The consent of the majority was to be obtained before any law could be passed, and it was necessary to have them called together. The barons or inferior lords observed the same method in their jurisdictions, and they who held of them were called pares curiae baronis. It was likewise necessary that they should be consulted, as they too were in arms. The baron could neither go to war, nor make a law, without the consent of the majority. Nothing could be done in the kingdom without almost universal consent, and thus they fell into a kind of aristocracy with the king at the head of it.

Besides these orders of men of which we have taken notice, there were two others which in that period were held in the utmost contempt. The first was that of the villains (villani) who ploughed the ground and were adscripti glebae. The second order was the inhabitants of boroughs, who were much in the same state of villainage with the former, or but a little beyond it. As the boroughs were much under the influence of the lord who gave them protection, it was the king's interest to weaken as

much as possible this interest and to favour their liberty. Henry II carried this so far that if a slave escaped to a borough and lived there peaceably a year and day, he became free. He gave them many other privileges, but what secured them most was the power of forming themselves into corporations upon paying a certain sum to the king. They held of him in capite, and at first every man paid his proportion to the king; but afterwards the borough paid the sum and levied it as it seemed proper to itself. By this means, as the number of inhabitants increased, the burden became lighter, and the boroughs became opulent and very considerable. In the reign of King John a law was made that if a lord married his ward to a burgher he only forfeited his wardship.

§ 9. Of the English Parliament.

Thus we have considered the several orders of men of which the whole kingdom then consisted. We shall next show how each of them got a share in the government, and what share of it was allotted to each of them. Every person who had an estate great or small, had a right to sit in the king's court, and to consult and advise with him about public matters. In the reign of William Rufus 700 sat in parliament. In Henry III's time it was enacted that the smaller barons, who could not afford to attend in parliament, should send a representative. These representatives were considered as lords, and sat in the same house with them. In the same manner boroughs came to have representatives in parliament, because they themselves were become opulent and powerful, and the king found it his interest to give them some weight so as to lessen the authority of the peers. It became necessary to have their consent as well as that of the barons before any law was passed. These representatives of the boroughs sat in a house by themselves, and the smaller barons, being far from the level of the great lords with whom they sat, and not much superior to the commons, soon joined them. The king's revenues were then on many occasions insufficient for his demands. They consisted chiefly, first, of the royal demesnes; secondly, knights' services; thirdly, feudal emoluments such as wardships; fourthly, fines, amercements, compositions for crimes, &c.; fifthly, all waff goods, res nullius, &c. These were the principal sources of the king's revenue. But these were by no means sufficient to supply the increasing expenses of government. The two bodies of the commoners when joined made a very considerable figure, and the greater part of the subsidies came from them. The king excused the smaller barons from a constant attendance, and called them or not as he pleased. When he did call them he issued a writ summoning them, and from this was the origin of creating peers by writ or patent, which is the only way of doing it at present.

§ 10. How the Government of England became Absolute.

Having shown how the House of Commons became considerable, we shall next show how the nobility's power decreased and the government turned arbitrary.

In all the courts of Europe the power of the nobility declined from the common causes, the improvements in arts and commerce. When a man could spend his fortune in domestic luxury he was obliged to dismiss his retainers. By their ancient rustic hospitality they could more easily maintain 1000 retainers than at present lodge one lord for a night. Richard, Earl of Warwick, who was styled Make-King, maintained every day forty thousand people besides tenants. But when luxury took place he was unable to do this. Thus the power of the nobility was diminished, and that too before the House of Commons had established its authority, and thus the king became arbitrary. Under the House of Tudor the government was quite arbitrary, the nobility were ruined, and the boroughs lost their power.

It might be expected that the sovereign also should have lost his authority by the improvement of arts and commerce, but a little attention will convince us that the case must have been quite opposite. A man possessed of forty thousand pounds a year, while no other body can spend above a hundred, cannot be affected by the increase of luxury. This is precisely the case of the king. He is possessed of a million, while none of his subjects can spend above thirty or forty thousand pounds, and therefore he can spend it in no other way, but by maintaining a great number of people. Luxury must therefore sink the authority of the nobility, whose estates are small in proportion to that of the king; and as his continues unaffected, his power must become absolute. Though this was the case in most nations of Europe, yet in Germany it was quite otherways. The monarchy there was elective, and consequently never could have so much authority. The country is much larger than any other in Europe, and at the dissolution of the feudal government the nobility, who were possessed of considerable fortunes already, got more in proportion than the rest; thus their estates rose so high above those that were immediately below them, that it was impossible for them to spend them in luxury, and therefore they were able to keep a considerable number of retainers. Thus in Germany the power of the nobility was

preserved, while in England it was utterly destroyed, and the king rendered absolute.

§ 11. How Liberty was restored.

We have now shown how the government of England turned absolute: we shall next consider how liberty was restored, and what security the British have for the possession of it.

The act of Henry VII allowing the nobility to dispose of their estates had already placed them entirely on a level with the commons. Elizabeth, who always affected popularity, was continually unwilling to impose taxes on her subjects. In order to supply her exigencies she sold the royal demesnes, as she knew that none of her offspring was to succeed her. Her successors therefore, standing in need of frequent supplies, were obliged to make application to parliaments. The Commons were now become very considerable, as they represented the whole body of the people; and as they knew the king could not want, they never granted him anything without in some degree infringing his privileges. At one time they obtained freedom of speech, at another they got it enacted that their concurrence should be necessary to every law. The king, on account of his urgent necessities, was forced to grant whatever they asked, and thus the authority of the parliament established itself. A peculiar advantage which Britain enjoyed after the accession of James I was that as the dominions of Britain were every way bounded by the sea, there was no need for a standing army, and consequently the king had no power by which he could overawe either people or parliament. The 1,200,000 pounds a year which was settled upon the king at that time might have secured his independency, had not the bad economy of Charles II rendered him as indigent as any of his predecessors. His successor was still more dependent, and was forced to quit the throne and the kingdom altogether. This brought in a new family, which, as the royal demesnes were entirely alienated, depended wholly upon taxes, and were obliged to court the people for them. Ever since, the king’s revenue, though much greater than it was then, depends so much on the concurrence of the parliament that it never can endanger the liberty of the nation. The revenues at present consist chiefly of three branches, to wit, first, the civil list, which is entirely consumed in the maintenance of the royal family, and can give the king no influence, nor hurt the liberty of the subject; secondly, the annual land and malt taxes, which depend entirely on the parliament; thirdly, the funds mortgaged for paying off the public debts, such as the taxes on salt, beer, malt, &c., levied by the officers of

custom and excise. These the king can by no means touch: they are paid to the court of exchequer, which is generally managed by people of interest and integrity, who possess their offices for life and are quite independent of the king. Even they can pay nothing but to those appointed by parliament, and must have the discharge of the public creditor. The surplus of the mortgages goes into what is called the sinking fund for paying the public debt, [which] secures the government in the present family, because if a revolution were to happen, the public creditors, who are men of interest, would lose both principal and interest. Thus the nation is quite secure in the management of the public revenue, and in this manner a rational system of liberty has been introduced into Britain. The parliament consists of about 200 peers and 500 commoners. The Commons in a great measure manage all public affairs, as no money bill can take its rise except in that House. Here is a happy mixture of all the different forms of government properly restrained, and a perfect security to liberty and property.

There are still some other securities to liberty. The judges appointed for the administration of justice are fixed for life, and quite independent of the king. Again, the king's ministers are liable to impeachment by the House of Commons for maladministration, and the king cannot pardon them. The Habeas Corpus Act, by which the arbitrary measures of the king to detain a person in prison as long as he pleased is restrained, and by which the judge who refuses to bring a prisoner to his trial if desired within forty days is rendered incapable of any office, is another security to the liberty of the subject. The method of election, and placing the power of judging concerning all elections into the hands of the Commons, are also securities to liberty. All these established customs render it impossible for the king to attempt anything absolute.

Besides all these, the establishment of the courts of justice is another security to liberty. We shall therefore consider the origin of these courts, the history of them, and their present state.

§ 12. Of the English Courts of Justice.

In England, and indeed in all Europe, after the feudal law was introduced, the kingdom was governed and justice administered in the same manner as by a baron in his jurisdiction; as a steward managed all affairs in the county belonging to the lord, so the grand justiciary had the management of all in the kingdom. He appointed sheriffs and other inferior officers. He was himself a great lord, and, by the authority of his office, in every country but England he became as powerful as the king. But Edward I saw the danger and got it prevented. All kinds of law, criminal or civil, were determined by the justiciary or king's court which always attended the king: those delays and adjournments in civil suits to which this court always attending the king must have been liable, gave occasion for separating common causes from the king's court, and fixing for them at Westminster a court of common pleas. Criminal causes have always a more speedy determination. One would indeed think that when a person's life is at stake, the debate should be longer than in any other case: but resentment is roused in these cases and precipitates to punish. It is a matter of no moment to the spectator how a trifling matter of cash be determined, but it is by no means so in criminal cases. When common pleas were taken away the criminal and fiscal powers were connected, and the power and authority of the great justiciary little diminished. Afterwards Edward I divided the business of the justiciary into three different courts, viz: —

The court of king's bench.

The court of exchequer.

The court of common pleas.

In the last all civil suits were tried. In the first all criminal ones, and to it lay the appeal from the court of common pleas. It was called king's bench, because the king then frequently sat upon it, though this cannot now be done, as it is improper that the king should judge of breaches of the king's peace. The court of exchequer judged in all affairs between the king and his subjects, the debts due by either of them to the other, and whatever regarded the revenue. The court of chancery was originally no court at all. The chancellor was no more than a keeper of briefs or writs according to which justice was done. What gave occasion to the keeping of these briefs shall now be considered.

Edward I abolished the power of the grand justiciary. He employed mean persons to be judges, generally clergymen. As the decision depended on such persons, their jurisdictions would be exercised very precariously, and accordingly we find that both in criminal and civil cases they interposed with hesitation, in the former as mediators, and in the latter as arbitrators, and accordingly they would be unwilling to give justice in those cases where they had no precedent from the court of justiciary. On this account all the briefs by which the court of justiciary determined were kept. To keep these seems to have been originally the office of chancellor. If a person had a law-suit he went to the clerk of the court of chancery, who examined the briefs, and if he found one that comprehended your case, justice was done accordingly; but if one could not be found, you could not have justice. Thus we find that the chancellor was not a judge originally. In Scotland the office of the English chancellor is lodged in the court of session. In England a brief was sent from the chancellor to the sheriff by which he was obliged to appear before the king's judges. Judges then, from the irregularity and inaccuracy of their proceedings, gave great jealousy to the king, and on this account many severe sentences went out against them; £10,000 has at one time been levied from the judges on account of corruption. They were therefore tied down strictly to the chancery briefs, and always bound by their records in such a manner that they could not be in the least amended, not so much as a word wrong spelled rectified. This precision still remains in some cases where not taken away by the statutes of amendment; a mere orthographical blunder, though evidently so, has in many cases made the whole of no effect. The judges were therefore tied down to the precise words of the brief, or if there was a statute, to the words of it. This was the origin and jurisdiction of the court of chancery.

During the improvement of the law of England there arose rivalships among the several courts. We shall therefore show how each of them began to extend its power and encroach [on] the privileges of another, and how the court of chancery increased its influence. The court of king's bench, which judged criminal causes and every breach of the king's peace, was the first that assumed immediately, and previously to an appeal, to judge in civil causes, and to encroach on the jurisdiction of the court of common pleas, by what is called a writ of error, that is, they supposed the person to be guilty of a trespass. For example, when a man owed £10, and did not come to pay it at the time appointed, an order

went out from the king’s bench to examine and find him out, supposing that he intended to conceal himself, and they punished him for this trespass. At present an action on contract can come immediately before the king’s bench. In this manner it was that this court extended its power, and, being supreme over all, none could encroach upon it.

The court of exchequer brought in civil causes to be tried immediately by them in the following manner: suppose a man owed a sum of money to the king, which it is the business of the court to take care of, and the man cannot pay unless his debtors first pay him, the court took upon them to sue this other man by what is called the quo minus, that is, by what he is rendered less able to pay the king. As the debts of the king were many, and as the profits of the judges arose from sentence money, which was more or less according to the business of the court, they eagerly grasped at this extension of their power. All the courts endeavoured, by the speediness of their determinations and accuracy of their proceedings, to encourage prosecutors to come before them.

In what manner the chancellor came to attain his equitable jurisdiction shall be taken notice of in the next place. After the improvement of arts and commerce, which gave occasion to many law-suits unheard of before, people suffered a great deal by the imperfections of law. Edward III found that there were a great many injuries to which no brief nor court statute extended; and therefore the parliament allowed that if a person applied to the clerk of chancery and found there was no brief that could give him any remedy, the clerk should look for some briefs of a similar nature and out of them compose a new one by which the complainer might have redress. In this manner the chancery prescribed rules to the other courts; but as they appointed the briefs and manner of proceeding, this was putting an end to the affair, for there was no occasion to go to any other court, and the chancery got these affairs into its own hands. There could be no appeal brought from the courts of king’s bench or of common pleas to that of chancery, but they applied to it for what the common law could not redress. The chancellor in this manner obtained the power of judging in all cases of equity, and is applied to in the greater part of civil cases, the chief of which are, first, the specific performance of contracts. By the common law if a person was bound by contract to deliver a piece of ground, and afterwards refused to do it, he was only obliged to pay damages, but not to perform it specifically. The chancery, which was now considered as a court of conscience, enjoined the specific performance of it. Secondly, the

chancery gave redress for all incests and frauds in trust when the common law could not. As the leaving lands to the church deprived the king of the emoluments arising from them, an act was passed against it. The clergy ordered that they should be left to certain persons who would dispose of them for the benefit of the church, and if they did not perform it, then, as it was a fraud in trust, the chancellor allowed the bishop to see it done. In like manner, when persons in the state of affairs at that time were obliged to alienate their estates to persons that had no concern in them, the chancellor caused them to be restored. Wills, legacies, and things of this sort also fell under the equitable decision of the chancellor.

It will be proper when we are treating of courts to inquire into the origin of juries. In the beginning of the allodial government when the several courts had arrived at a very small degree of improvement, and before they had experience to examine thoroughly into matters, when any person was brought before them on an action depending on his oath, he was obliged to bring twelve compurgators to swear that the oath was just. There are remains of this at present in actions of debt, where, if the person can bring in a certain number of persons to swear that his oath is just, he gains the suit. It is to be observed that the imperfection of this way of trying was one of the great causes that gave origin to the judicial combat. A nobleman, or indeed any man of spirit, who was eluded of his right by a set of perjured fellows, would rather choose to combat it in the field and appeal to the judgement of God than leave his cause to them. Henry II first instituted that the sheriff and a certain number of persons who had opportunity to be best acquainted with the crime should have the whole affair laid before them, and that the person should be judged by their sentence. The law of England, always the friend of liberty, deserves praise in no instance more than in the careful provision of impartial juries. They who are chosen must be near the place where the crime was committed that they may have an opportunity of being acquainted with it. A great part of the jury may be laid aside by the panel. He can lay aside thirty of their number, and he can challenge them either per capita, that is, any single juryman, or any number of them, if he suspect the sheriff of partiality. There may be many small causes for suspicion of partiality, and of the relevancy of these the court is judge. Nothing can be a greater security for life, liberty, and property than this institution; the judges are men of integrity, quite independent, holding their offices for life but are tied down by the law. The jurymen are your neighbours who are to judge of a fact upon which your life depends. They too can be laid aside for several reasons.

The laws of England with regard to juries are only defective in one point, in which they differ from the laws of Scotland. In England the whole jury must be unanimous, which renders the office of a juryman a very disagreeable service. A case may appear to you more clear than it does to me, and may really be different from what it appears to either of us, and yet there is a necessity for our agreement, and of consequence a necessity that one of us should swear contrary to our conscience. In criminal causes there is little danger, people are generally disposed to favour innocence and to preserve life. But in civil cases people are not so much troubled, they are not so much disposed to favour, and many of them are exceedingly doubtful. People of fashion are not fond of meddling in a jury attended with such inconveniences, and therefore only the meaner sort of people attend the judge. A great man would not choose to be so often called and returned, and perhaps treated in such a manner as no gentleman would choose to be. In this case the law providing for security has done too much. In this country, where unanimity is not required, the service is not so disagreeable. Though a person differ from the majority he may stand by his opinion and is not forced to comply, and the people of the highest rank are willing to be jurors. In the actions which come before the court of chancery no jury is required, and the court of session in Scotland has taken them away in civil causes.

Besides the courts that have been mentioned there were several others erected by the king's patent. Henry VIII erected three. The court of high commission which sat upon ecclesiastics, the court of star chamber which takes in anything less than death, and the court of wardship which took care of the king's interest in these emoluments. This last was taken away by Charles II, who accepted a sum for the whole. It is now understood that the king cannot erect a court without consent of parliament. In no other country of Europe is the law so accurate as in England, because it has not been of so long standing. The parliament of Paris was only erected about the time of Henry VIII of England. The British parliament consists of a great number of men, and these of great dignity. All new courts disdain to follow the rules that were formerly established. All new courts are a great evil, because their power at first is not precisely determined, and therefore their decisions must be loose and inaccurate.

Thus we have considered the origin of government

1. Among a nation of savages;
2. Among a nation of shepherds;

3. The government of small clans with chieftains; the manner in which aristocracies arose; the fall of little republics, conquering or defensive, and, lastly, the different forms of government that arose in Europe after the dissolution of arbitrary government.

§ 13. Of the little Republics in Europe.

We shall next consider the origin of the little republics in Europe, and consider the rights of sovereign and subject.

First, of the origin of these republics. In some countries the provinces which were far from the seat of government sometimes became independent, as was the case in a good part of Germany and France during the time of Charlemagne. Hugh Capet, who was chief justiciary, got the government into his hands, but took only the title of the King of France. The Pope, by raising disturbances in Germany, for a long time hindered the Emperor Otho from taking possession of Italy. But when he got possession of it, on account of its distance, he could not retain it. Every little town formed itself into a republic, with a council of its own choosing at its head. Some towns in Germany being well fortified, such as Hamburgh, assumed the same privileges, and still in some measure retain them. The Italian towns are governed by a hereditary nobility, though the ancient republics were perfectly democratical. In Venice the people freely gave up the government, as they also did in Holland, because they could not support the trouble which it gave them. The Dutch and Swiss republics are formed into a respublica foederata, and on this depends their strength.

We shall make some remarks on the manner of voting in these republics. When there are 100 votes and three candidates, it is possible that the person who is most odious may be elected. If A, B and C be candidates, there may be 34 votes for A, and 33 for B, and as many for C. Thus though there are 66 votes against A, he carries it. This must be still more the case when a criminal is brought before this assembly, for 34 may think him guilty of murder, 33 of manslaughter, and 33 of chance medley, yet he must suffer for murder. To prevent this, in some of these republics they always bring the question to a simple state. Is he guilty of murder or not? If there be three candidates, they put a previous vote, by which they exclude one of the candidates. In their senates the president never has a deliberative vote, but only a decisive one, because they will allow no member to have two votes. When there is an equality on both sides, nothing can be done, and therefore the business is not rejected, but referred to another meeting.

§ 14. Of the Rights of Sovereigns.

We shall now consider what duty is owing to the sovereign, and what is the proper punishment of disobedience. Every attempt to overturn this power is in every nation considered as the greatest crime, and is called high treason. It is to be observed that there is a great difference between treason in monarchies and treason in republics. In the one it is an attempt on the king's person, and in the other on the liberties of the people, from whence we may see how the maxim of assassination came to be established in republics, and not in monarchies. It is the interest of monarchies that the person in authority be defended, whatever his title or conduct be, and that no person be allowed to enquire into them. The laws of monarchy are therefore unfavourable to the assassination of tyrants. In a republic the definition of a tyrant is quite clear. He is one who deprives the people of their liberty, levies armies and taxes, and puts the citizens to death as he pleases. This man cannot be brought to a court of justice, and therefore assassination is reckoned just and equitable. The present republican governments in Europe, indeed, do not encourage this maxim, because monarchies now set the fashion, and [other] government[s] copy their pattern. According to our present notions Oliver Cromwell's assassination is most opprobrious, but it would have appeared otherwise when the republics of Greece and Rome set the fashion.

Having thus taken notice of this difference between monarchical and republican governments, we shall next consider the crimes reckoned treason. There are three kinds of treason or attacks upon the essence of government. First, perduellio, or an attempt to subvert the established government by force or rebellion. Secondly, proditio, or the joining of the enemy, delivering up to him forts, hostages, &c., or the refusing to deliver up garrisons, &c., to the government when they demand them. This is called high treason. Thirdly, laesa maiestas, or an insult on the authority of the magistrate, which is not so heinous a crime as the two former. These were the kinds of treason among the Romans. Under the emperors these were blended, and a breach of the smallest, even in so trifling a manner as throwing a stone at the emperor's statue, was punished with death. Under Honorius, a conspiracy against any of the emperor's ministers was high treason.

The crimes accounted treason by the English law are the following. First, killing the king, wishing his death, or providing arms against him,

with every attempt of this kind are punished capitally. The gunpowder plot was never executed, yet the conspirators were put to death. Had they intended only the death of some other person, they would not have been executed. Secondly, corrupting the king's wife or oldest daughter, because these are affronts to the king, and may introduce a spurious offspring to the crown. If it be a younger daughter, the crime is not so great. Thirdly, levying a force against the king, aiding his enemies, &c. Fourthly, attempting the life of the chancellor or [judge of] assize when sitting in court; at another time it is only felony. Edward I, however, made the mere wounding of them not treason. Fifthly, counterfeiting the king's great or privy seal, which is accounted an usurpation of the government, because by them the acts of government are carried on. Sixthly, counterfeiting of the king's coin, though this should not properly be treason, because it is no attempt on the essence of government. This crime is no more than forgery, and is usually punished as such. These were the branches of treason before the reformation. At this period Henry VIII declared himself head of the Church, assumed the sovereignty in ecclesiastical affairs as a part of his prerogative, and established for this purpose the court of high commission to judge of ecclesiastics, which was abolished by Mary and restored by Elizabeth. As there was some danger then from the Popish party, the Catholic religion was considered as influencing the being of government, and therefore it was declared high treason to bring in any bull of the Pope, agnus dei, or whatever might support his authority, to support popish seminaries, or conceal popish priests. This law, however proper then, should now be repealed, as there is no more occasion for it; no notice would now be taken of entertaining a popish priest.

During the civil war and usurpation of Cromwell it became a question how far it is lawful to resist the power of government. The court party believed the king to be absolute, and the popular doctrine was that the king is only a steward, and may be turned out at the pleasure of the people. After the restoration the court party got the better, and the other party became odious. At the Revolution the Stewart family were set aside for excellent reasons, and the succession established in the present family. By this the court party was turned out, and began to influence the dispositions of the people. It was therefore enacted that whoever should speak against the present succession should be guilty of treason. This is now altogether unnecessary, because the government is now so well established that there is no reason to take notice of those who write or speak against it.

In Scotland the laws were very confused with regard to treason. Prejudicing the people against the king, or the king against the people, were made high treason. But by the Union they are made the same with those of England. These are the laws of Britain with respect to treason, and they subject the person who breaks them to the highest penalties. He is half hanged, and then his entrails are taken out, he forfeits his estate, his wife's dowry, &c., and corrupts his blood, so that his children cannot succeed.

Besides these there are other offences against the crown which do not subject to the pains of high treason, but to those of felony. First, the making of coin below the standard and the exportation of coin. From the notion that opulence consists in money, the parliament resolved that every one might have bullion coined without any expense of mintage. Thus coined money was never below the value of bullion, and therefore there was a temptation to melt it down. This occasioned the act declaring this practice felony. Secondly, any attempt to increase the coin, as by the philosopher's stone, was made felony. Thirdly, destroying the king's armour is also felony. Fourthly, any attempt against the king's officers is also felony, and in general whatever is felony against another person is felony against the king. If his pocket were picked it would be felony against him, as it is against any private gentleman, but the former offences are committed against him as king. There are some other small offences which may be done to the king which do not amount to felony, but incur what is called a praemunire. This is necessary to explain. In the reigns of King John and Henry III, England was entirely under the dominion of the Pope. His legate brought over bulls, and raised contributions as he pleased, and long before the Reformation it was necessary to defend the king's liberty against the Pope. The king sometimes appointed one to a benefice, and the Pope another, and the Pope's candidate was often preferred. A law was therefore made forbidding any bull to be brought from Rome, or any appeal to be carried thither, and subjecting every person who refused to ordain the king's presentee, to the penalties of praemunire regem, i.e. to fortify the king against the Pope; the penalty was forfeiture of goods and outlawry. After Henry VIII was declared head of the Church by the Pope, it was made a praemunire to attack the king's prerogative with regard to ecclesiastical matters.

Beside these there are other offences called misprisions of treason, and are either positive or negative. Positive misprision of treason is the not revealing an attempt against the king's person, his oldest daughter, or

the heir of the kingdom. In like manner it is felony if you do not reveal any notice you receive of conspiracies and rebellions. Negative misprision is the counterfeiting of foreign coin current in the kingdom, such as Portuguese gold, but it is not felony to counterfeit French or Dutch money, because they are not current here.

In the last place there are offences against the king called contempts, which are fourfold. First, contempt of the king's court or palaces. A riot committed in any of these is a great indignity offered to the sovereign. Riots in courts of justice are also severely punished, because there persons are often provoked, and if the law were not strict they would disturb the court. Secondly, contempt of the king's prerogative, such as disobeying the king when lawfully called, going out of the kingdom, when in office, without his leave, refusing to come after a summons under the privy seal, accepting a pension from a foreign prince without the king's permission, even in a man of letters. Thirdly, contempt of the king's person and government (of which many are guilty), as by saying he is indolent or cowardly, that he has broken the coronation oath, or to speak disrespectfully of his ministers. These are never regarded at present, because the government is so well established that writing and speaking cannot affect it. Fourthly, contempt of the king's title, by denying it, or preferring the Pretender's to it, by drinking the Pretender's health, or refusing the oath of allegiance and abjuration; all these subject to imprisonment or fining, but not to the penalties of treason, felony, praemunire, nor outlawry.

Having considered the offences of the subject against the sovereign, we shall next treat of the crimes which the sovereign may commit against the subject. But first it is proper to consider who are subjects of a state.

§ 15. Of Citizenship.

The laws of different countries vary much with regard to those to whom the right of citizenship belongs. In most of the Swiss republics nothing gives the right of citizenship, but to be born of a citizen. In Rome a family might be peregrina for four or five generations. At Athens no man was a citizen unless both father and mother were Athenians. It is to be observed that the Athenians were particularly sparing in giving the right of citizenship, because it entitled them to very great privileges. Even kings were denied that honour; all they did when they wanted to bestow a favour on a neighbouring king was to free him from taxes on imports. This they did to Amyntas, father of Philip, king of Macedon. As aliens paid higher duties than natives, it was no small privilege to have these removed. After the defeat of the Persians their forces amounted to 25,000 men: their country was well cultivated: many cities in Asia paid them tribute. In consequence of this the people were entitled to attendance on the court of justice, to have their children educated at the public expense, to have certain distributions of money among them, with many other emoluments. If the number of citizens increased, these privileges would not be so valuable, and therefore they were very jealous of it. As whoever comes into a parish in England must give a bond not to be burdensome to it, so [in] all little republics where the number of freemen are small and election in the hands of a few, citizenship is of great importance, but in a large city such as Rome it was a very small compliment, and accordingly they made whole provinces citizens at once. In Britain one born within the kingdom is under the protection of the laws, can purchase lands, and if of the established religion, can be elected to any office. In great states the place of birth makes a citizen, and in small ones the being born of parents who are citizens. In like manner the incapacity of being a citizen is different in different countries. By the old laws of Rome, and of every barbarous nation, the goods of every person who came within their territories were confiscated, and he himself became a slave to the first person who happened upon him. By a law of Pomponius, if he came from a nation at peace with Rome, he was treated as the law prescribed. In barbarous countries they have but one word to signify a stranger and an enemy. At Rome every stranger was hostis, as they considered all nations as their enemies, and the person who came from them as a spy. The Litchfield

man of war was shipwrecked on the Emperor of Morocco's dominions, and because we had no league with him, the whole crew were made slaves. Our sovereign so far complied with the custom of the place as to ransom them. When they found the advantage of exporting their own goods, and importing those of others, they would naturally allow those who trafficked with them to be in a state of safety, both with respect to his person and goods, and would allow him an action if injured in either. This is the state of aliens in most of the countries of Europe at present. In Britain an alien cannot purchase nor inherit land property, nor maintain a real action. He cannot make a will because it is the greatest extension of property, and is founded on piety and affection to the dead, which an alien can have but few opportunities of deserving. By a particular statute an alien merchant, but not a tradesman, may have a lease of a house. This arises from a whimsical principle that it would discourage our own tradesmen to allow foreigners to settle among them. This is the state of aliens in most countries.

In Britain the manner of obtaining citizenship is twofold. First, by letters of denization, which is a part of the king's prerogative. Secondly, by a bill of naturalization, which is an act of parliament. By the former an alien is capacitated to purchase lands and to transmit them to posterity if subjects of Great Britain, but he cannot inherit, because as the king is heir of aliens he may transfer his own right, but cannot take away the right of the person who ought to succeed. A denizen alien may inherit an estate bequeathed to him, but to be capable of inheriting in all respects, an act of naturalization is necessary, by which he has a right to all the privileges of a freeborn subject. When king William came to the throne, naturalized aliens were made peers. As many Dutch families came over with him, it was natural to suppose that he would favour them with every privilege. The English, offended at this partiality, made an act declaring that there should be no act of parliament for the future by which they should be allowed such emoluments. As in most countries they are [not] allowed the right of transmitting lands, it was [un]necessary that they should have an action for it. Neither in England nor in Germany are aliens allowed to make a will. In Saxony there was made a very equitable law that aliens from countries where they were allowed no privileges, should be allowed none among them. In Rome it was the right of citizens only to make a will.

It is to be observed with respect to aliens, that they are aliens amis, or aliens ennemie. If a number of the latter should make war upon the king, or injure him, they cannot be prosecuted for high treason, because he is

not their lawful sovereign, and they owe no allegiance to him. If the laws of nations do not protect them, they must be dealt with by martial law. Aliens, however, who live in the country, are protected by the laws, and as they thus own allegiance to the king, they may be prosecuted for treason, and punished accordingly. Whatever makes a freeborn subject guilty of treason makes an alien ami guilty of it. An alien ennemie, that is one who comes from a country at war with us, if he give information to his natural sovereign, is also guilty of treason.

§ 16. Of the Rights of Subjects.

Having thus considered who are properly the subjects of a state, we come now to treat of the crimes of the sovereign against the subject, or the limitations of his power.

On this branch of public law it is impossible to speak with any degree of precision. The duties of one subject to another are sufficiently ascertained by the laws of every country and the courts of justice, but there are no judges to determine when sovereigns do wrong. To suppose a sovereign subject to judgement, supposes another sovereign. In England it can be exactly ascertained when the king encroaches on the privileges of the people, or they on that of the king, but none can say how far the supreme power of king and parliament may go. In like manner where the absolute power of sovereignty is lodged in a single person, none can tell what he may not do, with accuracy. God is the only judge of sovereigns, and we cannot say how he will determine. All decisions on this subject have been made by the prevailing party, and never coolly by a court of justice, and can give us no light into the subject. Our best notions of it will arise from considering the several powers of government and their progress.

In the beginning of society all the powers of government are exercised precariously. The majority may make war, but cannot force the minority to it, though this power was the first that was exerted absolutely. The judicial power was much longer executed precariously than the federative. In every country the judges once only interposed as mediators, and sometimes the panel had his choice to refer his cause to the judge or to God, by combat, hot water, and, nay, if the sentence of the judge did not please the panel, he might challenge the judge to fight him in the court. In time, however, it became absolute. The legislative power was absolute whenever it was introduced, but it did not exist in the beginnings of society, it arose from the growth of judicial power. When the judicial power became absolute, the very sight of a judge was terrible, as life, liberty, and property depended on him. Tacitus tells us that Quintilius Varus, having conquered a part of the Germans, wanted to civilize them by erecting courts of justice, but this so irritated them that they massacred him and his whole army. To a rude people a judge is the most terrible sight in the world. When property was extended, it therefore became necessary to restrain their arbitrary decisions by

appointing strict rules which they must follow. Thus the legislative power was introduced as a restraint upon the judicial. In Britain the king has the absolute executive and judicial power. However, the Commons may impeach his ministers, and the judges, whom he appoints, are afterwards independent of him. The legislative power is absolute in the king and parliament. There are, however, certain abuses which no doubt make resistance in some cases lawful, on whatever principle government be founded.

Suppose that government is founded on contract, and that these powers are entrusted to persons who grossly abuse them, it is evident that resistance is lawful, because the original contract is now broken. But we showed before that government was founded on the principles of utility and authority. We also showed that the principle of authority is more prevalent in a monarchy, and that of utility in a democracy, from their frequent attendance on public meetings and courts of justice. In such a government as this last, as the principle of authority is, as it were, proscribed, popular leaders are prevented from acquiring too great power, because they are not allowed to continue in office till they acquire any great ascendency; but, still, there is a respect paid to certain offices, whoever be the person that exercises them. In Britain both principles take place. Whatever be the principle of allegiance, a right of resistance must undoubtedly be lawful, because no authority is altogether unlimited. Absurdity of conduct may deprive an assembly of its influence as well as a private person, an[d] imprudent conduct will take away all sense of authority. The folly and cruelty of the Roman emperors make the impartial reader go along with the conspiracies formed against them.

It is to be observed that the right of resistance is more frequently exerted in absolute monarchies than in any other, because one man is more apt to fall into imprudent measures than a number. In Turkey eight or ten years seldom pass without a change of government. The same degree of ill usage will justify resistance to a senate or body of men. It must be allowed that resistance is in some cases lawful, but it’s excessively difficult to say what an absolute sovereign may do or may not do, and there are different opinions concerning it. Mr. Locke says that when a sovereign raises taxes against the will of the people resistance is lawful, but there is no country besides England where the people have any vote in the matter. In France the king’s edict is all that is necessary, and even in Britain it is but a very figurative consent that we have, for the number of voters is nothing to that of the people. Exorbitant

taxes no doubt justify resistance, for no people will allow the half of their property to be taken from them; but though the highest propriety be not observed, if they have any degree of moderation, people will not complain. No government is quite perfect, but it is better to submit to some inconveniences than make attempts against it.

Some other writers allege that the king cannot alienate any part of his dominions. This notion is founded on the principle of the original contract, by which indeed, though a people were willing to submit to one government, they will not have one of another's choosing. This doctrine is, however, groundless. In France and Spain great part of the dominions have been given to the king's children as a portion without any complaint; when Florida was put into our hands, they never made any opposition. The King of Spain and Czar of Moscovy can even alter the succession as they please. This was in general the case in all feudal jurisdictions, they were divisible at the pleasure of the lord. It was but lately that the right of primogeniture took place in the principalities of Germany. It is alleged that the King of France cannot alter the Salic law, by which daughters cannot succeed to the crown. This law was owing to the power of the princes of the blood, who would not allow the succession to go past themselves. But if France had been as destitute of nobility as Britain was at the accession of the present family, the Salic law might have been altered as easily as any other law.

It is hard to determine what a monarch may or may not do. But when the summa potestas is divided as it is in Britain, if the king do anything which ought to be consented to by the parliament, without their permission, they have a right to oppose him. The nature of a parliamentary right supposes that it may be defended by force, else it is no right at all. If the king impose taxes or continue them after the time is expired, he is guilty of breach of privilege. James II attempted some impositions of this sort upon importation. In the petition of right it is expressly appointed that the taxes shall not continue a moment after the time determined by act of parliament.

When the parliament saw the crown going to James II, who was a Roman Catholic, they appointed two tests, to wit, an abjuration of the Pope and the oath of supremacy, and that every person within three months after his acceptance of any office should take the sacrament after the form prescribed by the Church of England. King James employed Roman Catholics both in the army and privy council, and besides, appointed persons entirely unqualified to the treasury, and broke in upon the privileges of the Universities. He also assumed a power of dispensing

with the law in cases where he himself was no way concerned. Some of the bishops, merely for doing what every British subject has a right to do, to wit, remonstrating against such proceedings, were sent to the Tower. Nothing could more alarm the nation than this attack upon the bishops. One Sharp preached against popery, the religion of the king, upon which the bishop of London was ordered to suspend him, but he only cautioned him against such practices. The king, not pleased with this, created a court of high commission, which had been long abrogated and discharged ever after to be erected, and summoned both the bishop and Sharp to appear before it. The king, perceiving the disgust of the people, and thinking it proceeded from the fear of those possessed of abbey lands, lest they should be taken from them, and from a fear of a change in the religion of the country, he declared that he would grant liberty of conscience to all, and retain every one in the possession of the Church lands. This plainly showed his intention to change the religion of the country, which is the most difficult thing in the world. It is necessary before a religion be changed that the opinions of the people be changed, as was done by Luther, Calvin, John Knox, and others before the Reformation. King James then applied to the army, but found they by no means sympathized with him. He, in return, told them that he would never any more bring down his sentiments to theirs, nor consult them on any occasion. It was no wonder that by such practices the Revolution was brought about, and the family set aside, for the whole nation was disposed to favour the Prince of Orange. They might justly have passed by the whole family, but they generously dispensed with the rigorous law which corrupts the blood with the forfeiture of the estate, and bestowed the crown on his two Protestant daughters. Their brother, on account of the suspicions of his being a Papist, as he had been educated in that religion, was rejected. The present family, being the nearest Protestant heirs, was by an act of parliament settled in the government, and it was enacted that no prince, unless a Protestant, shall sit on the throne of Britain. Thus King James, on account of his encroachments on the body politic, was with all justice and equity in the world opposed and rejected.

Thus we have considered man as a member of a state.

As ecclesiastics and laymen are two grand divisions of men in a state, under this head too might be considered ecclesiastic law and the respective rights of these two bodies of men. Here too we might consider military law, which arises from considering the state as divided into two bodies, civil and military. But these are foreign to our purpose.

DIVISION II. DOMESTIC LAW

§ 1. Husband and Wife.

We come now to consider man as a member of a family, and in doing this we must consider the threefold relation which subsists in a family. These, to wit, between husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant.

First of these we shall consider husband and wife. In every species of animals the connexion between the sexes is just as much as is necessary for the propagation and support of the species. Quadrupeds, whenever the female impregnates, have no farther desire for each other; the support of the young is no burden to the female, and there is no occasion for the assistance of the male. Among birds some such thing as marriage seems to take place, they continue the objects of desire to each other, their connexion remains for a considerable time, and they jointly support the young; but whenever the young can shift for themselves all further inclination ceases. In the human species women by their milk are not capable of providing long for their children. The assistance of the husband is therefore necessary for their sustenance, and this ought to make marriage perpetual. In countries, however, where Christianity is not established, the husband possesses an unlimited power of divorce, and is not accountable for his conduct. In ancient Rome, though they had the power of doing it, yet it was thought contrary to good manners. We may observe an utility in this constitution of our nature that children have so long a dependence upon their parents, to bring down their passions to theirs, and thus be trained up at length to become useful members of society. Every child gets this piece of education, even under the most worthless parent.

On this subject it is proposed to consider the duties of each of the two parties during their union, how this union should [be] begun and ended, and what are the particular rights and privileges of each.

The first duty is fidelity of the wife to the husband; breach of chastity is the greatest of offences. Spurious children may be introduced into the family, and come to the succession instead of lawful ones. This real utility, however, is not the proper foundation of the crime. The indignation of the public against the wife arises from their sympathy with the jealousy of the husband, and accordingly they are disposed to resent and punish it. The sentiment of jealousy is not chiefly founded, or rather not at all, upon the idea of a spurious offspring. It is not from the

particular act that the jealousy arises, but he considers her infidelity as an entire alienation of that preference to all other persons which she owes him. This is the real idea he has of it, as may appear from the following consideration. The idea we have of a father does not arise from the voluptuous act which gave occasion to our existence, for this idea is partly loathsome, partly ridiculous. The real idea that a son has of a father is the director of his infancy, the supporter of his helplessness, his guardian, pattern and protector. These are the proper filial sentiments. The father's idea of a son is of one that depends upon him, and was bred up in his house or at his expense, by which connexion there should grow up an affection towards him; but a spurious offspring is disagreeable from the resentment that arises against the mother's infidelity.

In those countries where the manners of the people are rude and uncultivated, there is no such thing as jealousy, every child that is born is considered as their own. The foundation of jealousy is that delicacy which attends the sentiment of love, and it is more or less in different countries, in proportion to the rudeness of their manners. In general, wherever there is little regard paid to the sex, infidelity is little regarded, and there will be the greatest looseness of manners. Agreeable to this we find that Menelaus expressed his resentment against Paris, not against Helen, and this not for debauching her, but for carrying her away. In the Odyssey she talks before her husband of that action without reserve. In Sparta it was common for them to borrow and lend their wives. When manners became more refined, jealousy began, and rose at length to such a height that wives were shut up, as they are among the Turks at this day. As mankind became more refined, the same fondness which made them shut up women made them allow them liberties. In the latter ages of Greece women were allowed to go anywhere. This same fondness, carried to a high degree, gives as great a licence as when infidelity was disregarded. In no barbarous country is there more licentiousness than in France. Thus we may observe the prejudice of manners, with respect to women, in the different periods of society.

Though there was little or no regard paid to women in the first state of society as objects of pleasure, yet there never was more regard paid them as rational creatures. In North America the women are consulted concerning the carrying on of war, and in every important undertaking. The respect paid to women in modern times is very small; they are only put to no trouble for spoiling of their beauty. A man will not exempt his friend from a laborious piece of business, but he will spare his mistress. When the infidelity of the wife is considered as an injury to the husband,

it is necessary that unmarried women should be laid under restraints, that when married they may be accustomed to them. Hence the origin of punishment for fornication.

We come now to consider how this union is begun. As the duty after marriage is quite different from what it was before, it is necessary that there should be some ceremony at the commencement of it. This differs in different countries, but in general is connected with religion, as it is supposed to make the greatest impression. In the infancy of society, though marriage seemed intended to be perpetual, yet the husband had an unlimited power of divorce, though it was reckoned indecent to exercise it unless for an enormous crime. The reason was that the government durst intermeddle little with private affairs, and far less with matters in private families. For the security of government they endeavoured by all means to strengthen the power of the husband and make him as absolute as possible. In ancient Rome the husband was sovereign lord of life and death in all matters belonging to his own family.

In Rome three kinds of marriages took place:
First, by confarreation, a religious ceremony;
Secondly, by coemption, when the husband bought his wife;
Thirdly, by use. If he had lived with her a year and day, she was his by prescription, and he could divorce her.

The power of divorce extended to the wife after female succession took place. A woman possessed of a great fortune, who lived happily before marriage and had so much in her own power, would not incline to give it all to her husband. The lawyers therefore invented a new kind of marriage in favour of heiresses, which was called the deductio domi, or marriage by contract; certain terms were agreed on between the parties, and then the husband came and carried her home. To prevent prescription taking place, she went away three or four days every year, which, according to the form of the contract, secured her fortune. Thus the wife became equally independent with the husband, and had equally the power of divorce. As the marriage was founded upon the consent of both parties, it was reasonable that the dissent of either party should dissolve it.

This form of marriage is pretty similar to the present, with this material difference however, that it did not legitimate the children nor preserve the honour of the women. The Roman form caused great disorders. When the parties separated, which was often the case, they

married others, and very often the women went through five or six husbands. This so corrupted their morals that about the end of the monarchy there was scarce a great man that was not cuckolded. The disorder came to such a height that, after the establishment of Christianity, the power of divorce was restrained unless for certain causes. Among the Scythian nations, which settled in the West of Europe, divorce was taken away altogether. In Burgundy, however, the power of the husband was very great. By a law there, if a man abused his wife he was liable to a fine, but if the wife misbehaved she was put to death.

As in general only flagrant crimes were taken notice of by the civil court, small ones went into the hands of the ecclesiastics, and that first gave occasion to their great power. When the civil court gave no redress for breach of contract, the ecclesiastics punished the offender for perjury, and when any difference happened betwixt man and wife, they made them suffer penance for it. Afterwards the power of divorce was taken away unless for adultery, and when the one was afraid of bodily harm from the other. Even this last was not a perfect divorce, for neither of the parties was allowed to marry again, but only a separation a mensa et toro.

The causes of a perfect divorce, after which they were allowed to marry again, were these three. First, if they were within the degrees of consanguinity, the marriage was made null unless they had a dispensation from the Pope. Secondly, precontract with any other woman. Thirdly, frigidity in a man, and incapacity in a woman. The ecclesiastics brought in other alterations besides these with regard to marriage. It is to be observed that the laws made by men are not altogether favourable to women. They considered the infidelity of the husband and wife were equally punished, he had no more power to divorce than she. Adultery, saevitia, and metus were considered as causes of separation, but not of divorce.

The canon law, when it took place, was dictated by ecclesiastics, who on most occasions copied the Roman law, as they were the only persons that understood Latin, and among whom the remains of literature were preserved. At first even the ecclesiastic law required no ceremonies at marriage. As the ceremonies of confarreation and coemption had gone into desuetude in the latter times of the Roman law, when the only thing that was required was the deductio domi; so by the ecclesiastic law for a long time, a contract of any kind made a marriage, whether a contract in praesenti or in futuro. Contract in praesenti is when I say, I take you for a

wife, or, I take you for a husband. Contract in futuro is when they say, I will do it. Either of these contracts might be proved either by evidence or by oath, if they declared themselves married persons, or that they were to be so. Pope Innocent III enacted that all marriages should be performed in facie ecclesiae, but though this was considered as the only decent marriage, yet others were often in use and in some cases were valid. If a person was married in futuro, and afterwards in facie ecclesiae, and the first wife made no opposition till after the banns were out, the first marriage was null. If it was contract in praesenti the second was null. This was the case in England till the late Marriage Act. If a contract in futuro can be proved, or if the man refuse his oath, the marriage is in some countries considered as valid. The contract in praesenti is everywhere valid, especially if they cohabit afterwards. All these institutions are derived from the canon law, which made the breach of them liable to church censures as ours does.

An act of parliament only makes a divorce in England, the infidelity of the wife will not do it. In Scotland it is much more easily done. Protestants never carried matters so far as the canon law, for the clergy married themselves. Besides, love, which was formerly a ridiculous passion, became more grave and respectable. As a proof of this, it is worth our observation that no ancient tragedy turned on love, whereas now it is more respectable and influences all the public entertainments. This can be accounted for only by the changes of mankind.

The species of marriage of which we have been treating took place only in Rome and in the Christian countries with a few others, for in many countries they took as many wives as they were able to maintain. This naturally leads us to consider the origin of polygamy. It is to [be] observed that though voluntary divorce be attended with inconveniences, yet it is not altogether contrary to the principle of justice that a man should put away his wife and take another for less reasons than adultery, because they make them quite unhappy together, though either of them might live very well elsewhere. The same is the case with polygamy. If a woman consents to be one of five, or twenty, or more wives, and the law allows it, there is no injury done her, she meets with the treatment which she might naturally expect. The ancient Jewish and oriental laws tolerated polygamy, but though it and voluntary divorce be not altogether contrary to justice, it must always be a very bad policy where they are established or allowed.

Polygamy excites the most violent jealousy, by which domestic peace is destroyed. The wives are all rivals and enemies, besides, the children are ill taken care of, and the wife complains that her children are not used as they ought; because she measures the affection of the father by her own, between which there is no proportion, as his is divided among forty or fifty children, and hers only among four or five. Where polygamy takes place there must both be a jealousy of love and a jealousy of interest, and consequently a want of tranquillity. It may be said that in the seraglios of the Eastern monarchs there is the greatest peace, but this is owing to the most imperious discipline: when rebels are subdued their humility is remarkable. In Africa we find the most horrid disorders, their discipline not being severe enough. It is the greatest misery to the women that they are entirely shut up and can enjoy no company but that of the eunuchs, which they detest.

The man too who has the seraglio is by no means happy, though apparently so. He too must be jealous, and on account of the inequality betwixt him and them he can have no entertainment at his own house, no opportunity of social improvements; you must never mention his wife to a Turk, she can never be seen by men, not even by her physician, as Tournefort tells us. This gravity and reserve of the husband must have a bad effect upon the manners of the country. As the men have no trust nor dependence upon each other, they cannot form into parties, and therefore the government must always be arbitrary, of which they have a model in their own houses, where there is little parental and less conjugal affection. Besides all this it tends to depopulate the species, the greater part of men can get no wives, and many of them are castrated to take care of the seraglio. It is indeed alleged that there are more women born than men. Montesquieu says that at Bantam in the East Indies there are ten women born for one man. Dutch authors say that on the coast of Guinea there are fifty to one. The account from Japan is better attested, where it is said there are eleven women to nine men. Where this is the case, if the fact be true, it would be an inconvenience if polygamy did not take place.

By strict examination we find that in Europe there is little difference. The general computation is that there are thirteen men to twelve women, or seventeen to sixteen, which, as men are more exposed to dangers than women, makes the number about equal. Now if there be no difference in Europe, we have reason to conclude that there is not any difference in any other place. The laws of nature are the same everywhere, the laws of gravity and attraction the same, and why not the laws of generation? In

some of the fore-mentioned places there may indeed be more women than men. In places where the seat of religion is, and where the court sits, and consequently the opulent live, there must be more women, because the rich only have seraglios, and they purchase the women from other places, so that there is a constant import of women from those countries in which polygamy does not take place.

Polygamy takes place under despotic governments. When a country is conquered by savages, they indulge themselves in all manner of brutality, and this among the rest, as there is no established law to the contrary. It never took place in ancient Carthage or Rome, though it takes place in Turkey. In every country freedom puts out polygamy; there is nothing that free men will less submit to than a monopoly of this kind, but despotism is always favourable to polygamy.

Montesquieu observes still further in favour of polygamy, that in some countries women are marriageable at eight or nine, and are old and withered at twenty. When they have their beauty they cannot have much understanding, and when it increases their beauty is gone, and consequently they cannot long be agreeable companions, and therefore a husband had need of more than one. It may be their custom indeed to deflower infants, but the fact is not well attested. Cleopatra was thirty-six when taken by Augustus, yet she was with child. Constantia bore a child at fifty-four. But though the fact were true, it is not reasonable that polygamy should take place, but only voluntary divorce. If women were only useful ten or twelve years, it might be reasonable to take another, but not a number at the same time.

Wherever polygamy takes place there can be no hereditary nobility. It is difficult to make the right of primogeniture take place where there are so many wives, several of whom bring forth nearly at the same time. Where there are so many children, they cannot all have the affection of the parent, and it is only by this means that any of them can establish themselves. Where the children are numerous affection diminishes. I may regard four or five children who are connected with my friend, but if there are a hundred in the same relation they are little regarded. Now hereditary nobility is the great security of the people’s liberty. Being in every corner of the country, whenever the subjects are oppressed they fly to him as their head. In Eastern countries there is no such thing. Every man is almost an upstart, and the royal family alone is regarded. The families of the Bashaws after their death mix with the vulgar. Wherever there is a hereditary nobility, the country cannot easily be conquered, or rather not at all. They may be beat once or twice, but they still recover

under their natural heads. Eastern countries, for this very reason that they want these, make feeble resistance against foreign invaders.

Polygamy is exceedingly hurtful to the populousness of a nation. An hundred women married to an hundred men will have more children than the same number married to two or three. It may indeed be said that in China, about the mouth of the Ganges, and in Egypt, they are populous notwithstanding polygamy. In those countries there are regulations regarding populousness, and some other circumstances contribute to it, such as the remarkable fertility of the soil.

Thus we see marriage is of two kinds, viz. polygamy or monogamy, of which the latter is of three kinds: first, when the husband can divorce the wife at pleasure; secondly, when the power of divorce is equally in their power; and thirdly, when it is in the power of the civil magistrate entirely. Where polygamy is allowed, the wife is entirely in the power of the husband, he may divorce her or dispose of her as he pleases.

The laws concerning monogamy differ according to the species of it. That kind where the contract or agreement is indissoluble but by the civil magistrate, is the most convenient. By this indeed nothing but what is very disagreeable to society is the occasion of divorce. But it is always better that the marriage tie should be too strait, than that it should be too loose. The unlimited power of divorce in the latter ages of the Republic was productive of the most disorderly consequences, the prevention of which sufficiently atones for any hardships it may occasion. When both parties have the power of divorce, they can have no mutual trust nor dependence upon each other, but their interests are quite separate.

We come now to consider what interest the husband has in the property of the wife, or the wife in that of the husband, according to the different species of marriage. Where polygamy takes place, the wife, being in absolute slavery, has no interest at all in the husband's property, and is only entitled to an aliment after his death. When the husband only has the power of divorce, the property of the wife becomes his as much as his own. When they have the power of divorce in the hands of both, whatever portion the wife brings is secured, and the husband can have no more ado with it but to manage it. When he dies, the wife has no more share of the husband's property than was agreed upon by the contract. In the species of monogamy when divorce is in the hand of the magistrate, the right of the husband extends not so far as formerly; but that of the wife extends further, as she is more independent of him than in any other species. If a wife has a land estate, the husband receives the rents, which are at his absolute disposal. If the wife die and leave a son, the husband

is the natural guardian of it, and is entitled to a courtesy of the life-rent of his wife's estate. In England the husband can dispose of all [his wife's] chattels real in his lifetime, but if he do not dispose of them in his lifetime, they go to the wife, not to the heir at his death. All [her] chattels personal he can dispose of as he pleases. Debts on bonds are the same with chattels real. If the husband demands payment of the debt, he can dispose of the money as he pleases, but if he do not claim it in his lifetime, it goes to his wife after his death. If the wife die first, all chattels real and debts on bond go to her relations, if the husband have not already disposed of them. If the husband die first, the wife has a third part of his land estate, whether there be children or not. This is considered as her dowry. In England she has a complete third of all, but in Scotland she has only a third of all bills, money, moveables, and bygone rents; bonds bearing interest go to the children. In Scotland the husband can sell his wife's land with her own consent, but she must first be examined before a court, and declare that it was with her own consent, and then her executors cannot claim it. Both in Scotland and in England, no bond granted by the wife is binding upon the husband unless it be granted for the necessaries of life. In this respect she is considered as a servant, for if a servant buys provision in his name, he is obliged to pay [for] them. In Scotland the husband may have a writ of inhibition to prevent the wife from contracting debts in his name. In England any verbal notice that he will not be accountable for them is sufficient. If they be separated he is not even obliged to pay [for] what she purchases for her aliment.

We come now to consider what persons are capable of contracting marriage. Betwixt ascendants and descendants marriage is prohibited in infinitum. Nothing can be more shocking to nature than for a mother to marry her son. By this the mother becomes inferior to her son, and on account of the inequality of their ages the ends of marriage are seldom accomplished. Therefore it is never tolerated unless where superstition takes place. In like manner a marriage between a father and a daughter is incestuous. It is, however, to be observed that this is not so contrary to nature as the former, because the father still is superior when he is husband, and accordingly we find that many barbarous nations tolerated this. But still it is unnatural that the father, the guardian and instructor of the daughter, should turn her lover and marry her. Besides, a mother can never look agreeably on a daughter who will probably supply her place. Nothing can be more destructive of domestic happiness. For the same reasons, the uncle and niece, or the aunt and nephew, never marry. At

Rome and Carthage indeed, they used sometimes to give a dispensation to the uncle and niece, but never to the aunt and nephew.

The marriage of collaterals, such as brother and sister, seems to have been prohibited chiefly from political views, because they are bred up together, and would be in danger of mutual corruption, unless properly restrained. The same reason lay against a marriage between cousins in those ages when they were brought up in the same house. At Athens a man might marry his sister consanguinea but not his sister uteral. Many eminent men married in this manner, thus Cimon married his father's daughter Elpinice. By the law of England the wife of the deceased grand-uncle can marry her husband's grand-nephew, it being above four degrees.

Affinity by the Christian law is considered as the same with consanguinity. The wife's sister is considered as the husband's sister, and the wife's aunt as the husband's aunt. It is to be observed that the rules of affinity are rather rules of police than of nature, for it is not contrary to nature that a man should marry his wife's sister. In many countries of the East Indies this kind of marriage takes place, because they think that the wife's sister will probably make the best mother-in-law to her sister's children. But it may be answered to this that it entirely hinders all intercourse between the sister and her brother-in-law's family, and that it might be expected that she would answer this purpose by living in his house unmarried with no children of her own. The canon and civil law reckoned affinity differently. The civil law counted brothers and sisters as one degree removed from the common stock, and cousins german two. The canon law counted how far the persons were asunder. Brothers were two degrees, the father being one, and either of the brothers another. In the same manner cousins german were four degrees. The canon counted both sides from the stock, and the civil law only one. When the one says the second degree was prohibited from marriage, and the other the fourth, they both mean cousins german. The Pope often dispensed with these laws, and by that means extended his authority and promoted his interest.

Having now considered all the different species of marriage, we come to consider the effects of the want of it. The effect of marriage is to legitimate the children. We must therefore consider the difference of legitimate and illegitimate. Legitimation gives the children inheritable blood, so that they can succeed to their father and his relations. An illegitimate child has no inheritable blood, and therefore cannot succeed to his father intestato, because it is unknown who is his father, nor to his

mother, because no child succeeds that is not lawfully begotten. As a bastard can succeed to nobody, so nobody can succeed to him, as he is not related to any human creature. If he die intestate without children, his wife has one half of his moveables and one third of his land estate, and the rest goes to the king; but if he has children, the wife has a third of all. The king is still considered as ultimus heres. In Scotland there is a further inconvenience attending it. As the king is the heir of bastards, a bastard is incapable of making a testament, because it would cut the king out of his right. The king can, however, grant him letters of legitimation which make him capable of testating, because, as the right of succession belongs to the king, he may dispose of it as he pleases. However, this, or anything less than an act of parliament, cannot give him inheritable blood, but an act of the whole legislature can do anything.

The canon and civil law restore to blood a person born out of wedlock in the following ways: —

First, per subsequens matrimonium, or marrying the woman that had the children. As concubines were numerous, it was enacted that whoever married his concubine legitimated her children. This Justinian afterwards made perpetual.

Secondly, per oblationem curiae. When the children were willing to execute certain parish offices, as deacons, &c., though this entitled them only to succeed to the father, and not to his relations.

Thirdly, per adrogationem. As for example, one Roman could adopt the son of another, and the son accept of him as a father. They had it in their power to adrogate any free man. Bastards were considered as free men, and if they were willing to accept might be adrogated as such.

Fourthly, per [re]scriptum principis, which was much the same with letters of legitimation.

Fifthly, per testamentum, by which they probably succeeded only to their father’s estate.

The canon law introduced the subsequens matrimonium into all countries but England. The English clergy were then unpopular by joining with the king against the barons, and therefore in England the subsequens matrimonium never could legitimate. That subsequens matrimonium might legitimate, the canon law made some restrictions which did not take place at Rome. Bastards of adulterous persons could not succeed, those, to wit, of a woman who has a husband alive, or of a concubine to a man whose wife is alive, though they should marry

afterwards. Incestuous children also could not succeed, unless legitimated by a dispensation from the Pope.

Thus we have seen the disabilities and incapacities of illegitimate children, which can only have an effect where monogamy prevails; and indeed, these alone hinder polygamy from gaining ground in any country, because, if bastards were allowed to succeed, men would hardly subject themselves to the inconveniences of lawful marriage. To have a wife entirely in their power, and to take others when they please, would be more convenient.

§ 2. Parent and Child.

We come now to consider the history of parentage, being the second relation in which we were to consider man as a member of a family. The authority of the father over his children, both with respect to liberty and property, was at first absolute. He was at liberty to choose whether he would bring up his children or not, and it was accounted no injustice to refuse to do it. The law hinders the doing injuries to others, but there can be no fixed laws for acts of benevolence. All that the law prohibited was immediately putting them to death; but he might expose them if he pleased. Even with us a father is not obliged to ransom a son who is taken captive, but may do it or not as he pleases. In the same manner anciently a father might choose whether he would ransom his son from starving, from wild beasts, and the like. Though some regulations were made in Rome concerning this, they were never well kept, and the practice was not abolished till the establishment of Christianity. In China, at present, where polygamy takes place, they are often obliged to expose them and generally drown them. As the father had it entirely in his power to bring up his son or not, he had an absolute jurisdiction over him if he did bring him up. At Rome the father had the ius vitae et necis et vendendi. Besides, whatever the son acquired belonged to the father, and if he married, his children were considered as members of the grandfather's family. This power of the father over his son was very soon lessened. The son was connected with the mother's relations, and the uncle, whom on some occasions he was to succeed, would naturally look after the person who was to be his heir. By a law of Numa Pompilius, if a son was married, it was no longer in the father's power to sell him. The twelve tables indeed mention this privilege of the father, but it is probable it was only those who married without their father's consent. In like manner the ius vitae et necis went out. The father only put in execution the laws of his country for capital crimes. He could take the power out of the hands of the magistrate, and condemn his son to punishment himself, but he could not free his son if he was accused by the laws of his country. This shows that the patria potestas was not altogether absolute. This power of the father weakened by degrees, and at last went out altogether. The father only pronounced the sentence as it was dictated to him by the civil magistrate, as he himself might have gone wrong in some forms, and by that means rendered the whole null.

It is much the same with the gentlemen in this country, who have it in their power to seize the goods of their tenants when in debt, without any form of law. As they are ignorant how it ought to be done, they are obliged as well as others to apply for authority to the civil court, though they are vested with the power of doing it themselves.

The power of the father with respect to the property of the son soon went out likewise. We find that very early, by a law of Marcianus, the fathers were obliged to provide proper wives for their sons, and to bestow proper portions upon [them]; and if they refused, the government was to see it done. This shows that the property after marriage must have been their own. The law seems to have been made because the wife brought a fortune along with her, and therefore it was but reasonable the husband should also have some property independent of his father. It must therefore only have been the property of unmarried children over which the parent had any power, and this is not unreasonable. The authority of the father was not arbitrary at Rome, for we often find men accused there for not taking proper care of their children, which could hardly have been the case if they could have put them to death.

Julius Caesar, and after him Augustus, were the first that gave to sons property independent of their fathers. At first they kept as their own whatever they took in war, or the peculium castrense, afterwards whatever they acquired by the liberal and mechanic arts. This was extended by Adrian and afterwards by Justinian to everything unless what they got from their fathers. All donations and legacies were entirely at their own disposal. We also find the power of the father in disinheriting them limited. There were only certain cases in which it was in his power. After the fall of the Roman Empire the power of the father over the son, as well as over the wife, was softened. The father came to have over the son, while he continued in the family with him, an authority much the same with that a father has among us, that, to wit, of taking care of his morals. But when out of the family he was not so immediately concerned about him. The father has this particular privilege with respect to his son, that he can become tutor to him without surety, and is not accountable, as every other tutor is, for negligence and omission. This is the natural authority the father has over the son. The father is obliged to bring up his children, and the children, in case of old age or infirmity, to maintain the father.

§ 3. Master and Servant.

We now come to consider the history of law with regard to masters and servants, which was the third relation in which we proposed to consider family. We have found that the same principle which gave the husband authority over the wife, also gave the father authority over the son. As the power of the husband was softened by means of his wife's friends, with whom she was connected, and to whom she could complain, so that of the father was softened by the same means. But it was not so with the servants; they had nobody to whom they could complain, they had no connexion with any person, and having none to take their part they necessarily fell into a state of slavery. Accordingly we find that the master had the power of life and death over them, quite different from the ius vitae et necis over the wife and children, which was restricted to criminal cases: the power over the servants was perfectly arbitrary. Besides, as the master had the disposal of his liberty, a slave could have no property. Whatever he has or can acquire belongs to his master. No contract of the slave could bind the master, however, unless the laws found a tacit consent of the master implied. A slave can only acquire for his master. If I promised a slave £10, I am obliged to pay it to the master. But besides these disadvantages, there are many others, to which the ancient Greek and Roman slaves as well as our negroes were liable, though less attended to.

First. They were hindered from marriage. They may cohabit with a woman, but cannot marry, because the union between two slaves subsists no longer than the master pleases. If the female slave does not breed, he may give her to another or sell her. Among our slaves in the West Indies there is no such thing as a lasting union, the female slaves are all prostitutes, and suffer no degradation by it.

Second. But slavery is attended with still greater evils than these; for a slave who is a polytheist is properly under the protection of no religion. He has no God any more than liberty and property. The polytheistic religion consists of a great number of local deities. Every place has its own divinity. The slaves belong not to the country, and therefore its gods are no way concerned about them. Besides, a heathen can never approach a deity empty handed. The slaves had nothing to offer, and therefore could expect no favour from them. Those slaves who were employed about the temples were the only ones who could have any title to the

protection of the gods. The master prayed for them, but it was in the same manner that he prayed for his cattle. Every person is superstitious in proportion to the precariousness of his life, liberty, or property, and to their ignorance. Gamesters and savages are remarkably so. It is then a very great hardship that a slave, who is addicted to superstition from both these causes, should be deprived of that which is so well fitted to soothe the natural feelings of the human breast. The religion therefore which discovered one God who governed all things, would naturally be very acceptable to slaves. Accordingly we find that the Jewish religion, which, though well fitted for defending itself, is, of all others, the worst adapted to the making of converts, because they could never be of the stock of Abraham, from whom the Messiah was to come, could not be on a level with the Jews, but only proselytes of the gate, and were obliged to abstain from many kinds of food, with all these disadvantages made great progress among the Roman slaves. When Christianity was introduced, which was attended with none of these disadvantages, it made the most rapid progress among the slaves.

We are apt to imagine that slavery is quite extirpated, because we know nothing of it in this part of the world; but even at present it is almost universal. A small part of the West of Europe is the only portion of the globe that is free from it, and is nothing in comparison with the vast continents where it still prevails. We shall endeavour to show how it was abolished in this quarter, and for what reasons it has continued in other parts, and probably will continue.

It is to be observed that slavery takes place in all societies at their beginning, and proceeds from that tyrannic disposition which may almost be said to be natural to mankind. Whatever form of government was established, it was a part of its constitution that slavery should be continued. In a free government the members would never make a law so hurtful to their interest, as they might think the abolishing of slavery would be. In [a] monarchy there is a better chance for its being abolished, because one single person is lawgiver, and the law will not extend to him, nor diminish his power, though it may diminish that of his vassals. In a despotic government slaves may be better treated than in a free government, where every law is made by their masters, who will never pass anything prejudicial to themselves. A monarch is more ready to be influenced to do something humanely for them. When Augustus was visiting Vedius Pollio, one of the slaves, who had accidentally broken a platter, threw himself down before Augustus imploring his protection, that he might not be cut in pieces and thrown into the fish

pond. Augustus was so shocked with this, that he immediately manumitted all Pollio's slaves, though Pollio, no doubt, relished not the behaviour of his guest. In the reigns of Adrian and Antoninus, when monarchy had taken place, there were several laws made in favour of slaves, but never one in the times of the Republic. Slavery, then, may be gradually softened under a monarch, but not entirely abolished, because no one person whatever can have so much authority as to take away at once the most considerable part of the nation's property, because this would occasion a general insurrection.

In an opulent country the slaves are always ill-treated, because the number of slaves exceeds the number of free men, and it requires the most rigid discipline to keep them in order. If a free man was killed in a house all the slaves were put to death. Several authors tell us that in the night-time at Rome, nothing was to be heard but the cries of slaves whom their masters were punishing. Ovid tells us that the slave who kept the gate was chained to it, and the slaves who manured the ground were chained together lest they should run away; and what was more cruel, when an old slave was incapable for work he was turned out to die on an island, near the city, kept for that purpose. Slavery is more tolerable in a barbarous than in a civilized society. In an uncultivated country the poverty of the people makes the number of the slaves anyone can keep quite inconsiderable, and therefore their discipline will not be so rigid as when they are numerous. Besides, in a barbarous country, the master labours himself as well as the slave, and therefore they are more nearly on a level. In the early periods of Rome the slave worked with his master and ate with him, and the only punishment in case of misbehaviour was the carrying a cross stick through the town or village. In Jamaica and Barbadoes, where slaves are numerous and objects of jealousy, punishments even for slight offences are very shocking; but in North America they are treated with the greatest mildness and humanity.

Thus we have shown that slavery is more severe in proportion to the culture of society. Freedom and opulence contribute to the misery of the slaves. The perfection of freedom is their greatest bondage; and, as they are the most numerous part of mankind, no human person will wish for liberty in a country where this institution is established.

It is almost needless to prove that slavery is a bad institution even for free men. A free man who works for day's wages will work far more in proportion than a slave in proportion to the expense that is necessary for maintaining and bringing him up. In ancient Italy an estate managed by slaves, in the most fertile country, yielded to the master only one-sixth of

the produce, whereas a landlord even in our barren country receives a third, and the tenants live much better. Slaves cultivate only for themselves; the surplus goes to the master, and therefore they are careless about cultivating the ground to the best advantage. A free man keeps as his own whatever is above his rent, and therefore has a motive to industry. Our colonies would be much better cultivated by free men. That slavery is a disadvantage appears from the state of colliers and salters in our own country. They have indeed privileges which slaves have not. Their property after maintenance is their own, they cannot be sold but along with the work, they enjoy marriage and religion, but they have not their liberty altogether, and it would certainly be an advantage to the master that they were free. The common wages of a day labourer is between six and eight pence, that of a collier is half-a-crown. If they were free their prices would fall. At Newcastle the wages exceed not tenpence or a shilling, yet colliers often leave our coal-works, where they have half-a-crown a day, and run there, though they have less wages, where they have liberty.

There is still one inconvenience more that attends slavery, that it diminishes the number of free men even to a degree beyond imagination, for every slave takes up the room of a free man. The inequality of fortune seemed at first a misfortune, and laws were made against it. £10 per annum is reckoned the necessary expense of one man. A landed gentleman who has £10,000 per annum spends what would maintain a thousand men. At first sight we are apt to conceive him a monster who eats up the food of so many, but if we attend to it he is really useful, and he eats or wears no more than the rest. £10 serves him too, and his £10,000 maintains a thousand people who are employed in refining his £10 by an infinity of ways so as to make it worth the whole. This gives room for all kinds of manufactures. When slaves are employed to sift, as it were, this £10 out of the £10,000, one must be a tailor, another a weaver, a third a smith, and thus each takes up a free man’s place.

We come now to account for the abolition of slavery in this part of the world. The slaves in this and the neighbouring countries were those who cultivated the ground, and were what was called adscripti glebae, and could only be sold along with the land. As they had nothing but their maintenance for their labour, the ground was but badly cultivated. To remedy this disadvantage, tenants by steelbow were introduced. They had no stock themselves, and therefore the landlord gave them cattle and the implements for ploughing, which they resigned at the end of the lease. At harvest the crop was equally divided between the landlord and

tenant. This was the first species of free tenants, who were plainly emancipated villains. After this custom had continued for a long time the tenants picked up so much as enabled them to make a bargain with the landlord to give him a certain sum for a lease of so many years; and whatever the ground should produce they would take their venture. This is plainly an advantage to the landlord; the ground every year is better cultivated, he is at no expense, and the half of the product was better to the tenants than any sum they would give. By the feudal law the lord had an absolute sway over his vassals. In peace he was the administrator of justice, and they were obliged to follow him in war. When government became a little better established, the sovereign did all he could to lessen this influence, which on some occasions was dangerous to himself, and hindered people from applying to him for justice. As therefore the ancient villains were tenants at will, were obliged to perform certain duties to their master, and were entirely at his disposal, a law was made taking away all their burdens but that of being tenants at will, and at last their privilege was extended and they became copyholders.

Another cause of the abolition of slavery was the influence of the clergy, but by no means the spirit of Christianity, for our planters are all Christians. Whatever diminished the power of the nobles over their inferiors increased the power of the ecclesiastics. As the clergy are generally more in favour with the common people than the nobility, they would do all they could to have their privileges extended, especially as they might have expectations of reaping benefit by it. Accordingly we find that Pope Innocent III encouraged all landlords to emancipate their slaves. Thus the influence of the clergy, combining with that of the king, hastened the abolition of slavery in the West of Europe. Agreeable to this we find that, in countries where neither the king nor the church were very powerful, slavery still prevails. In Bohemia, Hungary, and those countries where the sovereign is elective, and consequently never could have great authority, and besides, where the church never had any great influence, servitude still remains, because the court is by no means powerful enough to emancipate the slaves of the nobility.

To show by what means slaves are acquired, to consider the state of domestic servants in our own country, together with mentioning a certain particular state of families, will be all that is to be said on this head respecting man as a member of a family.

Slaves may be acquired five different ways. First, captives in war, in almost every country, are slaves. If the conqueror does not kill them, he has a right to make them slaves. Secondly, as captives become slaves,

having nobody to deliver them, so their children become slaves also. Thirdly, persons guilty of certain crimes were made slaves, sometimes to the person injured, sometimes to the public. Fourthly, debtors in the ancient state of the Roman Republic were made slaves. If they could not pay their debt it was thought reasonable they should work for it. This still takes place in all countries where slavery is established. Fifthly, there is a sort of voluntary slavery when an indigent citizen sells himself to be the slave of another person. When a person sells himself to another for any sum, by the laws of slavery this very sum becomes the property of the person who bought him. But when a person was in debt and obliged to become a slave for it, he would not perhaps choose to be his creditor's slave for fear of ill-usage, and would therefore sell himself to another person, on condition that he would pay his debt. The citizens of Rome were often in debt, and by that means became entirely dependent upon their superiors. Many of them had no means of subsistence but what they received from candidates for their votes, and, as this was by no means sufficient for that purpose, they often borrowed from them to whom they gave their votes, who were ready enough to lend that they might secure them entirely to their interest. By this means they could not give their vote to any other person unless he paid what they owed to their creditors, which few would be willing to do, as for the most part they owed more than the value of their votes.

In the middle age of the Republic these two last methods of acquiring slaves were prohibited by express laws, the first by what was called cessio bonorum, and the latter by a law prohibiting any free man to sell himself.

The slavery in the West Indies took place contrary to law. When that country was conquered by Spain, Isabella and Ferdinand were at the greatest pains to prevent the Indians from falling into a state of servitude, their intention being to make settlements, to trade with them, and to instruct them. But Columbus and Cortez were far from the law, and obeyed not their orders, but reduced them to slavery, which in a manner instituted itself among them.

We come now to consider the state of servants. A negro in this country is a [free] man. If you have a negro servant stolen from you, you can have no action for the price, but only for damages sustained by the loss of your servant. In like manner if a negro is killed, the person who does it is guilty of murder; but though a negro servant is entitled to the privileges of a free man while here, you can oblige him to return to America and keep him as formerly. It is not from Christianity, but from

the laws of this country that he enjoys freedom, because there is no such thing as slavery among us.

The greatest dependents among us are menial servants (inter moenia) who are bound from one term to another. They have almost the same privileges with their master, liberty, wages, &c. The master has a right to correct his servant moderately, and if he should die under his correction it is not murder, unless it was done with an offensive weapon, or with forethought and without provocation. A servant can acquire property for his master either when he acts by his express authority, or when a tacit consent is implied. If a servant buys or sells goods in his master's name, his master has room for an action in case of non-payment or of non-delivery. As there is a peculiar connexion between master and servant, they can be vindicated in many cases where any other person would be found guilty. If either master or servant kill any other person in defence of each other, it is justifiable homicide. If a master dies before the term, the executors are obliged to pay up the whole of the servant's wages and to maintain him besides.

Apprentices are much in the same way with servants, only with this difference, that the master receives a fee with the apprentice, and is obliged to teach him a trade; and if he refuse to do it he may be pursued for damages and loss of time.

§ 4. Guardian and Ward.

We come now to consider the particular state of families. When a father dies leaving his children young, it is necessary that they should be taken care of. Even in the times of exposition, when an infant was some time kept, it was thought cruel to put him to death: the child was destitute, there were then no hospitals or places of charity: it must therefore be put into the custody of some person. The nearest relation by the father's side was he whom the law fixed upon. In an early age the maintenance of the child was all that was to be taken care of, for there were no estates to manage, and the mother went back to her father's family. This guardianship terminated when the child was about thirteen or fourteen years of age, at which time it was capable in that age to shift for itself. But when men came to be possessed of estates, though he might be supposed capable of shifting for himself about that age, yet he could not be capable of managing an estate. Now it became necessary to retain him in pupillarity more than fourteen years. By praetorian law, at that age he was allowed to choose his guardians or curators. A curator can do nothing without the consent of the pupil; a guardian can act without his consent, but is accountable to his pupil for whatever he does during his minority. At first lunatics and idiots were almost the only persons who had guardians; and, on account of its being disgraceful to have one, it was generally declined. Afterwards the law made invalid all acts of the pupil, till he was twenty-one, without the consent of his curators. As the nearest relation by the father's side is often next heir, it was reckoned improper to trust the person of the son with him. The English law carried this so far that if an estate was left to the son in [his] father's lifetime he was not trusted with him. By our law the care of an estate is entrusted to the next heir, as he will probably take best care of it; and the heir to a more remote relation, who will take best care of him, as he cannot be benefited by his death.

§ 5. Domestic Offences and their Punishments.

We will now mention some offences in families with their peculiar punishments. Infidelity of the wife to the husband is punished with the greatest ignominy. In the husband, it never was punished with death, nor in the woman unless where the greatest jealousy prevails. It would be thought ridiculous in our country to bring a woman to the scaffold for adultery. Forcible marriages and rapes are generally punished with death. Bigamy, as it dishonours the former wife, is punished capitally. As there is the closest connexion betwixt persons in a family, if the wife kills the husband, it is considered as a sort of petty treason, and the punishment by the English law is burning alive. The same is the punishment if a servant kills his master or makes an attempt upon him. Thus we have finished all that is to be said with regard to man, considered as a member of a family.

DIVISION III. PRIVATE LAW

§ 1. First way of acquiring Property: Occupation.

We formerly explained the nature of rights, and divided them into natural and acquired. The former need no explanation; the latter are divided into real and personal. Real rights are property, servitude, pledge, and exclusive privilege. We are first to treat of property.

Property is acquired five ways. First, by occupation, or the taking possession of what formerly belonged to nobody. Second, by accession, when a man has a right to one thing in consequence of another, as of a horse's shoes along with the horse. Third, by prescription, which is a right to a thing belonging to another arising from long and uninterrupted possession. Fourth, by succession to our ancestors or any other person, whether by a will or without one. Fifth, by voluntary transference, when one man delivers over his right to another.

We shall first treat of occupation, the laws of which vary according to the periods of human society. The four stages of society are hunting, pasturage, farming, and commerce. If a number of persons were shipwrecked on a desert island their first sustenance would be from the fruits which the soil naturally produced, and the wild beasts which they could kill. As these could not at all times be sufficient, they came at last to tame some of the wild beasts that they might always have them at hand. In process of time even these would not be sufficient; and as they saw the earth naturally produce considerable quantities of vegetables of its own accord, they would think of cultivating it so that it might produce more of them. Hence agriculture, which requires a good deal of refinement before it could become the prevailing employment of a country. There is only one exception to this order, to wit, some North American nations cultivate a little piece of ground, though they have no notion of keeping flocks. The age of commerce naturally succeeds that of agriculture. As men could now confine themselves to one species of labour, they would naturally exchange the surplus of their own commodity for that of another of which they stood in need. According to these stages occupation must vary. Occupation seems to be well founded when the spectator can go along with my possession of the object, and approve me when I defend my possession by force. If I have gathered some wild fruit, it will appear reasonable to the spectator that I should dispose of it as I please.

The first thing that requires notice in occupation among hunters is what constitutes it, and when it begins, whether it be on the discovery of the wild beast or after it is actually in possession. Lawyers have varied on this head, some give a part to the person who has formerly wounded a wild beast, though [he] have given up the chase, and others do not. All agree that it is a breach of property to break in on the chase of a wild beast which another has started, though some are of opinion that if another should wound the beast in its flight he is entitled to a share, as he rendered the taking of it more easy upon the whole. Among savages property begins and ends with possession, and they seem scarce to have any idea of anything as their own which is not about their own bodies.

Among shepherds the idea of property is further extended. Not only what they carry about with them, but also what they have deposited in their hovels, is their own. They consider their cattle as their own while they have a habit of returning to them. When the generality of beasts are occupied, they consider them as their own even after they have lost the habit of returning home, and they may be claimed for a certain time after they have strayed. But property receives its greatest extension from agriculture. When it first became necessary to cultivate the earth, no person had any property in it, and the little plot which was dressed near their hovels would be common to the whole village, and the fruits would be equally divided among the individuals. There are the remains of a common land property in our own country at this day. In many places there is a piece of ground belonging equally to several persons, and after harvest, cattle are, in many places, allowed to feed where they please. Private property in land never begins till a division be made from common agreement, which is generally when cities begin to be built, as every one would choose that his house, which is a permanent object, should be entirely his own. Moveable property may be occupied in the very first beginnings of society, but lands cannot be occupied without an actual division. An Arab or a Tartar will drive his flocks over an immense country without supposing a single grain of sand in it his own. By the laws of many countries there are some things, however, that cannot be occupied by any private person. Treasure and derelict goods, by the laws of Britain, belong to the king. This arises from that natural influence of superiors which draws everything to itself that it can without a violation of the most manifest rules of justice. In like manner seas and rivers cannot be occupied by any private person: unless [it is] particularly specified in your charter, you cannot take large fishes in a river running through your own estate. A sea surrounded by several

nations cannot be occupied by any one, but all must have a part of the jurisdiction, but any nation may hinder another from fishing in its bays, or approaching its coasts with vessels of war.

§ 2. Second way of acquiring Property: Accession.

The right of accession is not so much founded in its utility as in the impropriety of not joining it to that object on which it has a dependence. The milk of a cow I have purchased may not be of great value, but it is very improper that another person should have a right to bring up his calf upon it. The most important accessions are in land property. Land property is founded on division or an assignation by the society to a particular person of a right to sow and plant a certain piece of ground. In consequence of this right he must also have a right to whatever it produces, trees, fruit, minerals, &c. Alluvions made by any river naturally belong to the proprietor of the adjacent territory; but when the additions are very large, as is often the case in low countries, the government claims them, and the proprietor of the adjacent estate must purchase it before he possess it.

The principal dispute concerning accession is, when does the principal belong to me, and the accession to another, or, if they be mixed, to whom does the whole belong? It is a maxim in law that no person be a gainer by another's loss. If a man build a house by mistake upon my ground, though the materials be his, it is but reasonable that I should have the house, or be indemnified for my loss. In general the accession follows the principal, though in some cases, as where the workmanship is of more value than the materials, substantia cedet formae. The lawyers were, however, unwilling directly to contradict their general and established maxim, and therefore evaded it by giving the principal to the proprietor of the accession when it became a new species, that is, when it received a new form and a new name. This, however, was liable to exceptions. A picture and the board on which it was painted were in Latin of the same species; each was a tabula, and therefore the picture by this amendment still belonged to the proprietor of an insignificant board. The most general rule with regard to accessions is this, when the thing can be reduced to its primitive form without lessening its value or without any great loss to the proprietor of the accession, the proprietor of the principal may justly claim it, but when this cannot be done, the law justly favours the proprietor of the accession, and obliges him only to content the original proprietor for his property.

§ 3. Third way of acquiring Property: Prescription.

Prescription is founded on the supposed attachment of the possessor to what he has long been possessed of, and the supposed detachment of affection in the old possessor to what has been long out of his possession. There are four things requisite to form a right by prescription. First, bona fides, for if a person be sensible that his right to a thing is bad, it is no injury to deprive him of it, and the indifferent spectator can easily go along with the depriving him of the possession. Second, iustus titulus, by which is not meant a title just in all respects, for this is of itself sufficient without anything else, but a iustus titulus signifies some reasonable foundation that the person has to think a thing his own, such as [a] charter of some kind. If he claims a right without any such title, no impartial spectator can enter into his sentiments. Third, uninterrupted possession is also necessary to prescription, for if the property have often been claimed of him, the former possessor has not derelinquished his right. Fourth, the time is only to be reckoned when there was a person to claim the property; and therefore the longest uninterrupted possession when the proprietor was a minor, a lunatic, or in banishment, can give no right.

A iustus titulus is a proof of bona fides, and bona fides is requisite to a iustus titulus. By the Roman law, bona fides was only required at the first taking possession, and, though afterwards you found a fault in your title, prescription took place. Nature has fixed no period for prescription, and accordingly it varies according to the stability of property in a country. At Rome, [im]moveables once prescribed in two years, but afterwards more was required. In our country a feudal lord, who continually had claims upon his neighbour, could scarce be brought to admit any law of this nature. He was willing to revive a claim though as old as the days of Noah, and when at last they fixed on a period, they made it as long as possible, to wit, forty years. Among the Romans, it is to [be] observed, that if anyone’s possession was interrupted during the time required for prescription, by an enemy coming into the country, he had to begin anew again. By the English law nothing can interrupt prescription but a claim of the old possessor. Kings seldom ever allow their claims to prescribe, at least they account no length of uninterrupted

possession sufficient to do it. However, immemorial possession will ever carry this along with it.

§ 4. Fourth way of acquiring Property: Succession.

Succession is either legal or testamentary. By legal succession is meant that the law should distribute the goods of the deceased to those [to] whom it is to be presumed the person himself would have chosen that they should be given, according to some lawyers. But this supposes that testamentary succession, or a distribution of the goods according to the will of the deceased, was previous to legal succession, which is contrary to experience. In a rude period a man had scarce the full property of his goods during his lifetime, and therefore it cannot be supposed that then he should have had a power to dispose of them after his death. In all nations the relations of the dead person succeeded long before there was any such thing as a testament. The twelve tables at Rome, and the laws of Solon at Athens, seem first to have introduced testamentary succession; but long before this there was legal succession in both countries. The claim of the heir of blood is always thought the preferable one, but this claim is never founded on the presumed will of the deceased. If we consider succession in the earliest times, we shall find that it is more founded on the connexion of goods than of persons. As the father and sons lived together, and were joint acquirers of any property they had, when the father died the children had a joint right to the goods, not so much on account of their relation to the father as on account of the labour they had bestowed on acquiring them. The mother and the children would therefore continue in possession. Among the Romans the wife was considered as a daughter, and had her share accordingly. If any of the children were settled out of the family or were emancipated, they had no share in the succession, because they ceased to co-operate with the rest in acquiring the goods. It may be observed that when families in this manner lived together it was necessary to prohibit marriages of cousins. When men’s sons and grandsons lived in the same house, if all succeeded equally it was called successio secundum capita, but if the grandson succeeded only to his father’s part it was secundum stirpes. If a man had three sons who were all dead, but the oldest had left behind him one son, the second two, and [the] third three, by the former rule, on the death of their grandfather, each would have a sixth; but by the latter, the son of the oldest would have a third alone, the two sons of the second a third between them, and the three sons of the third a third among them.

The grandsons were as it were the representatives of their father. The right of representation is the same with the successio secundum stirpes. Among the Romans the right of representation was introduced in favour of the strong, and in prejudice of the weak, but in Britain [it] is the contrary.

Among the Romans a son could not succeed to the mother when she died, because, as she was considered as a daughter of the family, everything she had belonged to the husband; if the husband died first, the wife shared with her children, and then went home to her father's house, and succeeded anew to her father. But in times of more refinement under the emperors, the mother could succeed to the son, and the son to the mother. Anciently, when a son died, no person succeeded to him, because he and everything he had belonged to his father. Caesar first made a law that a son might possess as his own whatever he got in war, or acquired by the liberal arts.

Three classes of men may succeed, ascendants, descendants, and collaterals, as those in an upper line may succeed to those in a lower, those in a lower to those in an upper line, or those of the same line to one another. Collateral succession at first extended only to the nearest in blood, and if he refused it the goods belonged to the public, but afterwards the praetor extended it to the seventh in blood. When a brother died and another succeeded, it was in consequence of their connexion with the father, who is the common stock, and therefore succession of ascendants must have been prior to that of collaterals. But the right of descendants is stronger than either of these, because the son's claim on the father is evidently more strong than that of the father on the son. The principles of succession then in moveables are founded on the community of goods which took place anciently in families.

The different state of families in our country makes a considerable difference betwixt our law and that of the Romans. The wife is among us a much more considerable person than a daughter, and accordingly succeeds to more. When the husband dies, the goods are supposed to be divided into three equal parts, one of which is supposed to belong to the deceased husband, one to the wife and one to the children: there is however this difference, that the husband can dispose of his part by testament, which the wife cannot. A forisfamiliated son is not in the same condition with an emancipated son among the Romans. He can succeed with his brothers; only if he has got a portion he must bring it into the common stock at his father's death. Grandchildren do not succeed in place of their deceased father, as among the Romans. The

English law, however, admits of representation, and it prefers ascendants, if males, to collaterals.

We come now to treat of indivisible inheritance, which was introduced by the feudal law. When the nations that conquered the Roman Empire settled in the West of Europe, an inequality of fortune necessarily ensued. As the great had no way of spending their fortunes but by hospitality, they necessarily acquired prodigious influence over their vassals. They gave out their lands merely as a maintenance to their dependents; and it is observable that the Saxon word farm signifies victuals.

The chieftains, from their influence, were the sole administrators of justice in their own territories. It was the interest of government to authorize this jurisdiction, as it was the only method of preserving peace, and as the superior was the leader both in peace and war. So lately as in the year 1745 this power remained in the Highlands of Scotland, and some gentlemen could bring several hundreds of men into the field. As these lords had no other way to dispose of their lands, they gave some of them as munera, which were revocable at their pleasure, and others they gave as beneficia, which continued during life and returned to the lord after their decease.

The benefices of the clergy seem to have been on this foundation and have retained the name. By this means the lords secured the fidelity of their vassals. As benefices were for life, the property of them naturally came to be extended to the son of the deceased tenant, and by degrees the tenures became hereditary and were called feudal; thus the tenant became more independent. When any chieftain died and left his son a minor, the king appointed a leader to the vassals during the minority, and appropriated the profits and emoluments arising from the lands to his own use. When a female succeeded, the lord had the power of disposing of her in marriage, as it was reasonable that he should name the husband who was to be his own vassal. As the lord was guardian of the heir male, it was also thought unreasonable that he should marry without his consent. As the feudal lord possessed the lands during a minority, before the minor could recover his estate, he was obliged to pay what is called a relief. This was introduced by the court of the king or lord, before which the minor was obliged to swear fealty before he could recover his estate. He was also obliged to promise homage to his superior before he could enter on possession. Thus they held their lands of the superior for military service, homage, fealty, wardship, marriage, relief, &c. Allodial estates were free from all such services; but as it was for security of

property to hold of some great man who could protect the proprietor from violence, the generality of estates became feudal. For the same reason men possessed of great estates paid feu and swore fealty to the sovereign.

It appears from this that it must have been a very difficult matter to secure property, especially if it was small, in those early times, and therefore nothing could have a worse consequence than the division of estates. The consequences of dividing the kingdom of France were sufficiently experienced, and the case would have been still worse in private estates. However, on account of the opposition from the rest of the sons, it was long before the right of primogeniture or the indivisibility of estates could be introduced, and in Germany it did not fully take place before the last century; but as the circumstances necessarily required it, estates were at last made indivisible, and since a single person was to be preferred, the oldest son would naturally be the person. This legal preference must be given for some quality that is altogether indisputable. If it were to be given to wisdom or valour, there might be great disputes, but among brothers there can be [no] contest who is the oldest. In the beginnings of society age itself is very much respected; and to this day, among the Tartars, the king is not succeeded by his son, but by that one of the royal family who is oldest.

Primogeniture, when introduced, would naturally occasion succession by representation for the following reason: the younger brothers at first would think it hard that their older brother should be preferred to them, and if he died they would still think it harder that his son, an infant, should come in before them; accordingly in many places this has been disputed in single combat. Bruce and Balliol disputed on this account. According to our notions, Balliol had the best right, for he was descended from the oldest daughter, though Bruce was a step nearer the common stock. The difficulty of introducing this at first gave rise to a new species of succession, by which, when a father died, his estate went to his eldest son, but if he died while his children were minors, or if he died while his father was alive, his brother, not his sons, succeeded. This was attended with one inconvenience, that on the death of the youngest his sons were preferred to those of the other brothers. By the Roman law a grandson succeeded only to his father’s part: he might succeed as a son, but not as an oldest son. The brothers naturally thought that they were nearer the father than any grandson he could have; but as this was a hardship to the brother’s claim, so it was also a hardship to cut off the reasonable expectation which the grandson had if his father had lived.

This last circumstance after[wards] gave occasion to lineal succession. When this difficulty is got over there is little dispute about collateral succession. In feudal lordships a woman could not succeed, as she was incapable of performing military services; but they could succeed to lands where there was required any other kind of service. Of fiefs there are two kinds, masculine and feminine. France, to the crown of which no woman can succeed, is an instance of the former, and England of the latter.

There are some niceties whimsical enough in the Scotch law with regard to succession of collaterals. If the second brother has an estate and dies, it goes to the third and not to the oldest, who is supposed to have been sufficiently provided for. Conquest on the contrary ascends, but it does not go to the oldest, but to the immediately older brother. By the English law the old brother excludes the whole blood from one half of the estate by conquest, in other countries the preference is not so great.

We must observe that the right of primogeniture hinders agriculture. If the whole estate were divided among the sons, each one would improve his own part better than one can improve the whole; besides, tenants never cultivate a farm so well as if it were their own property. Primogeniture is also hurtful to the family, for, while it provides for one, it suffers all the rest in a few generations to be reduced to beggary. In succession to a monarchy, however, it has one evident advantage, that it prevents all dangerous rivalships among the brothers.

There are some other kinds of succession that take place, or have taken place in several countries. Thus in some countries the youngest son succeeds to the father. There is something like this among our tenants to this day: the older sons as they grow up are provided for, and the youngest, remaining with the father, succeeds to him.

So much for legal succession. We come next to testamentary. It is to be observed that there is no extension of property so great as this, and therefore it was long before it could be introduced; it was very natural to give a man a right to dispose of his property while he lived, but a testament supposes him to dispose of a right when, properly speaking, he can have none himself. He cannot be said to transfer his right, for the heir has no right in consequence of the testament till after the testator himself have none. Puffendorf whimsically accounts for this from the immortality of the soul. At Rome the right of making testaments was introduced gradually. At first it was only allowed, and that too after the consent of the fellow citizens was asked and obtained, to childless

people. This was much the same with adopting children. When a person died and wanted to leave his estate to a son in exile, he would naturally request his neighbours not to take it from him after his own death. This request would be regarded, not so much on account of its being his will, as from a kind of piety for the dead. We naturally find a pleasure in remembering the last words of a friend and in executing his last injunctions, the solemnity of the occasion deeply impresses the mind; besides, we enter as it were into his dead body, and conceive what our living souls would feel if they were joined with his body, and how much we would be distressed to see our last injunctions not performed. Such sentiments naturally inclined men to extend property a little farther than a man's lifetime.

This seems to have been the foundation of testamentary succession. It was a sort of impiety not to comply with the father's desire, though it was no injury to deprive the heir of the estate, as there was no law established in his favour, and as his being in exile cut off all reasonable expectation of succeeding. The injury is conceived to be done to the dead person, as we enter into what would be his sentiments were he to live again. It is to be observed that this practice is a considerable refinement in humanity, and never was practised in a rude nation. Before the twelve tables no Roman had a right to make a will. Our Saxon ancestors had no right to dispose of their lands by testament, and in the history of the Old Testament we hear of no such practice. Piety for the dead could take place only with regard to the immediate successor, and therefore at first the right of making testaments extended no further, unless in case the person in whose favour it was made should refuse to succeed, in which case another might be appointed. This was a further extent of the right. Again, if a man died and left his sister's son heir to him, that the estate might not go to foreign relations, the testator was allowed to say that if the pupil die at a certain age, the estate shall go to such another person. This was called pupillar substitution. Thus property was still further extended.

The greatest of all extensions of property is that by entails. To give a man power over his property after his death is very considerable, but it is nothing to an extension of this power to the end of the world. In the beginnings of society the state of families is very different from what it is at present. As the wife was subject to the husband, and at the best only on the footing of a daughter, she seldom made any addition to the husband's estate unless by her own industry; but when female succession took place, and women came to be possessed of fortunes, they would not

marry without a previous capitulation by which they insured themselves of good usage, and stipulated that some part of their fortune should go to their relations after their death. By this arose a new species of marriage from agreement which rendered the parties equally independent. This great alteration in domestic affairs would naturally at first be complained of, and, as the ultimate cause of it was the succession of females, they would endeavour to prevent their opulence. On this account a law was made at Rome bringing matters to their ancient footing, called the Voconian law. To elude this law a fide commissum was invented, by which, when a man had a mind to leave his estate to a person whom the law would not allow, [he left it to someone else] and took his solemn promise that he would transfer it to the person for whom he intended it. Augustus made a law obliging the trustee always to restore it, and appointed a [fidei-]commissary praetor for that purpose. The person to whom the estate was left was called heres fiduciarius, and the person to whom it was to be restored was called fide commissarius: thus property was extended beyond the first successor, and when this step was gained they easily advanced further and introduced entails.

Entails were first introduced into the modern law by the ecclesiastics, whose education made them acquainted with the Roman customs. As they were the preachers of this doctrine, they naturally became the explainers and executors of wills till Theodosius and Valentinian took it from them. In England William the Conqueror restored it to the ecclesiastics.

By the customs of our country a man, if he leave a wife and children, can dispose only of a third by testament; and if he leave a wife without children, only a half. Lands after the introduction of the feudal system could only be disposed [of] by testament in the same way with military services, by the consent of the superior. Originally in England there were no entails by will, but by tenure. A man held an estate for himself and his heirs, but if he had no heirs he could not alienate it, it returned to the superior. But if he had heirs he could alienate it, and thus the lord was deprived of his right of reversion. A law was afterwards made to secure this.

Upon the whole nothing can be more absurd than perpetual entails. In them the principle of testamentary succession can by no means take place. Piety to the dead can only take place when their memory is fresh in the minds of men: a power to dispose of estates for ever is manifestly absurd. The earth and the fullness of it belongs to every generation, and the preceding one can have no right to bind it up from posterity; such

extension of property is quite unnatural. The insensible progress of entails was owing to their not knowing how far the right of the dead might extend, if they had any at all. The utmost extent of entails should be to those who are alive at the person’s death, for he can have no affection to those who are unborn. Entails are disadvantageous to the improvement of the country, and those lands where they have never taken place are always best cultivated: heirs of entailed estates have it not in their view to cultivate lands, and often they are not able to do it. A man who buys land has this entirely in view, and in general the new purchasers are the best cultivators.

§ 5. Fifth way of acquiring Property: Voluntary Transference.

In voluntary transference two things are required: first, a declaration of the intention both of the person who transfers, and of him to whom it is transferred: second, the actual delivery of the thing. In most cases the first of these is not binding without the latter, because there is no right without possession. If a man indeed have borrowed a thing and afterwards purchase it, there is no need of delivery, for it is already in his possession. Before possession you can have no right to the thing, though you may have a right to make the man keep his promise or contract. If I buy a horse from a man, and before delivery he sell him to a third person, I cannot demand the horse from the possessor, but only from the person who sold him. But if he has been delivered I can claim him from any person. Property therefore cannot be transferred without tradition or delivery. Grotius indeed justly observes that in the transference of a pledge there is no need of delivery, because in this case the thing is already in the man's possession. In France, if a man declare his purpose to make a donation, and die before the delivery, the donation goes to the heir. This was also a custom among the Wisigoths. In transferring the property of lands and other large objects, what gives possession is not so easy to determine. As there cannot be an actual delivery, in our country a symbolical delivery is used; an ear or sheaf of corn signifies the whole field, a stone and turf, the estate to the centre of the earth, and the keys of the door, the house. By the Scotch law, if there be a transference of several estates, the purchaser must be infeft in each. By the English law infeftment in one serves for all when done in presence of the county court. In Scotland it must be done on the land: it is enough in England if it be done in view of it. Besides delivery a charter or writing, showing on what terms the transference was made, is also requisite for security. Till the custom was abolished by a late statute, no vassal or possessor had a right of alienating his estate without the consent of the superior. As he held it for military service, it was requisite that the estate should be resigned to the superior, who resigned it to the purchaser, as it was proper that his vassal should be of his own choosing. Afterwards, however, it became necessary to accept of creditors, and this was often used as a handle to elude the law. The seller gave a bond for a sum of borrowed money without any mention that it was a sale, by which means

the lands were adjudged to the creditor, and the lord was obliged to accept of him as his vassal. In like manner, as the tenant was liable to oppression from a new superior, the lord could not dispose of his estate without consent of his vassal. If therefore either of them alienated any part of their estates without the other’s consent, his right was forfeited.

The duty of vassals to their lords continued longer in Scotland than in England, which may be accounted for from the difference of their government, for that [of] England all along favoured democracy, and that of Scotland aristocracy. After society was fully established, there was no occasion for mutual consent, because the tenant was protected by law, whatever the lord was.

In the time of the civil wars a new sort of delivery took place. When a person transferred his estate to another for his own use it was not affected by forfeiture; the person to whom it was transferred was considered as the bailiff, and took possession in the other’s name.

§ 6. Of Servitudes.

The second species of real rights is servitudes or burdens which one man has on the property of another. These rights were at first personal, as they were entered into by a contract between the persons. It is necessary that I should have a road to the market town; if a man's estate lie between me and it, I must bargain with him for the privilege of a road through it. This contract produces only a personal right, though I should bind him not to sell this estate without the burden; but here was an inconveniency, for, if the land were sold and the new proprietor refused the road, I could not sue him on a personal right upon the former proprietor. Before I can come at the new purchaser, I must pursue the person from whom I had the right, who must pursue him to whom he sold it. If the land has gone through several hands this is very tedious and inconvenient. The law, to remedy this, made servitudes real rights, demandable a quocumque possessore.

Servitudes were rusticae, such as the right of a road to the town, or to the river, and of feeding so many cows on another man's pasture grounds, or urbanae, such as the right of leaning the beams of my house on your gable, the right of obliging him who is proprietor of the under-story to make his wall strong enough to support mine, and the like. These are all naturally personal rights and are only made real by lawyers. Life rents on estates and many other things are also servitudes, and are properly personal. Feudal burdens were only persons' rights, and therefore every new vassal must renew his homage and the promise of fealty.

In the beginning of the feudal law, if the proprietor did not perform his duty in every article he forfeited his feu; in like manner, if the tenant encroached on his lord's grounds, what he had feued returned to the superior. The right of the vassal is founded on the charter of the superior, and every article of it must be fulfilled, and every new possessor must renew the obligation. When tenants became independent and had a real property, they were said to have the dominium directum, not the dominium utile.

§ 7. Of Pledges and Mortgages.

Pledges and mortgages are certain securities for the payment of debts. At first they could not be claimed as real rights, though afterwards the law considered them as such. Pledges properly regard moveable subjects, and mortgages immoveable; if a pledge be not redeemed at a certain time, it is forfeited. As people in bad circumstances are naturally slothful, the negligence of debtors among the Romans gave occasion to the lex commissaria, by which the creditor was empowered to seize the pledge, and return the overplus if there was any. By the English law, if no day be named, the pledge falls to the pawntaker on the death of the pawner. In immoveables, lands are mortgaged but not delivered, and in case of failure they are forfeited. The Roman law and ours are much the same on this head. If payment be not made within some few months after demand, the creditor adjudges the land for the whole sum and the penalty incurred; but his property is not secure without long possession, for the proprietor has a power of redeeming it within a reasonable time; but, as upon redemption much trouble must be occasioned in examining old accounts and the like, the law has made twenty years the stated time in England for redeeming mortgages.

Hypothecs are another kind of pledges really arising from contract, but made real rights by the civil law. By them anciently the landlord was empowered to detain the furniture and whole stock of the tenant if he turned bankrupt, and could claim them a quocumque possessore. This arose from the practice of keeping tenants by steel-bow, by which the whole stock in the farm was the landlord’s. At present the landlord has only a right of preference, and we have not so many hypothecs as the Romans had.

All pledges are naturally personal rights, and are only made real by the civil law.

§ 8. Of Exclusive Privileges.

Exclusive privileges are the last division of real rights. Among these is the right of inheritance, which is not a creature of the civil law, but arises from nature. The heir, previous to any other person, has a privilege of demanding what belonged to the deceased, and after he is admitted heir it is his real property. Again, if a person start a wild beast, he has an exclusive privilege of pursuing, and whatever person comes in upon the chase is liable to punishment because he breaks in upon his exclusive privilege. In the year 1701 an English man-of-war engaged with a French merchant fleet under convoy, which was just about to fall into their hands, when a Scotch privateer came and carried off the prize. A lawsuit commenced and the Scotch privateer was declared guilty of breach of property, but upon strict inquiry we shall find that it was only breach of privilege. Though these and some other exclusive privileges arise from nature, they are generally the creatures of the civil law. Such are monopolies and all privileges of corporations, which, though they might once be conducive to the interest of the country, are now prejudicial to it. The riches of a country consist in the plenty and cheapness of provisions, but their effect is to make everything dear. When a number of butchers have the sole privilege of selling meat, they may agree to make the price what they please, and we must buy from them whether it be good or bad. Even this privilege is not of advantage to the butchers themselves, because the other trades are also formed into corporations, and if they sell beef dear they must buy bread dear. But the great loss is to the public, to whom all things are rendered less comeatable, and all sorts of work worse done; towns are not well inhabited, and the suburbs are increased. The privilege, however, of vending a new book or a new machine for fourteen years has not so bad a tendency, it is a proper and adequate reward for merit. A right to servitudes and exclusive privileges, it is to be observed, may be acquired by prescription.

So much for the different kinds of real rights: we proceed now to personal rights, which arise either from contract, quasi-contract, or delinquency.

§ 9. Of Contract.

That obligation to performance which arises from contract is founded on the reasonable expectation produced by a promise, which considerably differs from a mere declaration of intention. Though I say I have a mind to do such a thing for you, yet on account of some occurrences do not do it, I am not guilty of breach of promise. A promise is a declaration of your desire that the person for whom you promise should depend on you for the performance of it. Of consequence the promise produces an obligation, and the breach of it is an injury.

Breach of contract is naturally the slightest of all injuries, because we naturally depend more on what we possess than what is in the hands of others. A man robbed of five pounds thinks himself much more injured than if he had lost five pounds by a contract. Accordingly in rude ages crimes of all kinds, except those that disturb the public peace, are slightly punished, and society is far advanced before a contract can sustain action or the breach of it be redressed. The causes of this were the little importance of contracts in those times, and the uncertainty of language.

The first contracts that sustained action would be those where the damage done was very great, and where there could be no doubt but the person once intended to perform. Accordingly among the ancients promises entered into with great solemnity first sustained action. Among them no stipulation could be made unless the contractors were personally present, and no promissory note in writing was binding. As no promises by the Roman law sustained action without a stipulation, so by the English a consideration or cause for the promise was at first necessary to make it obligatory. It was thought contrary to good manners to insist on a promise: if a man promised with his daughter a certain sum, there is a consideration, and therefore he was obliged to perform it; but if he promised it with any other man’s daughter it was sine causa, and, unless she was a relation, could not sustain action. If I made you a promise it did not sustain action, but if I again promised not to forget my former promise, the latter promise was obligatory, and the former was the consideration that made it so.

By the civil law the first promises that sustained action were those entered into in presence of a court where there could be no doubt of the intention, and accordingly recognizance of every promise was taken before some court. A recognizance is when a debtor comes before a court

with the creditor, and acknowledges that he owes him a certain sum; a copy of this acknowledgment was given to the creditor and another lodged in the hands of the clerk, and whenever the creditor produced this, if it was found to correspond to the other, he might pursue for his money. Afterwards a recognizance before the magistrate of a staple town served the purpose.

The next contracts that sustained action were the contractus reales, or those which were entered into by the delivery of a thing to be returned itself, or in species, or in value. These are of four kinds, the mutuum, commodatum, depositum and pignus.

The mutuum is when I lend anything to be returned in value, as money. This soon sustained action.

Commodatum is when the thing itself is to be restored, as a borrowed horse.

Depositum is when a thing is committed to another's care but not to his use.

Pignus is a security for debt.

All these sustained action before the consensual contracts, which are also four, to wit, buying and selling, letting and hiring, partnership, and commission. In buying, if the contract be not fulfilled, you lose your earnest money. Letting and hiring once comprehended leases, day's wages, building, and almost everything with regard to society. If the contract of commission was performed gratuitously it could not at first sustain any action, but if a reward was given, it was nearly the same with the commodatum. If a small price be paid for the loan of a thing it becomes letting and hiring. The mutuum does not infer interest, and in a bond, unless the interest be specified, it will carry none.

Besides these there was in the Roman law what was called a pactum nudum, when there was a bare promise without any consideration, which produced an exception or defence against the action of the pursuer. As contracts deprive men of that liberty which every man wishes to enjoy, a very small defence set them free. Originally no contracts were sued before any court but the ecclesiastic, but they came gradually to civil courts. The canon law, which judged from principles of honour and virtue, obliged men to perform even those promises that were made gratuitously. This was imitated by the civil law; and by our law if a promise be clearly proven, he who promises must perform it. In general the law gave only action for damages till the court of chancery was introduced. It is indeed the natural idea of [a] court to redress injuries, and accordingly if a person refused to perform his contract he was only

obliged to pay the loss which the other had sustained; but the court of chancery forced the person to a performance of the agreement.

Nothing can be more different than the present and ancient state of contracts. Execrations and the most solemn ceremonies were scarce thought sufficient to secure the performance of a contract; drinking blood and water mixed, bleeding one another, promising before the altar, breaking a straw, and a number of other ceremonies to impress the mind, were invented. At present almost anything will make a contract obligatory.

There are some questions concerning contracts much agitated by lawyers, especially one in the case when the coin happens to be debased. [If] I borrow £100 when the coin is 4 oz. [to] the pound, and it be afterwards debased to 2 oz., whether should I pay £100 of the new coin or £200? When the government makes any alteration in the coin it is to answer some urgent necessity. In 1705 the crown of France had a demand for ten million, and could raise only five. They cried up the coin and paid the ten with five. As the government allows private persons to pay with the new coin, the injury is not great. The debasement of the coin cheapens for some time all commodities and provisions, as all are paid in the new coin, and therefore the uses of money may be served by the new as well as the old coin.

§ 10. Of Quasi-Contract.

Quasi-contract is founded on the duty of restitution. If you find a watch on the way, you are obliged to restore it by the right of property, because a man loses not property with possession. But if you and I balance accounts, and you pay me a sum which both think due, but you afterwards find you did not owe that sum, how will you claim it? You cannot ask it as your property, for you alienated that sum, nor can you claim it by contract, for there never was one made between us, yet it is evident that I am a gainer by your loss, and therefore restitution is due.

In the same manner if a man was called away by a sudden order of the state without leaving an attorney to manage a law suit that he had going on, and a friend undertakes this office without commission, as the defence is necessary, and the undertaking it prudent, restitution of his expenses are due. On the same principle were founded the actiones contrariae of the Roman law. If you lent me a horse which had cost me extraordinary expenses, by the contract commodate you could redemand your horse in the same [state] in which you lent him, but I could claim my extraordinary expenses by an actio contraria. The same principle takes place in many other cases. If a person borrows money, and gets three of his acquaintances sureties for him, jointly and severally, and if he turn bankrupt, the creditor pursues the ablest surety, who has a claim by the duty of restitution on the other two for their thirds. The Scotch law carries this still farther. If a bankrupt had two estates, and two creditors A and B: A has a security on both estates, B has security only on the best: A has a liberty of drawing his money from either estate he pleases, and draws from that on which B has his security. As B in this case is cut out, the law obliges A to give up his security on the other estate to B. The same was the case in the Roman law with regard to tutory.

§ 11. Of Delinquency.

We come now to the third kind of personal rights, those to wit, ex delicto.

Delicts are of two kinds, as they arise ex dolo when there is a blameable intention, or ex culpa when they are done through a culpable negligence.

Injury naturally excites the resentment of the spectator, and the punishment of the offender is reasonable as far as the indifferent spectator can go along with it. This is the natural measure of punishment. It is to be observed that our first approbation of punishment is not founded upon the regard to public utility which is commonly taken to be the foundation of it. It is our sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer which is the real principle. That it cannot be utility is manifest from the following example. Wool in England was conceived to be the source of public opulence, and it was made a capital crime to export that commodity. Yet though wool was exported as formerly and men were convinced that the practice was pernicious, no jury, no evidence, could be got against the offenders. The exportation of wool is naturally no crime, and men could not be brought to consider it as punishable with death. In the same manner, if a sentinel be put to death for leaving his post, though the punishment be just and the injury that might have ensued be very great, yet mankind can never enter into this punishment as if he had been a thief or a robber.

Resentment not only prompts to punishment, but points out the manner of it. Our resentment is not gratified unless the offender be punished for the particular offence done ourselves, and unless he be made sensible that it is for that action. A crime is always the violation of some right, natural or acquired, real or personal. The non-performance of a contract indeed is not a crime, unless it be through some fraudulent intention.

The greatest crime that can be done against any person is murder, of which the natural punishment is death, not as a compensation, but as a reasonable retaliation. In every civilized nation death has been the punishment of the murderer, but in barbarous nations a pecuniary compensation was accepted of, because then government was weak, and durst not meddle in the quarrels of individuals unless in the way of mediation. In the age of hunters particularly there was little more than

the name of authority, and a man of superior influence can do no more than persuade the parties to an agreement. When one man killed another, the whole society met and advised the one party to give, and the other to take, a compensation. In America when one member of a family kills another, the society does not intermeddle with them, as this cannot hurt the peace of the society; they only take notice of it when one family attacks another. It was long before the government could call a man before them and tell him what he must do, because it was long before people would submit to such absolute authority.

In the laws of all nations we have the remains of this ancient state of weakness. When government became more powerful, the murderer was not only obliged to make a compensation to the relations of the slain, but likewise to the public, who were put to the trouble of lending him their protection, on that occasion, against the revenge of those who were concerned. This was the state of criminal law among the Germans at the declension of the Roman Empire. The Germans were much farther advanced than the Americans at this day. Though they seldom punished with death, yet they seemed to make the punishment in some measure proportioned to the crime. A price was set on every person according to his station. There was one price paid for killing the king, and another for killing a slave. The compensation was proportioned to the dignity of the person and of his relations. What was paid to the prince for interposition was increased and diminished in the same proportion. It was a higher fine to kill a man belonging to a lord than one belonging to a little baron. To disturb the king's peace subjected to a greater fine than to disturb the peace of a baron or lord. If the injurer refused to pay the compensation he was left to the resentment of the injured, and if he was not able to pay it, he was obliged to implore the assistance of his friends. As the compensation was not adequate to the offence, the government, after it acquired strength, took this additional compensation to itself as the price of the offender's freedom. From this the sovereign acquired the right of pardoning criminals, for naturally he has no more right to pardon a crime than to discharge an unpaid debt.

Anciently a crime was considered in two lights, as committed against the family injured and against the peace. The government had the exclusive right of punishing those who had disturbed the peace and killed any of the king's vassals. The compensation to the government was afterwards changed into a capital punishment. After the king's pardon, the offender was free, and the relation had no right to pursue him. In England the offender can be punished for the relation as well as

for the king. When an appeal is made to the king, he cannot pardon, but appeals are seldom or never used, as it is difficult to bring them about. If a man was murdered, nobody but the wife could pursue for an appeal, or, if she was accessory, the legal heir. Any mistake in the process, such as a word wrong spelled, stopped the procedure, for the statute of amendment, which permitted courts to overlook errors, did not extend to appeals. Appeals in former times were often made in cases of maiming, hurting, &c.

There are several kinds of murder by the English law. The word originally signified stealth, as the crime was usually committed in private. Afterwards felonious killing of every kind was called murder, and compensation made for it accordingly. Murder arises either from malice prepense, or from sudden provocation, or from chance per infortunium. Of these the first alone is properly called murder, the second is manslaughter, and the last chance medley, which is often excusable and often justifiable. Murder committed se defendendo is when two persons quarrel, and the one is obliged to kill the other for his own safety. This is excusable, not justifiable homicide. Justifiable homicide is of two kinds. First, in defence [of] one's person, goods, or house. It differs from homicide se defendendo in this, that there is no quarrel, but an attack on the highway, or in a man's house. Second, homicide is justifiable in support of a constable or officer of justice.

These are the different species of murder and homicide, we shall next show what is the nature of each. When a person lies in wait for another and kills him, it is plainly murder. It is the same when a man kills another without provocation. By the English law there is no provocation without a blow; no words or menaces are sufficient. However, if a man give you a blow, and you return it and kill him, it is not murder, but manslaughter. If a man be shooting at tame fowl, or doing any other criminal action, and without intending it, kill a man, it is murder. Whereever there is any appearance of malice or forethought it is murder. If a person kills another in the afternoon for some provocation received in the forenoon, it is murder, but if he has only retired a few steps, and returned to do it immediately, it is not murder, but manslaughter. Homicide se defendendo is not punishable if there was no possibility of escape, but if a man had time to retire and draw his sword, it is punishable, because he might have escaped.

The Scotch law makes no distinction between manslaughter and murder. In England manslaughter was introduced by what is called benefit of clergy. When civil government increased in authority, the

punishment[s] of crimes were made more severe that the peace might be less disturbed. The clergy pled that this was not agreeable to the word of God, and as they derived their authority from Jesus Christ and the Pope, they would answer before no civil judicatory. They pretended that the scripture did not consider any crime where there was no malice or forethought as murder, and this they proved from Deuteronomy xixth. When any [clerical] person therefore had committed a crime, the bishop had a power to claim him and take him out of the hands of the secular power. If a person could get twelve persons to swear for him, he was acquitted. If not, the bishop judged whether he was corrigible or not. If he was incorrigible, he was degraded. The bishop could claim in this manner all clergy and beadles, wardens, or other persons who had any connexion with the Church, but the civil courts after[wards] allowed him only to claim those that could read, as this [was] more immediately connected with the office of the clergy. Queen Anne afterwards extended the privileges arising from benefit of clergy, with regard to manslaughter, to all equally. For chance medley a man forfeits his goods, but he has the power of suing for them again and of obtaining pardon. In justifiable homicide a man must plead not guilty of anything the court can meddle [with], and if he can bring in his evidence he is not arraigned.

Our resentment naturally falls upon inanimate as well as animate objects, and in many places the sword or instrument that had killed any person was considered as execrable, and accordingly was destroyed, particularly among the Athenians. By the English law if a man fell from a house and was killed, the house was forfeited by the law of deodand. Deodand signifies to be given to the devil, by the same sort of metaphor that the scripture uses where it is said he blessed God in his heart, that is, he cursed him. Afterwards the clergy applied deodands to charitable uses. If a man was killed by an object at rest, only the part by which he was killed was forfeited. If he was killed [by falling] from the wheel of a wagon standing, only that wheel was deodand, but if the wagon was in motion, the whole team was forfeited. It was long questioned if a ship was forfeited by a man being killed in it, but as mariners are so much exposed, it was thought hard that it should.

A person may also be injured in his body by demembration, mutilation, assault and battery, or restraint on his liberty. Maiming and mutilation originally by the Roman law were compensated for in the same way with murder, and if the person was incapable, with the assistance of his friends, to pay the compensation, he was given over to the person maimed, to be maimed in the same manner, as we are

acquainted by the Salic law, which gives us the form of their procedure. In the same manner all hurts among many nations, particularly among the Lombards, were compounded for; they paid so much for a tooth, so much more if it was a foretooth, so much for two teeth, but, what is very remarkable, though twenty were knocked out, the injured person could claim no more than the price of three. They had a precise sum for every member of the body. Among the Romans, if a man could not pay his composition, he was obliged to make satisfaction by the law of retaliation; he received as many blows as he gave. An eye went for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. This custom continued long, and is in general reasonable, but in some cases it is not proper. If a man got his arm broken in wrestling, it was hard that another's should be broken for it in cold blood. In some cases it was impracticable, as when a man causes an abortion in a woman, he could not be punished in the same manner. This custom by degrees went out, and pecuniary fines, according to the circumstances of him who was to pay them, were introduced, and the praetor at Rome caused them to be received, but in some countries it continued longer, and there are remains of it in Holland to this day. When a person was maimed in any member that rendered him incapable of military service, the punishment was more severe.

By the Coventry Act, maiming in the face from malice or forethought was punished with death. The reason of this was that Sir John Coventry had spoken impertinently against the king in parliament. The Prince of Wales, with some others, probably not without the king's permission, laid wait for him, and cut his ears and his face. The parliament immediately enacted that maiming in the face from forethought should be punishable with death. There was never one, however, executed upon this law but one Cook, who lay in wait to murder his brother, but did not get it executed, only he maimed him in the face. He was therefore by the Coventry Act found guilty of deliberate malice. He pled that his intention was to murder, not to maim, but the court from the instrument he used found that he intended to maim as well as murder.

A man may also be injured by assault and battery. When a person is put to bodily fear it is assault, and when he is actually beat it is battery. Originally no assault by words subjected to punishment, unless there was likewise a shaking of the fist, drawing an instrument or something of this kind. A composition was the first punishment for these crimes, but now it is fine and imprisonment.

A man may further be injured in his body by restraining his liberty, therefore the laws of every country are particularly careful of securing it.

No magistrate in this country has an arbitrary power of imprisonment. It is indeed reasonable that he should have it in his power to imprison when there is ground of suspicion, though an innocent man may sometimes suffer a little by it. Nothing is more difficult than perfectly to secure liberty. If the person can bring some circumstances to alleviate the suspicion, he may be set at liberty upon bail, unless it be a capital crime. If the bail be not sufficient, it is unjust in the magistrate to accept of it, but if it be, he is punishable if he do not. If a person be wrongously kept in prison beyond the time when he ought to have been tried, he has so much a day according to his station.

In England, if a person be confined the day after the assizes, forty days after he may have the benefit of the Habeas Corpus Act, that is, he may be carried to London at his own expense, but if he cannot afford this, he must wait till the next assizes. In Scotland there is no occasion for the Habeas Corpus Act. A person may be tried by the sheriff if he pleases, and at any rate can be carried to Edinburgh to the king's court. All this is for the security of liberty in free governments, but in despotic governments the will of the magistrate is law.

It is to be observed with respect to what is done through fear, that a bond given from this principle is not binding; no obligation is valid unless the person acted voluntary. However if a person is threatened to be pursued, and gives a bond to avoid it, the bond is valid, and the fear is not considered as a metus iniustus.

A rape or forcible marriage is capital, because the woman is so dishonoured that no other punishment can be a sufficient retaliation. Though forcible marriage be forbidden by law, yet if the woman afterwards consent, the friends can have no appeal, yet the king may pursue it.

A man may be injured in his reputation, by affronts, by words, and by writings. An affront in company is a real injury; if the affront be offered in words it is a verbal injury; if in writing it is a written injury. In all these the law gives redress. Affronts by the old law were punished in the same manner with assault and battery. Affronts in company are most atrocious crimes; the trifling fine of five or ten pounds is by no means an adequate compensation for them. Where the law denies justice, we are naturally led to take it ourselves. This introduced duelling in Europe, which brings along with it an additional injury; I must not only receive a box on the ear, but I am obliged to expose my life, or become altogether

odious. It is to be observed that in Socrates' time the affront of giving the lie was little thought of; he does it himself without any ceremony.

Verbal injuries are redressed both by ancient and modern laws. When a person is accused by words, it sustains a process before a court of justice. If he be accused of forgery, theft, or any crime, as he may be subjected to great damages, he is entitled to sufficient redress. In the same manner if a person's right or title be slandered he suffers an injury. If I say you have no more right to your own house than I have, it is an injury, as it may excite those who have pretended titles. Though it be true, this is only an alleviation, and will not secure me from a prosecution. There are some offences that are only prosecuted in spiritual courts, as if a person call a woman a whore.

Written injuries are subjected to severer punishments than verbal ones, as they are more deliberate malice. Abusive words in a libel give a process, though the same words would not if spoken. Libels and satires are punished according to the nature of the government. In aristocratical governments they are punished severely. Little petty princes may be quite destroyed by abusive libels, whereas kings and ministers of state in a free country, being far out of their reach, cannot be hurt by them. In governments, and in Rome for a long time, they were not punished. Augustus at last revived the law subjecting the authors to a capital punishment. In general people of circumstances take no notice of such libels unless it be absolutely necessary to clear themselves of some crime.

A person may be injured in his estate, real or personal. With regard to his real estate he may be injured either in his moveables or immoveables. In his immoveables he may be injured by arson or forcible entry. Arson is wilful fire-raising either in the house of another, or in our own, so as to affect that of another. By the Roman, English and Scotch law this is punished capitally. If the fire be occasioned by negligence no punishment is inflicted. Forcible entry is the violently putting a man out of his estate. The laws are so strict on this head that the person ousted may retake his own by violence. This was occasioned by the feudal customs, by which it was very common for barons and their vassals to deprive one another of their possessions, and this was the only way [that] then could be fallen on to get it restored. Afterwards it was enacted that if any person could prove that he was violent[ly] dispossessed, his estate should be restored. But if the violent possessor had kept it three years, the old possessor must prove not only that he was dispossessed by violence, but that he has a real right to it, before it be restored.

A man may be injured in his moveables three ways, by theft, robbery, and piracy. Theft is the clandestinely taking away the property of another. This crime does not naturally excite that degree of resentment which prompts to capital punishment; and for a long time it was not punished with death. By the old Roman law the thief was obliged to restore what he had taken, and to add to it as much more. If he stole a sheep he restored two. There was, however, a peculiar distinction between the fur manifestus and fur nec manifestus. The former, as he was taken with the goods about him, paid quadruple, and the latter only double the value of things stolen. This they borrowed, it is said, from the Lacedaemonians, who taught their youth to steal and hide well, as they thought it improved them in that cunning which is necessary in war. However, the Lacedaemonians never encouraged the stealing the property of another. In their feasts nothing was prepared for their young men, and it was expected that they should purloin from the tables of their fathers what was sufficient for themselves; to steal such trifles as a crust of bread was indulged, but nothing else. The real reason of their punishing the fur manifestus more severely than another was that barbarous nations punish crimes according to the degree of resentment they excite, and when the thief was catched in the act their resentment was very high, and consequently disposed them to punish him severely. Since the thirteenth century this crime has been punished capitally. The vassals of great lords were continually making incursions into the neighbouring territories and carrying off booty. When government came to be established, it naturally punished most severely those crimes to which men had the greatest propensity, and consequently endeavoured to restrain this practice. The Emperor Barbarossa first made this crime capital, and he was followed by all civilized nations, though undoubtedly the punishment is too great, for a thief is but a petty mean creature and does not excite a very high degree of resentment; he seems to be in some degree below this passion. By the old Scotch law theft in a landed gentleman was considered as treason, because the gentry were considered as theabettors and assistants of thieves and vagrants; and, as they made war on one another, which looked like an usurpation of sovereignty, they were considered as guilty of treason. By the English law any theft below a shilling was punished with the pillory, and above that with death. In Scotland it requires a much greater sum. Nothing is theft with us but what belongs to particular persons. The man who stole deer in a forest or pigeons at a distance from a pigeon-house could not be punished till by a late statute. House-breaking indeed, though there was

not the value of a shilling carried off, was punished capitally. Such punishments, however necessary once, are certainly now too severe. Government [was] at first weak, and could not punish crimes, but was obliged to interpose in those cases in which the interest of society was concerned; but when it acquired more strength it made punishments severe that it might restrict the licentiousness of manners which lax discipline had introduced. Accordingly we find that the laws of the twelve tables made almost every crime capital. In Europe after the custom of compensation went out, they punished everything as treason, theft in a landed man, a servant killing his master, a curate his bishop, or a husband his wife were all petty treason. Afterwards only crimes respecting the state were considered as treason; and this crime came by degrees to its proper extent.

Robbery, as it puts a man to the greatest bodily fear, is subjected to the greatest punishment: no occasion can save the robber, even though he should cover the injury by pretending to buy a man's goods after he has forced him to sell them to him.

Piracy is punished still more severely.

A man may be injured in his personal estate by fraud or forgery. The natural punishment of the dolus malus is not death, but some sort of ignominy such as the pillory. Some frauds, however, on account of the facility and security with which they may be committed, and the loss which they occasion, are justly subjected to capital punishment. When an insured ship, for instance, is cast away, it is difficult to prove that it was done by fraud; but if she be insured to the full value there is a great temptation to cast her away, and therefore the law, in order to intimidate the merchant, made death the punishment. It was a question whether a ship ought to be insured for her value at the port whence she sets out, or at the port to which she is bound, and it was determined that it should be at the port where she sets out. If a Glasgow merchant sends out a ship with £3000 worth of goods for Virginia, they are worth more than £4000 when they arrive there; and if the merchant were allowed to insure for this last sum he would have a great temptation to make shipwreck of her. He can expect no more when he is at the expense of taking his goods to Virginia; he may meet with bad debtors, and he can lose nothing by the insurers. In the same manner it was anciently capital to steal anything from the plough, as it was so much exposed.

In England a bankrupt may have a discharge on surrendering himself and all his effects, but as he has it in his power to defraud his creditors, if he does not give up all he has, he is punishable by death. Forgery is also

punished capitally, and nobody complains that this punishment is too severe, because when contracts sustain action property can never be secure unless the forging of false ones be restrained. However, the forgery of every deed is not capital, but only the forgery of deeds payable to the bearer on demand, because any forgery of a deed regarding the conveyance of land may easily be discovered before any damage be done.

Perjury is not punished capitally.

As there are several ways of acquiring personal rights so there are several ways in which they expire. First, by payment of what is due by contract or quasi-contract, because the fulfilment of the obligation satisfies the other party. Secondly, by discharge or acquittance, even though the debt be not paid. This also takes place with regard to crimes, for when the king or the injured person choose to drop prosecution or to give a pardon, the person is free. Thirdly, by prescription. If a debt be not claimed within a certain time the debtor is free. This is very reasonable, for if a debt be not claimed for a long time the negligence of the debtor is encouraged. By the Scotch law, if he call for neither principal nor interest of a bond for forty years, it very justly prescribes. Nobody of common prudence would neglect any part of his affairs for forty years, if ever he intended to meddle with them again. According to strict law, if the interest be demanded in the thirty-ninth year the capital does not prescribe. Crimes likewise prescribe, and it is reasonable that they should, whether they be punished from a sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer, or from public utility, or to satisfy the public. Resentment wears out in a few years, and a person who has behaved well for twenty years, the time fixed on by our law, cannot be very dangerous to the public. Appeals by the English law prescribe in one year; but an indictment does not prescribe so soon, because the king prosecutes for public security and not to gratify private resentment, and therefore the law favours his claim. At any rate it would be unreasonable to prosecute a man for a crime committed forty years ago, because he may now be a quite different man from what he was then. Besides, the thing is quite forgotten, and the end of punishing and public example is entirely lost. Treason itself prescribes in a few years. From a resentment in law, however, if sentence have actually passed upon a person, and he have made his escape, he may be executed on his former sentence: the escape is considered as a new crime. However, this is not very natural, and if a man live quietly after his return he is seldom troubled. We had an instance of an earl who had been sentenced in 1715 and had returned to

his native country and lived peaceably in it till the year 1745, when he again joined the rebels and was executed on his former sentence. Dr. Cameron suffered in Scotland in the same manner. In every country, if a person return after twenty years he is not troubled; it would be thought invidious in the officers of justice to meddle with him.

Some general observations on the criminal law is all that remains on this subject.

Resentment seems best to account for the punishment of crimes. If a person fires a pistol down a street, though he do no harm, public utility requires that he should be punished; but such crimes are by the laws of every country more slightly punished than if some mischief had ensued. The reason is plain. Resentment never rises to any great pitch unless some injury be actually done; some things that are in themselves criminal are not punished unless some bad consequence follow. A man meets with little resentment for riding an unruly horse in the market-place, but if he kill anybody, resentment is very high. For the same reason, deodands, though inanimate objects, are accounted execrable. In many cases the resentment falls upon the very member of the body which perpetrated the action. Resentment is on the whole a very indiscriminating principle, and pays little attention to the disposition of the mind.

Certain persons are not to be considered as subjects of punishment, such as idiots, madmen, and children. We are not so much shocked by an action done by a madman, as one done by another person. We think binding the only punishment adequate to their crimes.

This is all we intended on the injuries that may be done to a man as a man.

Having now considered man as a member of a state, as a member of a family, and as a man, we proceed to police, [the] second division of jurisprudence.

PART II: OF POLICE

DIVISION I. CLEANLINESS AND SECURITY.

Police is the second general division of jurisprudence. The name is French, and is originally derived from the Greek πολιτεία, which properly signified the policy of civil government, but now it only means the regulation of the inferior parts of government, viz: — cleanliness, security and cheapness or plenty. The two former, to wit, the proper method of carrying dirt from the streets, and the execution of justice, so far as it regards regulations for preventing crimes or the method of keeping a city guard, though useful, are too mean to be considered in a general discourse of this kind. An observation or two before we proceed to the third particular is all that is necessary.

We observe then, that in cities where there is most police and the greatest number of regulations concerning it, there is not always the greatest security. In Paris the regulations concerning police are so numerous as not to be comprehended in several volumes; in London there are only two or three simple regulations. Yet in Paris scarce a night passes without somebody being killed, while in London, which is a larger city, there are scarce three or four in a year. On this account one would be apt to think, that the more police there is the less security; but this is not the cause. In England as well as in France, during the time of the feudal government, and as late as Queen Elizabeth's reign, great numbers of retainers were kept idle about the noblemen's houses, to keep the tenants in awe. These retainers, when turned out, had no other way of getting their subsistence but by committing robberies, and living on plunder, which occasioned the greatest disorder. A remain of the feudal manners, still preserved in France, gives occasion to the difference. The nobility at Paris keep far more menial servants than ours, who are often turned out on their own account or through the caprice of their masters, and, being in the most indigent circumstances, are forced to commit the most dreadful crimes. In Glasgow, where almost nobody has more than one servant, there are fewer capital crimes than in Edinburgh. In Glasgow there is not one in several years; but not a year passes in Edinburgh without some such disorders. Upon this principle, therefore, it is not so much the police that prevents the commission of crimes as the having as few persons as possible to live upon others. Nothing tends so much to corrupt mankind as dependency, while independency still increases the honesty of the people.

The establishment of commerce and manufactures, which brings about this independency, is the best police for preventing crimes. The common people have better wages in this way than in any other, and in consequence of this a general probity of manners takes place through the whole country. Nobody will be so mad as to expose himself upon the highway, when he can make better bread in an honest and industrious manner. The nobility of Paris and London are no doubt much upon a level; but the common people of the former, being much more dependent, are not to be compared with those of the latter: and for the same reason the commonalty in Scotland differ from those in England, though the nobility too are much upon a level.

Thus far for the two first particulars which come under the general division of police.

DIVISION II. CHEAPNESS OR PLENTY.

§ 1. Of the Natural Wants of Mankind.

In the following part of this discourse we are to confine ourselves to the consideration of cheapness or plenty, or, which is the same thing, the most proper way of procuring wealth and abundance. Cheapness is in fact the same thing with plenty. It is only on account of the plenty of water that it is so cheap as to be got for the lifting; and on account of the scarcity of diamonds (for their real use seems not yet to be discovered) that they are so dear. To ascertain the most proper method of obtaining these conveniences it will be necessary to show first wherein opulence consists, and still previous to this we must consider what are the natural wants of mankind which are to be supplied; and if we differ from common opinions, we shall at least give the reasons for our non-conformity.

Nature produces for every animal everything that is sufficient to support it without having recourse to the improvement of the original production. Food, clothes and lodging are all the wants of any animal whatever, and most of the animal creation are sufficiently provided for by nature in all those wants to which their condition is liable. Such is the delicacy of man alone, that no object is produced to his liking. He finds that in everything there is need of improvement. Though the practice of savages shows that his food needs no preparation, yet being acquainted with fire, he finds that it can be rendered more wholesome and easily digested, and thereby may preserve him from many diseases which are very violent among them. But it is not only his food that requires this improvement; his puny constitution is hurt also by the intemperature of the air he breathes in, which, though not very capable of improvement, must be brought to a proper temperament for his body, and an artificial atmosphere prepared for this purpose. The human skin cannot endure the inclemencies of the weather, and even in those countries where the air is warmer than the natural warmth of the constitution, and where they have no need of clothes, it must be stained and painted to be able to endure the hardships of the sun and rain. In general, however, the necessities of man are not so great but that they can be supplied by the unassisted labour of the individual. All the above necessities everyone can provide for himself, such as animals and fruits for his food, and skins for his clothing.

As the delicacy of a man’s body requires much greater provision than that of any other animal, the same or rather the much greater delicacy of his mind requires a still greater provision to which all the different arts [are] subservient. Man is the only animal who is possessed of such a nicety that the very colour of an object hurts him. Among different objects a different division or arrangement of them pleases. The taste of beauty, which consists chiefly in the three following particulars, proper variety, easy connexion, and simple order, is the cause of all this niceness. Nothing without variety pleases us; a long uniform wall is a disagreeable object. Too much variety, such as the crowded objects of a parterre, is also disagreeable. Uniformity tires the mind; too much variety, too far increased, occasions an over-great dissipation of it. Easy connexion also renders objects agreeable; when we see no reason for the contiguity of the parts, when they are without any natural connexion, when they have neither a proper resemblance nor contrast, they never fail of being disagreeable. If simplicity of order be not observed, so as that the whole may be easily comprehended, it hurts the delicacy of our taste. Again, imitation and painting render objects more agreeable. To see upon a plain, trees, forests, and other such representations, is an agreeable surprise to the mind. Variety of objects also renders them agreeable. What we are every day accustomed to does but very indifferently affect us. Gems and diamonds are on this account much esteemed by us. In like manner our pinchbeck and many of our toys were so much valued by the Indians, that in bartering their jewels and diamonds for them they thought they had made by much the better bargain.

§ 2. That all the Arts are subservient to the Natural Wants of Mankind.

Those qualities, which are the ground of preference, and which give occasion to pleasure and pain, are the cause of many insignificant demands, which we by no means stand in need of. The whole industry of human life is employed not in procuring the supply of our three humble necessities, food, clothes and lodging, but in procuring the conveniences of it according to the nicety and delicacy of our taste. To improve and multiply the materials, which are the principal objects of our necessities, gives occasion to all the variety of the arts.

Agriculture, of which the principal object is the supply of food, introduces not only the tilling of the ground, but also the planting of trees, the producing of flax, hemp, and innumerable other things of a similar kind. By these again are introduced different manufactures, which are so very capable of improvement. The metals dug from the bowels of the earth furnish materials for tools, by which many of these arts are practised. Commerce and navigation are also subservient to the same purposes by collecting the produce of these several arts. By these again other subsidiary [arts] are occasioned. Writing, to record the multitude of transactions, and geometry, which serves many useful purposes. Law and government, too, seem to propose no other object but this; they secure the individual who has enlarged his property, that he may peaceably enjoy the fruits of it. By law and government all the different arts flourish, and that inequality of fortune to which they give occasion is sufficiently preserved. By law and government domestic peace is enjoyed and security from the foreign invader. Wisdom and virtue too derive their lustre from supplying these necessities. For as the establishment of law and government is the highest effort of human prudence and wisdom, the causes cannot have a different influence from what the effects have. Besides, it is by the wisdom and probity of those with whom we live that a propriety of conduct is pointed out to us, and the proper means of attaining it. Their valour defends us, their benevolence supplies us, the hungry is fed, the naked is clothed, by the exertion of these divine qualities. Thus, according to the above representation, all things are subservient to supplying our threefold necessities.

§ 3. That Opulence arises from the Division of Labour.

In an uncivilized nation, and where labour is undivided, everything is provided for that the natural wants of mankind require; yet, when the nation is cultivated and labour divided, a more liberal provision is allotted them; and it is on this account that a common day labourer in Britain has more luxury in his way of living than an Indian sovereign. The woollen coat he wears requires very considerable preparations — the wool-gatherer, the dresser, the spinster, the dyer, the weaver, the tailor, and many more, must all be employed before the labourer is clothed. The tools by which all this is effectuated employ a still greater number of artists — the loom-maker, miln-wright, rope-maker, not to mention the bricklayer, the tree-feller, the miner, the smelter, the forger, the smith, &c. Besides his dress, consider all his household furniture, his coarse linens, his shoes, his coals dug out of the earth or brought by sea, his kitchen utensils and different plates, those that are employed in providing his bread and beer, the sower, the brewer, the reaper, the baker, his glass windows and the art required in preparing [them], without which our northern climate could hardly be inhabited. When we examine the conveniences of the day labourer, we find that even in his easy simple manner he cannot be accommodated without the assistance of a great number, and yet this is nothing compared with the luxury of the nobility. An European prince, however, does not so far exceed a commoner, as the latter does the chief of a savage nation. It is easy to conceive how the rich can be so well provided for, as they can direct so many hands to serve their purposes. They are supported by the industry of the peasant. In a savage nation every one enjoys the whole fruit of his own labour, yet their indigence is greater than anywhere.

It is the division of labour which increases the opulence of a country.

In a civilized society, though there is a division of labour, there is no equal division, for there are a good many who work none at all. The division of opulence is not according to the work. The opulence of the merchant is greater than that of all his clerks, though he works less; and they again have six times more than an equal number of artisans, who are more employed. The artisan who works at his ease within doors has far more than the poor labourer who trudges up and down without

intermission. Thus, he who as it were bears the burden of society, has the fewest advantages.

§ 4. How the Division of Labour multiplies the Product.

We shall next show how this division of labour occasions a multiplication of the product, or, which is the same thing, how opulence arises from it. In order to this let us observe the effect of the division of labour in some manufactures. If all the parts of a pin were made by one man, if the same person dug the ore, [s]melted it, and split the wire, it would take him a whole year to make one pin, and this pin must therefore be sold at the expense of his maintenance for that time, which, taking [it] at a moderate computation, would at least be six pounds for a pin. If the labour is so far divided that the wire is ready-made, he will not make above twenty per day, which, allowing ten pence for wages, makes the pin a half-penny. The pin-maker therefore divides the labour among a great number of different persons; the cutting, pointing, heading, and gilding are all separate professions. Two or three are employed in making the head, one or two in putting it on, and so on, to the putting them in the paper, being in all eighteen. By this division every one can with great ease make 2000 a day. The same is the case in the linen and woollen manufactures. Some arts, however, there are which will not admit of this division, and therefore they cannot keep pace with other manufactures and arts. Such are farming and grazing. This is entirely owing to the return of the seasons, by which one man can only be for a short time employed in any one operation. In countries where the season[s] do not make such alterations it is otherwise. In France the corn is better and cheaper than in England. But our toys, which have no dependence on the climate, and in which labour can be divided, are far superior to those of France.

When labour is thus divided, and so much done by one man in proportion, the surplus above their maintenance is considerable, which each man can exchange for a fourth of what he could have done if he had finished it alone. By this means the commodity becomes far cheaper, and the labour dearer. It is to be observed that the price of labour by no means determines the opulence of society; it is only when a little labour can procure abundance. On this account a rich nation, when its manufactures are greatly improven, may have an advantage over a poor one by underselling it. The cotton and other commodities from China would undersell any made with us, were it not for the long carriage, and

other taxes that are laid upon them. We must not judge of the dearness of labour by the money or coin that is paid for it. One penny in some places will purchase as much as eighteenpence in others. In the country of the Mogul, where the day's wages are only twopence, labour is better rewarded than in some of our sugar islands, where men are almost starving with four or five shillings a day. Coin, therefore, can be no proper estimate. Further, though human labour be employed both in the multiplication of commodities and of money, yet the chance of success is not equal. A farmer, by the proper cultivation of an acre, is sure of increase; but the miner may work again and again without success. Commodities must therefore multiply in greater proportion than gold and silver.

But again, the quantity of work which is done by the division of labour is much increased by the three following articles: first, increase of dexterity; secondly, the saving of time lost in passing from one species of labour to another; and thirdly, the invention of machinery. Of these in order:

First, when any kind of labour is reduced to a simple operation, a frequency of action insensibly fits men to a dexterity in accomplishing it. A country smith not accustomed to make nails will work very hard for three or four hundred a day, and those too very bad; but a boy used to it will easily make two thousand, and those incomparably better; yet the improvement of dexterity in this very complex manufacture can never be equal to that in others. A nail-maker changes postures, blows the bellows, changes tools, &c., and therefore the quantity produced cannot be so great as in manufactures of pins and buttons, where the work is reduced to simple operations.

Secondly, there is always some time lost in passing from one species of labour to another, even when they are pretty much connected. When a person has been reading he must rest a little before he begin to write. This is still more the case with the country weaver, who is possessed of a little farm; he must saunter a little when he goes from one to the other. This in general is the case with the country labourers, they are always the greatest saunterers; the country employments of sowing, reaping, threshing being so different, they naturally acquire a habit of indolence, and are seldom very dexterous. By fixing every man to his own operation, and preventing the shifting from one piece of labour to another, the quantity of work must be greatly increased.

Thirdly, the quantity of work is greatly increased by the invention of machines. Two men and three horses will do more in a day with the

plough than twenty men without it. The miller and his servant will do more with the water miln than a dozen with the hand miln, though it, too, be a machine. The division of labour no doubt first gave occasion to the invention of machines. If a man's business in life is the performance of two or three things, the bent of his mind will be to find out the cleverest way of doing it; but when the force of his mind is divided it cannot be expected that he should be so successful. We have not, nor cannot have, any complete history of the invention of machines, because most of them are at first imperfect, and receive gradual improvements and increase of powers from those who use them. It was probably a farmer who made the original plough, though the improvements might be owing to some other. Some miserable slave who had perhaps been employed for a long time in grinding corn between two stones, probably first found out the method of supporting the upper stone by a spindle. A miln-wright perhaps found out the way of turning the spindle with the hand, but he who contrived that the outer wheel should go by water was a philosopher, whose business it is to do nothing, but observe everything. They must have extensive views of things, who, as in this case, bring in the assistance of new powers not formerly applied. Whether he was an artisan, or whatever he was who first executed this, he must have been a philosopher. Fire machines, wind and water-milns were the invention of philosophers, whose dexterity too is increased by a division of labour. They all divide themselves, according to the different branches, into the mechanical, moral, political, chemical philosophers.

Thus we have shown how the quantity of labour is increased by machines.

§ 5. What gives Occasion to the Division of Labour.

We have already shown that the division of labour is the immediate cause of opulence; we shall next consider what gives occasion to the division of labour, or from what principles in our nature it can best be accounted for. We cannot imagine this to be an effect of human prudence. It was indeed made a law by Sesostris that every man should follow the employment of his father, but this is by no means suitable to the dispositions of human nature, and can never long take place; every one is fond of being a gentleman, be his father what he would. They who are strongest and, in the bustle of society, have got above the weak, must have as many under as to defend them in their station. From necessary causes, therefore, there must be as many in the lower stations as there is occasion for, there must be as many up as down, and no division can be overstretched. But it is not this which gives occasion to the division of labour; it flows from a direct propensity in human nature for one man to barter with another, which is common to all men, and known to no other animal. Nobody ever saw a dog, the most sagacious animal, exchange a bone with his companion for another. Two greyhounds, indeed, in running down a hare, seem to have something like compact or agreement betwixt them, but this is nothing else but a concurrence of the same passions. If an animal intends to truck, as it were, or gain anything from man, it is by its fondness and kindness. Man, in the same manner, works on the self love of his fellows, by setting before them a sufficient temptation to get what he wants. The language of this disposition is, ‘Give me what I want, and you shall have what you want.’ It is not from benevolence, as the dogs, but from self love that man expects anything. The brewer and the baker serve us not from benevolence, but from self love. No man but a beggar depends on benevolence, and even they would die in a week were their entire dependence upon it.

By this disposition to barter and exchange the surplus of one’s labour for that of other people, in a nation of hunters, if any one has a talent for making bows and arrows better than his neighbours, he will at first make presents of them, and in return get presents of their game. By continuing this practice he will live better than before, and will have no occasion to provide for himself, as the surplus of his own labour does it more effectually.

This disposition to barter is by no means founded upon different genius and talents. It is doubtful if there be any such difference at all, at least it is far less than we are aware of. Genius is more the effect of the division of labour than the latter is of it. The difference between a porter and a philosopher in the first four or five years of their life is, properly speaking, none at all. When they come to be employed in different occupations, their views widen and differ by degrees. As every one has this natural disposition to truck and barter, by which he provides for himself, there is no need for such different endowments; and accordingly, among savages there is always the greatest uniformity of character. In other animals of the same species we find a much greater difference than betwixt the philosopher and porter, antecedent to custom. The mastiff and spaniel have quite different powers, but though these animals are possessed of talents they cannot, as it were, bring them into the common stock and exchange their productions, and therefore their different talents are of no use to them. It is quite otherwise among mankind; they can exchange their several productions according to their quantity or quality; the philosopher and the porter are both of advantage to each other. The porter is of use in carrying burdens for the philosopher, and in his turn he burns his coals cheaper by the philosopher's invention of the fire machine.

Thus we have shown that different genius is not the foundation of this disposition to barter which is the cause of the division of labour. The real foundation of it is that principle to persuade which so much prevails in human nature. When any arguments are offered to persuade, it is always expected that they should have their proper effect. If a person asserts anything about the moon, though it should not be true, he will feel a kind of uneasiness in being contradicted, and would be very glad that the person he is endeavouring to persuade should be of the same way of thinking with himself. We ought then mainly to cultivate the power of persuasion, and indeed we do so without intending it. Since a whole life is spent in the exercise of it, a ready method of bargaining with each other must undoubtedly be attained. As was before observed, no animal can do this but by gaining the favour of those whom they would persuade. Sometimes, indeed, animals seem to act in concert, but there never is anything like bargain among them. Monkeys, when they rob a garden, throw the fruit from one to another, till they deposit it in the hoard, but there is always a scramble about the division of the booty, and usually some of them are killed.

§ 6. That the Division of Labour must be proportioned to the Extent of Commerce.

From all that has been said we may observe that the division of labour must always be proportioned to the extent of commerce. If ten people only want a certain commodity, the manufacture of it will never be so divided as if a thousand wanted it. Again, the division of labour, in order to opulence, becomes always more perfect by the easy method of conveyance in a country. If the road be infested with robbers, if it be deep and conveyance not easy, the progress of commerce must be stopped. Since the mending of roads in England forty or fifty years ago, its opulence has increased extremely. Water carriage is another convenience, as by it 300 ton can be conveyed at the expense of the tear and wear of the vessel, and the wages of five or six men, and that too in a shorter time than by a hundred wagons which will take six horses and a man each. Thus the division of labour is the great cause of the increase of public opulence, which is always proportioned to the industry of the people, and not to the quantity of gold and silver, as is foolishly imagined, and the industry of the people is always proportioned to the division of labour.

Having thus shown what gives occasion to public opulence, in farther considering this subject we propose to consider:

First, what circumstances regulate the price of commodities:

Secondly, money in two different views, first as the measure of value, and then as the instrument of commerce:

Thirdly, the history of commerce, in which shall be taken notice of the causes of the slow progress of opulence, both in ancient and modern times, which causes shall be shown either to affect agriculture or arts and manufactures:

Lastly, the effects of a commercial spirit, on the government, temper, and manners of a people, whether good or bad, and the proper remedies. Of these in order.

§ 7. What Circumstances regulate the Price of Commodities.

Of every commodity there are two different prices, which though apparently independent, will be found to have a necessary connexion, viz. the natural price and the market price. Both of these are regulated by certain circumstances. When men are induced to a certain species of industry, rather than any other, they must make as much by the employment as will maintain them while they are employed. An arrow-maker must be sure to exchange as much surplus product as will maintain him during as long time as he took to make them. But upon this principle in the different trades there must be a considerable difference, because some trades, such as those of the tailor and weaver, are not learned by casual observation and a little experience, like that of the day-labourer, but take a great deal of time and pains before they are acquired. When a person begins them, for a considerable time his work is of no use to his master or any other person, and therefore his master must be compensated, both for what maintains him and for what he spoils. When he comes to exercise his trade, he must be repaid what he has laid out, both of expenses and of apprentice fee, and as his life is not worth above ten or twelve years' purchase at most, his wages must be high on account of the risk he runs of not having the whole made up. But again, there are many arts which require more extensive knowledge than is to be got during the time of an apprenticeship. A blacksmith and weaver may learn their business well enough without any previous knowledge of mathematics, but a watchmaker must be acquainted with several sciences in order to undertake his business well, such as arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy with regard to the equation of time, and their wages must be high in order to compensate the additional expense. In general, this is the case in all the liberal arts, because after they have spent a long time in their education, it is ten to one if ever they make anything by it. Their wages therefore must be higher in proportion to the expense they have been at, the risk of not living long enough, and the risk of not having dexterity enough to manage their business. Among the lawyers there is not one among twenty that attains such knowledge and dexterity in his business as enables him to get back the expenses of his education, and many of them never make the price of their gown, as we say. The fees of lawyers are so far from being extravagant, as they are generally thought,

that they are rather low in proportion. It is the eminence of the profession, and not the money made by it, that is the temptation for applying to it, and the dignity of that rank is to be considered as a part of what is made by it.

In the same manner we shall find that the price of gold and silver is not extravagant, if we consider it in this view, for in a gold or silver mine there is a great chance of missing it altogether. If we suppose an equal number of men employed in raising corn and digging silver, the former will make more than the latter, because perhaps of forty or fifty employed in a mine, only twenty make anything at all. Some of the rest may indeed make fortunes, but every corn man succeeds in his undertakings, so that upon the whole there is more made this way than the other. It is the ideal acquisition which is the principal temptation in a mine.

A man then has the natural price of his labour, when it is sufficient to maintain him during the time of labour, to defray the expense of education, and to compensate the risk of not living long enough, and of not succeeding in the business. When a man has this, there is sufficient encouragement to the labourer, and the commodity will be cultivated in proportion to the demand.

The market price of goods is regulated by quite other circumstances. When a buyer comes to the market, he never asks of the seller what expenses he has been at in producing them. The regulation of the market price of goods depends on the three following articles: —

First, the demand, or need for the commodity. There is no demand for a thing of little use; it is not a rational object of desire.

Secondly, the abundance or scarcity of the commodity in proportion to the need of it. If the commodity be scarce, the price is raised, but if the quantity be more than is sufficient to supply the demand, the price falls. Thus it is that diamonds and other precious stones are dear, while iron, which is much more useful, is so many times cheaper, though this depends principally on the last cause, viz: —

Thirdly, the riches or poverty of those who demand. When there is not enough produced to serve everybody, the fortune of the bidders is the only regulation of the price. The story which is told of the merchant and the carrier in the deserts of Arabia is an evidence of this. The merchant gave 10,000 ducats for a certain quantity of water. His fortune here regulated the price, for if he had not had them, he could not have given them, and if his fortune had been less, the water would have been

cheaper. When the commodity is scarce, the seller must be content with that degree of wealth which they have who buy it. The case is much the same as in an auction. If two persons have an equal fondness for a book, he whose fortune is largest will carry it. Hence things that are very rare go always to rich countries. The King of France only could purchase that large diamond of so many thousand pounds value. Upon this principle, everything is dearer or cheaper according as it is the purchase of a higher or lower set of people. Utensils of gold are comeatable only by persons in certain circumstances. Those of silver fall to another set of people, and their prices are regulated by what the majority can give. The prices of corn and beer are regulated by what all the world can give, and on this account the wages of the day-labourer have a great influence upon the price of corn. When the price of corn rises, wages rise also, and vice versa; when the quantity of corn falls short, as in a sea-voyage, it always occasions a famine, and then the price becomes enormous. Corn then becomes the purchase of a higher set of people, and the lower must live on turnips and potatoes.

Thus we have considered the two prices, the natural and the market price, which every commodity is supposed to have. We observed before that however seemingly independent they appear to be, they are necessarily connected. This will appear from the following considerations. If the market price of any commodity is very great, and the labour very highly rewarded, the market is prodigiously crowded with it, greater quantities of it are produced, and it can be sold to the inferior ranks of people. If for every ten diamonds there were ten thousand, they would become the purchase of everybody, because they would become very cheap, and would sink to their natural price. Again, when the market is overstocked, and there is not enough got for the labour of the manufacture, nobody will bind to it, they cannot have a subsistence by it, because the market price falls then below the natural price. It is alleged that as the price of corn sink[s], the wages of the labourer should sink, as he is then better rewarded. It is true that if provisions were long cheap, as more people would flock to this labour where the wages are high, through this concurrence of labour, the wages would come down, but we find that when the price of corn is doubled, the wages continue the same as before, because the labourers have no other way to turn themselves. The same is the case with menial servants.

From the above we may observe that whatever police tends to raise the market price above the natural, tends to diminish public opulence. Dearness and scarcity are in effect the same thing. When commodities

are in abundance, they can be sold to the inferior ranks of people, who can afford to give less for them, but not if they are scarce. So far, therefore, as goods are a conveniency to the society, the society lives less happy when only the few can possess them. Whatever therefore keeps goods above their natural price for a permanency, diminishes [a] nation's opulence. Such are

First, all taxes upon industry, upon leather, and upon shoes, which people grudge most, upon salt, beer, or whatever is the strong drink of the country, for no country wants some kind of it. Man is an anxious animal, and must have his care swept off by something that can exhilarate the spirits. It is alleged that this tax upon beer is an artificial security against drunkenness, but if we attend to it, [we will find] that it by no means prevents it. In countries where strong liquors are cheap, as in France and Spain, the people are generally sober, but in northern countries, where they are dear, they do not get drunk with beer, but with spirituous liquors; nobody presses his friend to a glass of beer, unless he choose it.

Secondly, monopolies also destroy public opulence. The price of the monopolized goods is raised above what is sufficient for encouraging the labour. When only a certain person or persons have the liberty of importing a commodity, there is less of it imported than would otherwise be; the price of it is therefore higher, and fewer people supported by it. It is the concurrence of different labourers which always brings down the price. In monopolies, such as the Hudson's Bay and East India companies, the people engaged in them make the price what they please.

Thirdly, exclusive privileges of corporations have the same effect. The butchers and bakers raise the price of their goods as they please, because none but their own corporation is allowed to sell in the market, and therefore their meat must be taken, whether good or not. On this account there is always required a magistrate to fix the prices. For any free commodity, such as broad cloth, there is no occasion for this, but it is necessary with bakers, who may agree among themselves to make the quantity and price what they please. Even a magistrate is not a good enough expedient for this, as he must always settle the price at the outside, else the remedy must be worse than the disease, for nobody would apply to these businesses, and a famine would ensue. On this account bakers and brewers have always profitable trades.

As what raises the market price above the natural one diminishes public opulence, so what brings it down below it has the same effect.

It is only upon manufactures to be exported that this can usually be done by any law or regulation, such as the bounty allowed by the government upon coarse linen, by which it becomes exportable, when under twelve pence a yard. The public paying a great part of the price, it can be sold cheaper to foreigners than what is sufficient for encouraging the labour. In the same manner, by the bounty of five shillings upon the quarter of corn when sold under forty shillings, as the public pays an eighth part of the price, it can be sold just so much cheaper at a foreign market. By this bounty the commodity is rendered more comeatable, and a greater quantity of it produced, but then it breaks what may be called the natural balance of industry. The disposition to apply to the production of that commodity is not proportioned to the natural cause of the demand, but to both that and the annexed bounty. It has not only this effect with regard to the particular commodity, but likewise people are called from other productions which are less encouraged, and thus the balance of industry is broken.

Again, after the ages of hunting and fishing, in which provisions were the immediate produce of their labour, when manufactures were introduced, nothing could be produced without a great deal of time. It was a long time before the weaver could carry to the market the cloth which he bought in flax. Every trade therefore requires a stock of food, clothes, and lodging to carry it on. Suppose then, as is really the case in every country, that there is in store a stock of food, clothes, and lodging, the number of people that are employed must be in proportion to it. If the price of one commodity is sunk below its natural price, while another is above it, there is a smaller quantity of the stored stock left to support the whole. On account of the natural connexion of all trades in the stock, by allowing bounties to one you take away the stock from the rest. This has been the real consequence of the corn bounty.

The price of corn being sunk, the rent of the farms sinks also, yet the bounty upon corn, which was laid on at the time of the taxes, was intended to raise the rent, and had the effect for some time, because the tenants were assured of a price for their corn, both at home and abroad. But though the effects of the bounty encouraging agriculture brought down the price of corn, yet it raised the grass farms, for the more corn the less grass. The price of grass being raised, butchers' meat, in consequence of its dependence upon it, must be raised also, so that if the price of corn is diminished, the price of other commodities is necessarily raised. The price of corn has indeed fallen from forty-two to thirty-five, but the price of hay has risen from twenty-five to near fifty shillings. As

the price of hay has risen, horses are not so easily kept, and therefore the price of carriage has risen also. But whatever increases the price of carriage diminishes plenty in the market. Upon the whole, therefore, it is by far the best police to leave things to their natural course, and allow no bounties, nor impose taxes on commodities.

Thus we have shown what circumstances regulate the price of commodities, which was the first thing proposed.

§ 8. Of Money as the Measure of Value and Medium of Exchange.

We come now to the second particular, to consider money, first as the measure of value and then as the medium of permutation or exchange. When people deal in many species of goods, one of them must be considered as the measure of value. Suppose there were only three commodities, sheep, corn, and oxen, we can easily remember them comparatively, but if we have a hundred different commodities, there are ninety-nine values of each arising from a comparison with each of the rest. As these cannot easily be remembered, men naturally fall upon one of them to be a common standard with which they compare all the rest. This will naturally at first be the commodity with which they are best acquainted. Accordingly we find that black cattle and sheep were the standard in Homer's time. The armour of one of his heroes was worth nine oxen, and that of another worth an hundred. Black cattle was the common standard in ancient Greece. In Italy, and particularly in Tuscany, everything was compared with sheep, as this was their principal commodity. This is what may be called the natural measure of value. In like manner there were natural measures of quantity, such as fathoms, cubits, inches, taken from the proportion of the human body, once in use with every nation. But by a little observation they found that one man's arm was longer or shorter than another's, and that one was not to be compared with the other, and therefore wise men who attended to these things would endeavour to fix upon some more accurate measure, that equal quantities might be of equal values. This method became absolutely necessary when people came to deal in many commodities, and in great quantities of them. Though an inch was altogether inconsiderable when their dealings were confined to a few yards, more accuracy was required when they came to deal in some thousands. We find, in countries where their dealings are small, the remains of this inaccuracy. The cast of the balance is nothing thought of in their coarse commodities.

Since, then, there must of necessity be a common standard of which equal quantities should be of equal values, metals in general seemed best to answer this purpose, and of these the value of gold and silver could best be ascertained. The temper of steel cannot be precisely known, but what degree of alloy is in gold and silver can be exactly found out. Gold

and silver were therefore fixed upon as the most exact standard to compare goods with, and were therefore considered as the most proper measure of value.

In consequence of gold and silver becoming the measure of value, it came also to be the instrument of commerce. It soon became necessary that goods should be carried to market, and they could never be cleverly exchanged unless the measure of value was also the instrument of commerce. In the age of shepherds it might be no great inconvenience that cattle should be the medium of exchange, as the expense of maintaining them was nothing, the whole country being considered as one great common; but when lands came to be divided, and the division of labour introduced, this custom would be productive of very considerable inconveniences. The butcher and shoemaker might at times have no use for one another's commodities. The farmer very often cannot maintain upon his ground a cow more than he has. It would be a very great hardship on a Glasgow merchant to give him a cow for one of his commodities. To remedy this, those materials which were before considered as the measure of value, came also to be the instrument of exchange. Gold and silver had all advantages. They can be kept without expense, they do not waste, and they are very portable. Gold and silver, however, do not derive their whole utility from being the medium of exchange; though they never had been used as money, they are more valuable than any other metals. They have a superior beauty, are capable of a finer polish, and are more proper for making any instrument, except those with an edge. For all these reasons, gold and silver came to be the proper measure of value, and the instrument of exchange; but in order to render them more proper for these purposes, it was necessary that both their weight and their fineness should be ascertained. At first their balances were not very accurate, and therefore frauds were easily committed. However, this was remedied by degrees; but common business would not allow of the experiments which are necessary to fix precisely the degree of fineness. Though with a great quantity of alloy, they are to appearance good. It was necessary therefore, to facilitate exchange, that they should fall upon some expedient to ascertain with accuracy both weight and fineness. Coinage most effectually secures both these. The public, finding how much it would tend to facilitate commerce, put a stamp upon certain pieces that whoever saw them might have the public faith that they were of a certain weight and fineness; and this would be what was at first marked upon the coin, as being of most importance.

Accordingly, the coins of every country appear to have borne the names of the weights corresponding to them, and they contained the denomination they expressed. The British pound sterling seems originally to have been a pound weight of pure silver.

As gold could be easily exchanged into silver, the latter came always to be the standard or measure of value. As there cannot be two standards, and in the greater part of purchases silver is necessary, we never say a man is worth so many guineas, but always pounds.

It is to be observed that the measure of quantity has always increased, while that of value has decreased. The British pound has now decreased to less than a third of its original value, which was sixty-three shillings, while the measure of quantity has considerably increased. The reason is that the interest of the government requires this. It is the interest of the baker and the brewer to make the measure of quantity as little as possible; and therefore there are inspectors appointed who, when it is brought down, always settle it a little farther up. All our measures, which were taken from the Roman foot, fathom, and inch, are now a great deal more. In like manner what was called Troy weight, from Troy, a town in Champaigne, where then the greatest commerce was carried on, gave rise to a heavier weight, because there was usually given the cast of the balance along with it, and as this rendered dealings inaccurate, it was necessary that this cast of the balance should be determined. Accordingly, averdupois (avoir du poise), or heavy weight, was settled at thirteen ounces; but as this was a number not easily divided, it was settled at sixteen, the ounces being made proportioned to it.

Thus the measure of quantity has been increasing; we shall next show how the coin decreased. When the government takes the coinage into its own hands, the expenses naturally fall upon it, and if any private man coins, he must lessen the value or have nothing but his labour for his pains; and besides, as no man’s authority can be so great as to make his coin pass in common payments, he must forge the stamp of the government. As the government took the task upon themselves, they would endeavour, in order to prevent frauds, to prevent counterfeiting the king’s coin, and encroaching on his prerogative; besides, as the public faith was engaged, it was necessary to prevent all kinds of fraud, because it was likewise necessary that people should be obliged to receive the coin according to its denomination, and that if any refused it after a legal tender of payment was made, the debtor should be free, and the creditor guilty of felony. In rude and barbarous periods the government was laid

under many temptations to debase the coin, or, according to the mint language, to raise it; when, for instance, on any important occasion, such as paying of debts, or of soldiers, it has occasion for two millions, but has no more than one, it calls in the coin of the country, and, mixing with it a greater quantity of alloy, makes it come out two millions, as like as possible to what it was before. Many operations of this kind have been performed in every country; but England, from the freedom which it has almost uninterruptedly enjoyed, has been less troubled with this than any other nation. There it has only fallen to one-third, but in many other countries it is not a fiftieth of its original value.

The inconveniences of such practices are very great. The debasement of the coin hinders commerce, or, at least, greatly embarrasses it. A new calculation must be made how much of the new coin must be given for so much of the old. People are disposed to keep their goods from the market, as they know not what they will get for them. Thus, a stagnation of commerce is occasioned; besides, the debasing of the coin takes away the public faith. Nobody will lend any sum to the government, or bargain with it, as he perhaps may be paid with one half of it. As there is a fraud committed by the government, every subject must be allowed to do the same, and pay his debts with the new money, which is less than he owed. This scheme, however, serves the purpose for some small time, on the following account. The use of money is twofold: for the payment of debts, and the purchasing of commodities. When the coin is debased, a debt of twenty shillings is then paid with ten; but if the new coin be carried to a foreign market, it will give nothing but the old value. All day-labourers are paid in the new coin. The necessities of life must be sold at what the greater part of people can give, and consequently their price will for some time be diminished. However, the king himself loses much, though he gains in the meantime. His doubling it is no doubt a present advantage, but it necessarily diminishes his revenue, because all his taxes are paid in the new coin. To prevent this loss the French, and indeed all other nations on a like occasion, when they double the money by edict without re-coinage, make the augmentation after the money is called in, and before it goes out, and a diminution is made before next term of payment. A diminution has always a worse effect than an augmentation. An augmentation injures the creditor, a diminution the debtor, who should always be favoured. If I bind for ten pounds and be obliged to pay fifteen, common industry must be excessively embarrassed.

The coins of most countries are either of copper, silver, or gold. We are obliged even to receive payment in sixpences, which sometimes is the occasion of confusion and loss of time. The different coins are regulated, not by the caprice of the government, but by the market price of gold and silver, and according to this the proportion of gold and silver [is] settled. This proportion sometimes varies a little. The guineas some time ago were valued at twenty-two shillings, and at other times they have been at twenty. The gold rises more in proportion in Britain than anywhere else, and as it makes the silver of somewhat less value it is the cause of a real inconvenience. As silver buys more gold abroad than at home, by sending abroad silver they bring gold in return, which buys more silver here than it does abroad. By this means a kind of trade is made of it, the gold coin increasing and the silver diminishing. Some time ago a proposal was given in to remedy this, but it was thought so complex a case that they resolved for that time not to meddle with it.

§ 9. That National Opulence does not consist in Money.

We have shown what rendered money the measure of value, but it is to be observed that labour, not money, is the true measure of value. National opulence consists therefore in the quantity of goods, and the facility of barter. This shall be next considered.

The more money that is necessary to circulate the goods of any country, the more is the quantity of goods diminished. Suppose that the whole stock of Scotland in corn, cattle, money, &c. amounts to twenty millions, and if one million in cash is necessary to carry on the circulation, there will be in the country only nineteen millions of food, clothes, and lodging, and the people have less by one million than they would have if there were no occasion for this expedient of money. It is therefore evident that the poverty of any country increases as the money increases, money being a dead stock in itself, supplying no convenience of life. Money in this respect may be compared to the high roads of a country, which bear neither corn nor grass themselves, but circulate all the corn and grass in the country. If we could find any way to save the ground taken up by highways, we would increase considerably the quantity of commodities, and have more to carry to the market. In the same manner as [the worth of] a piece of ground does not lie in the number of highways that run through it, so the riches of a country does not consist in the quantity of money employed to circulate commerce, but in the great abundance of the necessaries of life. If we could therefore fall on a method to send the half of our money abroad to be converted into goods, and at the same time supply the channel of circulation at home, we would greatly increase the wealth of the country.

Hence the beneficial effects of the erection of banks and paper credit. It is easy to show that the erection of banks is of advantage to the commerce of a country. Suppose as above that the whole stock of Scotland amounted to twenty millions, and that two millions are employed in the circulation of it, [and] the other eighteen are in commodities. If then the banks in Scotland issued out notes to the value of two millions, and reserved among them £300,000 to answer immediate demands, there would be one million seven hundred thousand pounds circulating in cash, and two millions of paper money besides.

The natural circulation however is two million and the channel will receive no more. What is over will be sent abroad to bring home materials for food, clothes, and lodging. That this has a tendency to enrich a nation may be seen at first sight, for whatever commodities are imported, just so much is added to the opulence of the country. The only objection against paper money is that it drains the country of gold and silver, that bank notes will not circulate in a foreign market, and that foreign commodities must be paid in specie. This is no doubt the case; but if we consider attentively we will find that this is no real hurt to a country. The opulence of a nation does not consist in the quantity of coin, but in the abundance of commodities which are necessary for life, and whatever tends to increase these tends so far to increase the riches of a country.

Money is fit for none of the necessaries of life. It cannot of itself afford either food, clothes, or lodging, but must be exchanged for commodities fit for these purposes. If all the coin of the nation were exported, and our commodities proportionably increased, it might be recalled on any sudden emergency sooner than anyone could well imagine. Goods will always bring in money, and as long as the stock of commodities in any nation increases, they have it in their power to augment the quantity of coin, if thought necessary, by exporting their stock to foreign countries. This reasoning is confirmed by matter of fact. We find that the commerce of every nation in Europe has been prodigiously increased by the erection of banks. In this country everybody is sensible of their good effects, and our American colonies, where most of the commerce is carried on by paper circulation, are in a most flourishing condition.

What first gave occasion to the establishment of banks was to facilitate the transference of money. This at this day is the only design of the bank at Amsterdam. When commerce is carried to a high pitch, the delivery of gold and silver consumes a great deal of time. When a great merchant had ten or twenty thousand pounds to give away, he would take almost a week to count it out in guineas and shillings. A bank bill prevents all this trouble. Before the erection of the bank at Amsterdam, the method the merchants fell upon to lessen the trouble of counting out great quantities of cash, was to keep certain sums put up in bags to answer immediate demands. In this case you must either trust the honesty of the merchant, or you must take the trouble of counting it over. If you trusted his fidelity, frequent frauds would be committed, if not, your trouble was not lessened. The inconveniences arising from this gave

occasion to the erection of that bank, of which the whole transaction is this: you deposit a certain sum of money there, and the bank gives you a bill to that extent. This money is secure, and you never call for it, because the bill will generally sell above par, and it is therefore an advantage to yourself to let it lie; the bank has no office for payment, because there is seldom any payment demanded. In this manner the bank of Amsterdam has a good effect in facilitating commerce, and its notes circulate only there; the credit of that city is not in the least endangered by the bank. In 1701, when the French army was at Utrecht, a sudden demand was made upon it, and all Holland was alarmed with the expected fatal consequences, but no danger ensued. Before this a suspicion prevailed that the bankers had fallen into a custom of trading with the money, but at that time it was found that a great quantity of the money had been scorched by a fire that happened in the neighbourhood about fifty years before that. This plainly showed that there was no ground for the suspicion, and the credit of the bank remained unhurt. It has been affirmed by some that the bank of Amsterdam has always money in its stores to the amount of eighty or ninety millions; but this has lately been shown by an ingenious gentleman to be false, from a comparison of the trade of London and Amsterdam.

The constitution of the banks in Britain differs widely from that in Amsterdam. Here there is only about a sixth part of the stock kept in readiness for answering demands, and the rest is employed in trade. Originally they were on the same footing with the Amsterdam bank, but the directors taking liberty to send out money, they gradually came to their present situation. The ruin of a bank would not be so dangerous as is commonly imagined. Suppose all the money in Scotland was issued by one bank, and that it became bankrupt, a very few individuals would be ruined by it, but not many; because the quantity of cash or paper that people have in their hands bears no proportion to their wealth. Neither would the wealth of the whole country be much hurt by it, because the hundredth part of the riches of a country does not consist in money. The only method to prevent the bad consequence arising from the ruin of banks, is to give monopolies to none, but to encourage the erection of as many as possible. When several are established in a country, a mutual jealousy prevails, they are continually making unexpected runs on one another. This puts them on their guard and obliges them to provide themselves against such demands. Was there but one bank in Scotland it would perhaps be a little more enterprising, as it would have no rival, and by mismanagement might become bankrupt; but a number puts this

beyond all danger: even though one did break, every individual [would] have very few of its notes. From all these considerations it is manifest that banks are beneficial to the commerce of a country, and that it is a bad police to restrain them.

Several political writers have published treatises to show the pernicious nature of banks and paper money. Mun, a London merchant, published one with this intention, in answer to a book that had been written on the opposite before. He affirms that as England is drained of its money, it must go to ruin. The circulation of paper banishes gold and silver from the country; all other goods which we have in our possession being spent upon our subsistence, gradually diminish, and must at last come to an end. Money never decays, a stock of it will last for ever, and by keeping up great quantities of it in the country we shall insure our riches as long as the world stands. This reasoning was in those days thought very satisfactory, but from what has been said before concerning the nature of public opulence, it appears evidently absurd.

Some time after that, Mr. Gee, likewise a merchant, wrote with the same intention. He endeavours to show that England would soon be ruined by trade with foreign countries; by the exchange he calculates that the balance is always against us, and consequently that in almost all our commercial dealings with other nations we are losers; as they drain us of our money, we must soon come to ruin. The absurdity of this is likewise evident from former considerations, and we find that though no stop was put to the manner of carrying on foreign commerce by any regulations, the nation has prodigiously increased in riches, and is still increasing. He proposed indeed some regulations to prevent our ruin from this quarter, which if the government had been [so] foolish [as] to have complied with, they would more probably have impoverished the nation.

Mr. Hume published some essays showing the absurdity of these and other such doctrines. He proves very ingeniously that money must always bear a certain proportion to the quantity of commodities in every country; that whenever money is accumulated beyond the proportion of commodities in any country, the price of goods will necessarily rise; that this country will be undersold at the foreign market, and consequently the money must depart into other nations; but on the contrary whenever the quantity of money falls below the proportion of goods, the price of goods diminishes, the country undersells others in foreign markets, and consequently money returns in great plenty. Thus money and goods will keep near about a certain level in every country. Mr. Hume’s reasoning is exceedingly ingenious. He seems, however, to have gone a little into the

notion that public opulence consists in money, which was considered above.

We may observe upon this that human industry always multiplies goods and money together, though not always in the same proportion. The labour of men will always be employed in producing whatever is the object of human desire, and things will increase in proportion as it is in the power of man to cultivate them. Corn and other commodities of that kind must always be produced in greater abundance than gold, precious stones, and the like, because they are more within the reach of human industry. Almost any part of the surface of the earth may, by proper culture, be made capable of producing corn, but gold is not to be found everywhere, and even where it is to be found, it lies concealed in the bowels of the earth, and to produce a small quantity of it, long time and much labour are requisite. For these reasons money never increases in proportion to the increase of goods, and consequently money will be sold at a cheaper rate in proportion as a country becomes opulent. In savage nations money gives a vast price, because savages have no money but [what] they acquire by plunder, for they have not that knowledge which is necessary for producing money in their own country. But when a nation arrives at a certain degree of improvement in the arts, its value diminishes; then they begin to search the mines and manufacture it themselves. From the fall of the Roman Empire to the discovery of the West Indies, the value of money was very high, and continually increasing. Since that latter period its value has decreased considerably.

Mr. Locke, too, published a treatise to show the pernicious consequences of allowing the nation to be drained of money. His notions were likewise founded upon the idea that public opulence consists in money, though he treats the matter in a more philosophical light than the rest. He affirms, with Mr. Mun, that if there is no money in a nation it must soon come to ruin, that all commodities are soon spent, but money lasts for ever.

Upon the whole we may observe on this subject, that the reason why our riches do not consist in money but commodities is, that money cannot be used for any of the purposes of life, but that commodities are fitted for our subsistence. The consumptibility, if we may use the word, of goods, is the great cause of human industry, and an industrious people will always produce more than they consume. It is easy to show how small a proportion the cash in every country bears to the public opulence. It is generally supposed that there are thirty millions of money

circulating in Britain, but the annual consumption amounts to much more than a hundred millions, for, computing the inhabitants of the island at ten millions, and allowing ten pounds per annum for the subsistence of each person, which is by much too little, the whole annual consumption amounts to that sum. So it appears that the circulating cash bears but a small proportion to the whole opulence of the country. It is probable, however, that there are not thirty millions in Britain, and in that case the proportion will be still less.

It is said by some who support the notion that the riches of a country consists in money, that when a person retires from trade he turns his stock immediately into cash. It is plain, however, that the reason of this is that as money is the instrument of commerce, a man can change it for the necessaries and elegancies of life more easily than anything else. Even the miser who locks up his gold in his chest has this end in view. No man in his senses hoards up money for its own sake, but he considers that by keeping money always by him, he has it in his power to supply at once all the necessities of himself and his family.

This opinion that riches consist in money, as it is absurd in speculation, so it has given occasion to many prejudicial errors in practice, some of which are the following.

§ 10. Of Prohibiting the Exportation of Coin.

It was owing to these tenets that the government prohibited the exportation of coin, which prohibition has been extremely hurtful to the commerce of the country, because whatever quantity of money there is in any country above what is sufficient for the circulation is merely a dead stock.

In King William’s time there were two species of coin, milled and unmilled. The unmilled was frequently clipped by different persons in its circulation. This occasioned frequent disorders among the people, and therefore the parliament ordered all the clipped money to be brought into the mint, and the government was at the expense of recoining it, which operation cost them about two millions. As they had been at this expense, they thought it just and proper to prohibit the exportation of money for the future. The merchants, however, complained of this hardship, and were then allowed to export money to a small extent. The great complaint, however, was always scarcity of money. In order to remedy this, the government established a common office for coining money where every one might get their gold and silver turned into coin without any expense. The consequence of this was that as coin was of no more value than bullion, a great deal of coin was melted down and exported. To prevent this it was rendered felony to melt coin; but it is so simple an operation, and so easily gone about, that the law was easily eluded. The immediate effect of this regulation was that more coin was exported than ever. This might have been easily prevented by fixing a certain price upon the coinage of bullion, or by ordaining the master of the mint to be paid by the persons who brought their money to be coined; but such a regulation was never thought of.

Any regulation of the above kind is very absurd, for there is no fear if things be left to their free course that any nation will want money sufficient for the circulation of their commodities, and every prohibition of exportation is always ineffectual, and very often occasions the exportation of more than otherwise would be. Suppose, for instance, the Portuguese prohibited from exporting their money by a capital punishment. As they have few goods to give in exchange for ours, their foreign trade must cease; or if they attempt to smuggle, the British merchant must lay such a price upon his goods as will be sufficient to

reward him for the risk he runs of being detected, and the Portuguese merchant, being obliged to buy his goods too dear, must be a loser. In general, every prohibition of this kind hurts the commerce of a country. Every unnecessary accumulation of money is a dead stock which might be employed in enriching the nation by foreign commerce. It likewise raises the price of goods and makes the country undersold at foreign markets.

It is to be observed that prohibiting the exportation of money is really one great cause of the poverty of Spain and Portugal. When they got possession of the mines of Mexico and Peru, they thought they could command all Europe by the continual supplies which they received from thence, if they could keep the money among them, and therefore they prohibited the exportation of it. But this had a quite contrary effect, for when money is, as it were, dammed up to an unnatural height, and there is more than the circulation requires, the consequences are very unfavourable to the country. For it is impossible that the exportation of gold and silver can be wholly stopped, as the balance of trade must be against them, that is, they must buy more than they sell, and it is indispensably necessary that this balance be paid in money. Every commodity rises to an extravagant height. The Portuguese pay for English cloth, additional to the natural price of it, the expense and risk of carrying it there, for nobody ever saw a Spanish or Portuguese ship in a British harbour. All the goods sent to those countries are carried by ourselves and consigned to the British factors, to be disposed of by them. But besides the carriage and insurance, the British merchant must be paid for the risk of having his money seized in Portugal, in consequence of the prohibition. All risk of forfeiture or penalty must lie upon the goods. This has a miserable effect upon the domestic industry of those countries, and has put a stop to their manufactures. Nobody ever saw a piece of Spanish cloth in any other country, yet they have the best materials in the world, and with the same art that we have, might monopolise the trade of Europe. It drew the attention of the nations who trade with them in these commodities, when a general, on a certain occasion, presented to his majesty the regiment of which he had the command clothed in the manufactures of Spain. In general they export no manufactured commodities, swords and armour excepted, as they have confessedly the best steel in the world, but only the spontaneous productions of the country, such as fruits and wines.

Regulations of a similar nature were made in Britain in King William’s time. Money was thought to constitute opulence, and therefore

the accumulation of it commanded the whole of the public attention. They coined all money brought in for nothing, and the expenses of coinage, which amounted to about £140,000, were entirely thrown away; and, besides, great encouragement was given to exportation, because, as gold and silver were coined for nothing, coined money could never be dearer than bullion. As the exportation of bullion was free, they melted down the coin and sent it abroad. At present there is a great temptation to such practices, for an oz. of pure silver at mint price is exactly valued at 5s. 2d., but bullion is often bought at 5s. 6d. As nothing is lost in melting, here is a profit of 4d. per oz. It is on this account that we seldom or never see a new shilling, and it is one of the causes that silver is so scarce in proportion to gold.

§ 11. Of the Balance of Trade.

The idea of public opulence consisting in money has been productive of other bad effects. Upon this principle most pernicious regulations have been established. Those species of commerce which drain us of our money are thought disadvantageous, and those which increase it beneficial, therefore the former are prohibited and the latter encouraged. As France is thought to produce more of the elegancies of life than this country, and as we take much from them, and they need little from us, the balance of trade is against us, and therefore almost all our trade with France is prohibited by great taxes and duties on importation. On the other hand, as Spain and Portugal take more of our commodities than we of theirs, the balance is in our favours, and this trade is not only allowed, but encouraged. The absurdity of these regulations will appear on the least reflection. All commerce that is carried on betwixt any two countries must necessarily be advantageous to both. The very intention of commerce is to exchange your own commodities for others which you think will be more convenient for you. When two men trade between themselves it is undoubtedly for the advantage of both. The one has perhaps more of one species of commodities than he has occasion for, he therefore exchanges a certain quantity of it with the other, for another commodity that will be more useful to him. The other agrees to the bargain on the same account, and in this manner the mutual commerce is advantageous to both. The case is exactly the same betwixt any two nations. The goods which the English merchants want to import from France are certainly more valuable to them than what they give for them. Our very desire to purchase them shows that we have more use for them than either the money or the commodities which we give for them. It may be said indeed that money lasts for ever, but that claret and cambrics are soon consumed. This is true: but what is the intention of industry if it be not to produce those things which are capable of being used, and are conducive to the convenience and comfort of human life? Unless we use the produce of our industry, unless we can subsist more people in a better way, what avails it? Besides, if we have money to spend upon foreign commodities, what purpose serves it to keep it in the country? If the circulation of commodities require it, there will be none to spare; and if the channel of circulation be full, no more is necessary. And if only a certain sum be necessary for that purpose, why throw more into it?

Again, by prohibiting the exportation of goods to foreign markets, the industry of the country is greatly discouraged. It is a very great motive to industry, that people have it in their power to exchange the produce of their labour for what they please, and wherever there is any restraint on people in this respect, they will not be so vigorous in improving manufactures. If we be prohibited to send corn and cloth to France, that industry is stopped which raises corn and prepares cloth for the French market. It may be said indeed that if we were allowed to trade with France we would not exchange our commodities with theirs, but our money, and thus human industry is by no means discouraged; but if we attend to it, we shall find that it comes to the same thing at last. By hindering people to dispose of their money as they think proper, you discourage those manufactures by which this money is gained. All jealousies therefore between different nations, and prejudices of this kind, are extremely [hurtful] to commerce, and limit public opulence. This is always the case betwixt France and us in the time of war.

In general we may observe that these jealousies and prohibitions are most hurtful to the richest nations, and that in proportion as a free commerce would be advantageous. When a rich man and a poor man deal with one another, both of them will increase their riches, if they deal prudently, but the rich man’s stock will increase in a greater proportion than the poor man’s. In like manner when a rich and a poor nation engage in trade, the rich nation will have the greatest advantage, and therefore the prohibition of this commerce is most hurtful to it of the two. All our trade with France is prohibited by the high duties imposed on every French commodity imported. It would, however, have been better police to encourage our trade with France. If any foreign commerce is to be prohibited, it ought to be that with Spain and Portugal. This would have been most advantageous to England. France is much more populous, a more extensive country, farther advanced in arts and manufactures of every kind, and the industry which a commerce with that country would have excited at home would have been much greater. Twenty millions of people perhaps in a great society, working as it were to one another’s hands, from the nature of the division of labour before explained, would produce a thousand times more goods than another society consisting only of two or three millions. It were happy therefore, both for this country and for France, that all national prejudices were rooted out, and a free and uninterrupted commerce established.

It may be observed in general that we never heard of any nation ruined by this balance of trade. When Gee published his book, the balance with all nations was against us, except Spain and Portugal. It was then thought that in a few years we would be reduced to an absolute state of poverty. This indeed has been the cry of all political writers since the time of Charles II; notwithstanding all this, we find ourselves far richer than before, and, when there is occasion for it, we can raise much more money than ever has been done. A late minister of state levied in one year twenty-three millions with greater ease than Lord Godolphin could levy six in Queen Anne's time. The French and Dutch writers, embracing the same principle, frequently alarmed their country with the same groundless terror, but they still continue to flourish. It is to be observed that the poverty of a nation can never proceed from foreign trade if carried on with wisdom and prudence. The poverty of a nation proceeds from much the same causes with those which render an individual poor. When a man consumes more than he gains by his industry, he must impoverish himself unless he has some other way of subsistence. In the same manner, if a nation consume more than it produces, poverty is inevitable; if its annual produce be ninety millions and its annual consumption an hundred, then it spends, eats, and drinks, tears, wears, ten millions more than it produces, and its stock of opulence must gradually [go] to nothing.

§ 12. Of the Opinion that no Expense at Home can be hurtful.

There is still another bad effect proceeding from that absurd notion, that national opulence consists in money. It is commonly imagined that whatever people spend in their own country cannot diminish public opulence, if you take care of exports and imports. This is the foundation of Dr. Mandeville's system that private vices are public benefits: what is spent at home is all spent among ourselves, none of it goes out of the country. But it is evident that when any man tears, and wears, and spends his stock, without employing himself in any species of industry, the nation is at the end of the year so much the poorer by it. If he spend only the interest of the money he does no harm, as the capital still remains, and is employed in promoting industry, but if he spend the capital, the whole is gone. To illustrate this let us make a supposition, that my father at his death, instead of a thousand pounds in cash, leaves me the necessaries and conveniences of life to the same value, which is precisely the same as if he left it in money, because I afterwards purchase them in money. I get a number of idle folks about me and eat, drink, tear, and wear, till the whole is consumed. By this, I not only reduce myself to want, but certainly rob the public stock of a thousand pounds, as it is spent and nothing produced for it. As a farther illustration of the hurt which the public receives from such practices, let us suppose that this island was invaded by a numerous band of Tartars, a people who are still in the state of shepherds, a people who lead a roving life, and have little or no idea of industry. Here they would find all commodities for the taking, they would put on fine clothes, eat, drink, tear, and wear everything they laid their hands upon. The consequence would be that from the highest degree of opulence the whole country would be reduced to the lowest pitch of misery, and brought back to its ancient state. The thirty millions of money would probably remain for some time, but all the necessaries of life would be consumed. This shows the absurdity of that opinion that no home consumption can hurt the opulence of a country.

Upon this principle that no public expense employed at home can be hurtful, a war in Germany is thought a dreadful calamity, as it drains the country of money, and a land war is always thought more prejudicial than a sea one for the same reason; but upon reflection, we will find that

it is the same thing to the nation, how or where its stock be spent. If I purchase a thousand pounds' worth of French wines, and drink them all when they come home, the country is two thousand pounds poorer, because both the goods and money are gone; if I spend a thousand pounds worth of goods at home upon myself the country is only deprived of one thousand pounds, as the money still remains; but in maintaining an army in a distant war it is the same thing whether we pay them in goods or money, because the consumption is the same at any rate. Perhaps it is the better police to pay them in money, as goods are better fitted for the purposes of life at home. For the same reason there is no difference between land and sea wars, as is commonly imagined.

From the above considerations it appears that Britain should by all means be made a free port, that there should be no interruptions of any kind made to foreign trade, that if it were possible to defray the expenses of government by any other method, all duties, customs, and excise should be abolished, and that free commerce and liberty of exchange should be allowed with all nations, and for all things.

But still further, and on the same principles as above, an apology is made for the public debt. Say they, though we [owe] at present above a hundred millions, we owe it to ourselves, or at least very little of it to foreigners. It is just the right hand owing the left, and on the whole can be little or no disadvantage. But [it] is to be considered that the interest of this hundred millions is paid by industrious people, and given to support idle people who are employed in gathering it. Thus industry is taxed to support idleness. If the debt had not been contracted, by prudence and economy the nation would have been much richer than at present. Their industry would not be hurt by the oppression of those idle people who live upon it. Instead of the brewer paying taxes which are often improper, the stock might have been lent out to such industrious people as would have made six or seven per cent. by it, and have given better interest than the government does: this stock would then have been employed for the country['s] welfare. When there are such heavy taxes to pay, every merchant must carry on less trade than he would otherwise do; he has his taxes to pay before he sell any of his commodities. This narrows, as it were, his stock, and hinders his trade from being so extensive as it otherwise would be. To stop this clamour, Sir Robert Walpole endeavoured to show that the public debt was no inconvenience, though it is to be supposed that a man of his abilities saw the contrary himself.

§ 13. Of the Scheme of Mr. Law.

The last bad effect that shall be taken notice of is the notion of Mr. Law, a Scotch merchant. He thought that national opulence consists in money, and that the value of gold and silver is arbitrary, and depends on constitution and agreement. He imagined that the idea of value might be brought to paper, and it preferred to money. If this could be done, he thought it would be a great convenience, as the government then might do what it pleased, raise armies, pay soldiers, and be at any expense whatever. Mr. Law proposed his scheme to the Scotch parliament in 1701. It was rejected, and he went over to France, where his project was relished by the Duke of Orleans. In this book he agrees with the fore-mentioned writers that, the balance of trade being against a nation, it must soon be drained of its money. In order to turn the balance of trade in our favours, he proposed to the Scotch Parliament the following scheme:

As there was little gold or silver in this country he thought they might fall upon some other method of creating money, independent of it, to wit, by paper. On this account he proposed the erecting of a land bank at Edinburgh, in which it is to be observed, he falls into many blunders concerning tenures and the nature of property. At this bank they were to keep by them only twenty or thirty thousand pounds to answer small demands, and to give out notes for land. For two acres of arable land they were to issue out a note of equal value, and if any extraordinary demand was made upon them, they would pay so much of it in money, and so much in land. By this means in a very short time the whole land of Scotland would go from hand to hand, as a twenty-shilling note does.

As this project never was executed, it is hard to say what the consequence might have been; it is, however, obviously liable to the following inconveniences. Taking the land rent of Scotland at five millions per annum, though it be much more, at twenty years’ purchase it amounts to an hundred millions; there would then be just so much currency in the country and if one million was then necessary for circulation there would just be ninety-nine millions for no purpose, as none of it could go abroad; they would not have been able to maintain one man more than formerly, as their food, clothes, and lodging would

not have been increased, and every commodity would have risen to ninety-nine times its present value.

Mr. Law, not meeting with the encouragement he expected, went over to France in the year 1714, and, as was before mentioned, found favour with the Duke of Orleans, then Regent, and got liberty to erect a bank there, which at first was only to the extent of six millions of livres or £320,0 sterling. From this beginning he carried it on to a very great height, issued out many notes, and in a short time engrossed the whole circulation of France. As Mr. Law's notes were received in payment of the revenue, this contributed to the success of the scheme. This, too, had a greater effect in France than it could have had here, considering the number of taxes, and the manner in which they are levied. By this and other circumstances, his notes were always at par with gold and silver, especially as they were making continual changes in their coin. About that time twenty-eight livres, which were equal to eight ounces of pure silver, were raised to sixty, and as a diminution of coin is always the consequent of a sudden rise, this was daily expected. Mr. Law made his notes payable in what was called the money of the day. Instead of promising to pay his notes, as we would say, in pounds sterling, he did it in crowns and half-crowns, which was a very proper method to make them par with gold and silver. Suppose that our coin were raised to double, a half-crown would become a crown, and so in this manner the bank notes and money would rise and fall together.

As Law wanted to make his notes above par, he fell upon the following scheme. He issued out his bank notes payable in livres tournois, by which, when the coin came to be diminished, he would not be obliged to pay above one-half. The coin was not received in the market or elsewhere, as the diminution was still expected, and did not come for some time. This favoured his design, and kept the notes above par, by which the credit of his bank was established.

The next step Mr. Law fell upon was the relieving of the public debts, which amounted to 200 millions. As he saw the diminution must needs come, he took another method to keep up his notes. He got a grant of the exclusive privilege of trading to Canada, and established the Mississippi Company. To this he joined the African, the Turkey, and the East India companies. He also farmed the tobacco and all the public revenues of France at 52 millions, for in France the whole revenue is farmed by one man, who undertakes it and levies it without excisemen, and the farmers there are the richest in the country, and must be skilled in the finances

and public revenues. Mr. Law undertook this, and, having the whole trade of the country monopolized, it was difficult to say what profits he would make. He wanted to lend the government 80 or 90 millions [sterling], which he could easily do by issuing notes to that value, but then he saw that they would soon return upon him. To prevent this, his invention was set on work, and we shall see how far he succeeded. As the company he erected seemed to be in a very flourishing condition, shares were purchased in it at a very considerable rate. He opened a subscription to it at 500 livres, so that a navy ticket or billet d'état purchased a share into it, which raised them to a par, as they had for a long time been far below it. The government of France was never in such a miserable condition as then. The interest of the money which should have paid the billets d'état was seized upon for other purposes. Never was monarch more degraded than Lewis XIV. After the treaty of Utrecht he had occasion to borrow 8 millions of livres from Holland, and not only to give them his bond for 32 millions, but to get some merchants to be security for him. Since that was the case, we need not be surprised that the billets d'état sold at great discount, as they bore no interest, and it was quite uncertain when they would be paid. Law published a declaration that one of these, which was granted for 500 livres, should purchase a share in the company, and thus they came again to par. The people still continuing in great expectations of profit, he in a few days opened a new subscription at 5000 livres, and afterwards another at 10,000. At this time he was enabled to lend the government 1600 millions of livres at 3 per cent.

Had he stopped here, it is probable that he would have answered all engagements, but his future proceedings ruined all. It was impossible that the value of shares could long continue at such a high rate. He thought, however, that it was necessary to do all that he could to keep them up, as the whole fortunes of many people were in the bank. He had issued out notes to double the circulation of the country, which raised the price of everything to an enormous pitch, and consequently the exchange was against France in all foreign trade. This was principally occasioned by his opening an office to purchase 500 livres shares at 9000 livres, which obliged him to issue out many notes. People of prudence who were concerned opposed this scheme, and indeed it was the first thing that made his bank lose credit, and occasioned its dissolution. As he was not obliged to pay the capital sums, only the annual dividend of 200 livres arising from the profits, he might have let them fall to their original 500 without any great loss but that of reputation; but his buying

up the shares occasioned his issuing out so many notes that they must of necessity return upon him. This was so much the case that he was obliged to open offices in different parts of Paris for the payment of them. When in this manner oppressed, he was making continual changes on the coin, in order to dissuade people from returning on the bank, and disgust them at gold and silver. He cried up gold, but as coin cannot be kept much above the level of the metal, when it was so much depreciated, it was not taken. If a person had 20,000 guineas, as he was afraid that the coin would not continue at that value, he went to the bank and got it exchanged for notes. The same consideration prevented them from returning upon the bank, as they would there be paid in coin. By this means he not only prevented his notes from coming upon him, but filled his coffers with almost all the gold in the country. In order to accomplish this part of his scheme more perfectly, he most arbitrarily published an edict prohibiting any persons from keeping by them gold or silver, beyond a certain sum. He also took away the severe penalties that were in force against the exportation of coin, and every person was allowed to export money free from duty. By this means much of it went to Holland. He reasoned with himself, some instrument of change is necessary, paper, gold, and silver, at present are the medium; if gold and silver be utterly exported, paper only remains, and may be rendered the sole instrument of commerce. This he thought he had done effectually when by an edict he had swept a part into his coffers, and cleared the country of the remainder. They would therefore be obliged to take paper. At last, however, after a great number of expedients, he found it was impracticable. By paying out great sums, he kept off ruin for some months, but at last published an edict that all bank notes were to be paid only in one half: and indeed if he had stood to this, as some imagined he might have done, it would have been far better than to have suffered the after consequences. Upon this edict the credit of the bank was entirely broken, and the bank notes all on a sudden sunk to nothing. This ruined an immense number of people. Britain can never be much hurt by the breaking of a bank, because few people keep notes by them to any value. A man worth £40,000 will scarce ever have £500 of notes by him. But the breaking of this bank in France occasioned the most dreadful confusion. The greatest part of people had their whole fortunes in notes, and were reduced to a state of beggary. The only people who were safe were the stock-jobbers who had sold out in time, or with their bank notes had purchased all the valuable goods and a great deal of land, though at the highest prices. These made immense fortunes by it.

The South Sea scheme in our own country was nothing to this. Nobody was under any obligations of going into it, the government had no share in it, and the loss was but a trifle in comparison. The clamour which Law's last edict made caused it soon to be rescinded, and the notes were again declared to be paid at value, but the bank never recovered its credit, and this had no effect. However, by raising the coin and other expedients, he kept it from May to October, and then was obliged to leave France, which with difficulty he accomplished; his goods were confiscated and he died soon after. This amazing scheme was founded on these two principles, that public opulence consists in money, and that the value of money is arbitrary, founded upon the common consent of mankind. Consistent with these principles he thought he might easily increase the public opulence if he could annex the idea of money to paper, and the government could never be at any loss to produce any effect that money could do. This scheme of Mr. Law's was by no means contemptible; he really believed in it, and was the dupe of it himself. It was thought he had provided well for himself, but it was found to be otherwise. If the Duke of Orleans had lived only a few days longer it was agreed upon that he was to have been re-established. After his death it was not thought expedient to have it put in execution.

This scheme of Law's was imitated all over Europe. It gave occasion to the South Sea Company in England, which turned out at last a mere fraud, and, could it have been carried to as great an extent as Law's, would have been productive of the same consequences. It was erected in the latter end of Queen Anne's reign, and the intention of it was to carry on a trade to the South Seas. For this purpose they bought up the greater part of the debts of the nation. Their stock, however, was not great, and the profits which could be expected from it were very inconsiderable; the expectations of the people were never greatly raised, and its fall was not very prejudicial to the nation.

§ 14. Of Interest.

We have only two things further to mention relating to the price of commodities, to wit, interest and exchange.

It is commonly supposed that the premium of interest depends upon the value of gold and silver. The value of these are regulated by their quantity, for as the quantity increases, the value diminishes, and as the quantity decreases, the value rises. If we attend to it, however, we shall find that the premium of interest is regulated by the quantity of stock. About the time of the discovery of the West Indies it is to be observed that common interest was at 10 or 12 per cent, and since that time it has gradually diminished. The plain reason is this. Under the feudal constitution there could be very little accumulation of stock, which will appear from considering the situation of those three orders of men, which made up the whole body of the people: the peasants, the landlords, and the merchants. The peasants had leases which depended upon the caprice of their masters; they could never increase in wealth, because the landlord was ready to squeeze it all from them, and therefore they had no motive to acquire it. As little could the landlords increase their wealth, as they lived so indolent a life, and were involved in perpetual wars. The merchants again were oppressed by all ranks, and were not able to secure the produce of their industry from rapine and violence. Thus there could be little accumulation of wealth at all; but after the fall of the feudal government these obstacles to industry were removed, and the stock of commodities began gradually to increase.

We may further observe that what one trade lends to another is not so much to be considered as money, as commodities. No doubt it is generally money which one man delivers another in loan, but then it is immediately turned into stock, and thus the quantity of stock enables you to make a greater number of loans. The price of interest is entirely regulated by this circumstance. If there be few who have it in their power to lend money, and a great number of people who want to borrow it, the price of interest must be high; but if the quantity of stock on hand be so great as to enable a great number to lend, it must fall proportionably.

§ 15. Of Exchange.

Exchange is a method invented by merchants to facilitate the payment of money at a distance. Suppose I owe £100 to a merchant at London, I apply to a banker in Glasgow for a bill upon another merchant in London, payable to my creditor. For this I must not only give the banker £100, but I must also reward him for his trouble. This reward is called the price, or premium, of exchange. Between Glasgow and London it is sometimes at 2 per cent., sometimes more, sometimes less. Between London and Glasgow again it is sometimes 4 or 5 per cent. below par; and between Glasgow and the West India colonies it is often at 50 per cent. below par. The value of exchange is always regulated by the risk of sending money between two places. It is often, however, greater than the risk can be supposed to be, and this is owing to paper circulation. Between Glasgow and London one can easily get £100 carried for fifteen or sixteen shillings; but as paper in Scotland makes a great part of the currency, and as there is an inconveniency in getting bank notes exchanged for gold and silver, a merchant chooses rather to pay 2 per cent. than take the trouble of changing the notes for cash, and sending the money. This too is the cause of the high price of exchange between Virginia and Glasgow. In the American colonies the currency is paper, and their notes are 40 or 50 per cent. below par, because the funds are not sufficient. In every exchange you must pay the price, the risk, some profit to the banker, and so much for the degradation of money in notes. This is the cause of the rise of exchange. Whenever it rises beyond the price of insurance it is owing to the money of one country being lower than that of another. This was the cause of the high price of exchange between France and Holland about the time of the Mississippi Company. It was then at 80 or 90 per cent. All the money had been expelled from France by the scheme of Mr. Law, and the whole circulation was paper, and the credit of the bank had fallen. All these reasons conspired to raise the exchange to such an enormous pitch.

§ 16. Of the Causes of the slow Progress of Opulence.

We come now to the next thing proposed, to examine the causes of the slow progress of opulence. When one considers the effects of the division of labour, what an immediate tendency it has to improve the arts, it appears somewhat surprising that every nation should continue so long in a poor and indigent state as we find it does. The causes of this may be considered under these two heads: first, natural impediments; and secondly, the oppression of civil government.

A rude and barbarous people are ignorant of the effects of the division of labour, and it is long before one person, by continually working at different things, can produce any more than is necessary for his daily subsistence. Before labour can be divided some accumulation of stock is necessary; a poor man with no stock can never begin a manufacture. Before a man can commence farmer, he must at least have laid in a year's provision, because he does not receive the fruits of his labour till the end of the season. Agreeably to this, in a nation of hunters or shepherds no person can quit the common trade in which he is employed, and which affords him daily subsistence, till he have some stock to maintain him, and begin the new trade. Every one knows how difficult it is, even in a refined society, to raise one's self to moderate circumstances. It is still more difficult to raise one's self by those trades which require no art nor ingenuity. A porter or day-labourer must continue poor for ever. In the beginnings of society this is still more difficult. Bare subsistence is almost all that a savage can procure, and having no stock to begin upon, nothing to maintain him but what is produced by the exertion of his own strength, it is no wonder he continues long in an indigent state. The meanest labourer in a polished society has in many respects an advantage over a savage: he has more assistance in his labour; he has only one particular thing to do, which, by assiduity, he attains a facility in performing; he has also machines and instruments which greatly assist him. An Indian has not so much as a pick-axe, a spade, or a shovel, nor anything else but his own labour. This is one great cause of the slow progress of opulence in every country; till some stock be produced there can be no division of labour, and before a division of labour take place there can be very little accumulation of stock.

The other cause that was assigned was the nature of civil government. In the infancy of society, as has been often observed, government must be weak and feeble, and it is long before its authority can protect the industry of individuals from the rapacity of their neighbours. When people find themselves every moment in danger of being robbed of all they possess, they have no motive to be industrious. There could be little accumulation of stock, because the indolent, which would be the greatest number, would live upon the industrious, and spend whatever they produced. When the power of government becomes so great as to defend the produce of industry, another obstacle arises from a different quarter. Among neighbouring nations in a barbarous state there are perpetual wars, one continually invading and plundering the other, and though private property be secured from the violence of neighbours, it is in danger from hostile invasions. In this manner it is next to impossible that any accumulation of stock can be made. It is observable that among savage nations there are always more violent convulsions than among those farther advanced in refinement. Among the Tartars and Arabs, great bands of barbarians are always roaming from one place to another in quest of plunder, and they pillage every country as they go along. Thus large tracts of country are often laid waste and all the effects carried away. Germany too was in the same condition about the fall of the Roman Empire; nothing can be more an obstacle to the progress of opulence.

We shall next consider the effect of oppressive measures, first, with regard to agriculture, and then with regard to commerce.

Agriculture is of all other arts the most beneficent to society, and whatever tends to retard its improvement is extremely prejudicial to the public interest. The produce of agriculture is much greater than that of any other manufacture. The rents of the whole lands in England amount to about 24 millions, and as the rent is generally about a third of the produce, the whole annual produce of the lands must be about 72 millions. This is much more than the produce of either the linen or woollen manufactures, for, as the annual consumption is computed to be about 100 millions, if you deduce from this the 72 millions, the produce of agriculture, there will remain only 28 millions for all the other manufactures of the nation. Whatever measures therefore discourage the improvement of this art are extremely prejudicial to the progress of opulence.

One great hindrance to the progress of agriculture is the throwing great tracts of land into the hands of single persons. If any man’s estate

be more than he is able to cultivate, a part of it is in a manner lost. When a nation of savages takes possession of a country, the great and powerful divide the whole lands among them, and leave none for the lower ranks of people. In this manner the Celtae, and afterwards the Saxons, took possession of our own island. When land is divided in great portions among the powerful, it is cultivated by slaves, which is a very unprofitable method of cultivation. The labour of a slave proceeds from no other motive but the dread of punishment, and if he could escape this, he would work none at all. Should he exert himself in the most extraordinary manner, he cannot have the least expectations of any reward; and as all the produce of his labour goes to his master, he has no encouragement to industry. A young slave may perhaps exert himself a little at first, in order to attain his master's favour; but he soon finds that it is all in vain, and that, be his behaviour what it will, he will always meet with the same severe treatment. When lands, therefore, are cultivated by slaves, they cannot be greatly improven, as they have no motive to industry. A cultivation of the same kind is that by villains. The landlord gave a man a piece of ground to cultivate, allowing him to maintain himself by it, and obliging him to restore whatever was over his own maintenance. This was equally unfavourable to the progress of agriculture, because the villains, who were a kind of slaves, had no motive to industry but their own maintenance. This objection lies equally against all cultivation by slaves. Some of the West India islands have indeed been cultivated by slaves, and have been greatly improven, but they might have been cultivated by freemen at less expense; and had not the profits of sugar been very great, the planters could not have supported the expense of slaves, but their profits have been so enormous, that all the extraordinary expense of slave cultivation has vanished before it. In the northern colonies they employ few slaves, and, though they are in a very flourishing condition in those colonies, the lands are generally cultivated by the proprietors, which is the most favourable method to the progress of agriculture. A tenant of the best kind has always a rent to pay, and therefore has much less to lay out on improvements. When a country sends out a colony, it may hinder a large tract of land to be occupied by a single person; but when savages take possession of a country, they are subject to no laws, the strongest man takes possession of most ground, and therefore among them agriculture cannot be quickly promoted.

After villains went out, as was explained before, tenants by steel bow succeeded. The landlord gave a farm with a stock to a villain, which

were restored with half of the produce, at the end of the year, to the landlord; but as the tenant had no stock, nor though he had, any encouragement to lay it out on improvements, this method always was unfavourable to agriculture. For the same reason that tithes, by depriving the farmer of a tenth of his produce, hinder improvement, this, though in a higher degree, was a hindrance, because the tenant was deprived of one-half of the produce. A great part of France is still cultivated by tenants of steel bow, and it is said that it still remains in some parts of the Highlands of Scotland.

The next species of cultivation was that by tenants, such as we have at present. Some of the tenants by steel bow, by extreme pinching and cunning, got a small stock laid up and offered their masters a fixed rent for the ground. Thus in progress of time the present method of cultivation was introduced, though it was long liable to inconveniences. If the landlord sold his land, the new proprietor was not bound to the terms of agreement, and the tenant was often turned out of his farm; the landlord too invented a method to get rid of the tenant when he pleased by selling the estate to another, on whom he had a back bond to make him return the estate whenever the tenants were turned out. As the tenants were continually in danger of being turned out, they had no motive to improve the ground. This takes place to this day in every country of Europe, except Britain. In Scotland, contracts of this kind were rendered real rights in the reign of James III, and in England in that of Henry VII.

Besides these there were several other impediments to the progress of agriculture. At first all rents were paid in kind, by which, in a dear year, the tenants were in danger of being ruined. A diminution of produce seldom hurts the tenant who pays his rent in money, because the price of corn rises in proportion to its scarcity. Society, however, is considerably advanced before money comes to be the whole instrument of commerce.

Another embarrassment was that the feudal lords sometimes allowed the king to levy subsidies from their tenants, which greatly discouraged their industry. Besides all, under the tyranny of the feudal aristocracy, the landlords had nothing to stop them from squeezing their tenants and raising the rents of their lands as high as they pleased. England is better secured in this respect than any country, because everyone who hold[s] but 40s. a year for life has a vote for a member of parliament, by which, if he rent a farm, he is secure from oppression.

Several circumstances concurred to continue the engrossment of lands. The right of primogeniture was pretty early established, and

hindered estates from being divided. The institution of entails is to this day attended with the same bad consequences. The embarrassment, too, of the feudal law in transferring property, detarded the progress of agriculture. Any quantity of any other commodity may be bought or sold in an instant, but in purchasing four or five acres of land a great deal [of] time must be spent in examining the progress of writs, and getting your right legally constituted. This tends greatly to the engrossment of lands, and consequently stops their improvement. If all the forms in buying lands were abolished, every person almost who had got a little money would be ready to lay it out on land, and the land by passing through the different hands would be much better improved. There is no natural reason why a thousand acres should not be as easily purchased as a thousand yards of cloth. The keeping land out of the market always hinders its improvement. A merchant who buys a little piece of land has it in his eye to improve it, and make the most of it he can. Great and ancient families have seldom either stock or inclination to improve their estates, except a small piece of pleasure-ground about their house.

There are many errors in the police of almost every country, which have contributed greatly to stop the progress of agriculture. Our fathers, finding themselves once in every two or three years subject to the most grievous dearths, to escape that calamity prohibited the exportation of corn. This is still the police of the greater part of Europe, and it is the cause of all that dearth it is intended to prevent. In a plentiful year the corn of Spain, though the most fertile country in the world, is not worth the cutting down; they suffer it to lie rotting on the ground, because they would get nothing for it. The cause of this is not the indolence of the people, as is commonly imagined. The fact is, the farmer, finding he cannot dispose of his corn this year, will not risk a crop next year, but turns his grounds to grass. Next year a famine ensues, and he sows more than can be disposed of for the following season. It is to be observed that this was one great cause of the depopulation of ancient Italy. Exportation of corn was prohibited by severe penalties, and the importation of it encouraged by high premiums, so that the Italian farmers had no encouragement to industry, not being sure of a market. In the latter times of the Republic the Emperors tried several methods of promoting the cultivation of the country, but being ignorant that the real cause of their want was the immense quantity of corn daily imported from Egypt, and other parts of Africa, all their endeavours were ineffectual. Caligula and Claudius gave their soldiers land for nothing, upon condition that they would cultivate it, but as the soldiers had no other motive, very

inconsiderable improvements were made. Virgil, too, published his Georgics to bring the cultivation of land into fashion, but all was in vain. Foreign corn was always sold cheaper than their own could be raised. Agreeably to this we find Cato in the Third Book of Cicero's Offices, preferring pasturage of any kind to farming. The Kings of Spain have also done all in their power to promote the improvement of land. Philip IV went to the plough himself in order to set the fashion. He did everything for the farmers except bringing them a good market; he conferred the titles of nobility upon several farmers; he very absurdly endeavoured to oppress manufacturers with heavy taxes in order to force them to the country; he thought that in proportion as the inhabitants of towns became more numerous, those in the country decreased. This notion was highly ridiculous; for the populousness of a town is the very cause of the populousness of the country, because it gives greater encouragement to industry. Every man in a town must be fed by another in the country, and it is always a sign that the country is improving when men go to town. There are no parts of the country so well inhabited nor so well cultivated as those which lie in the neighbourhood of populous cities.

All these causes have hindered, and still hinder, the improvement of agriculture, the most important branch of industry. We may observe that the greater number of manufacturers there are in any country, agriculture is the more improved, and the causes which prevent the progress of these react, as it were, upon agriculture. It is easy to show that the free export and import of corn is favourable to agriculture. In England, the country has been better stored with corn, and the price of it has gradually sunk, since the exportation of it was permitted. The bounty on exportation does harm in other respects, but it increases the quantity of corn. In Holland corn is cheaper and plentyer than anywhere else, and a dearth is there unknown. That country is as it were the magazine of corn for a great part of Europe: this is entirely owing to the free export and import they enjoy. If no improper regulations took place, any country of Europe might do more than maintain itself with all sorts of grain.

The slow progress of arts and commerce is owing to causes of a like kind. In all places where slavery took place, the manufactures were carried on by slaves. It is impossible that they can be so well carried on by slaves as by freemen, because they can have no motive to labour but the dread of punishment, and can never invent any machine for facilitating their business. Freemen who have a stock of their own, can get anything accomplished which they think may be expedient for

carrying on labour. If a carpenter think that a plane will serve his purpose better than a knife, he may go to a smith and get it made; but if a slave make any such proposal he is called a lazy rascal, and no experiments are made to give him ease. At present the Turks and Hungarians work mines of the same kind, situated upon opposite sides of the same range of mountains, but the Hungarians make a great deal more of them than the Turks, because they employ free men, while the Turks employ slaves. When the Hungarians meet with any obstacle every invention is on work to find out some easy way of surmounting it; but the Turks think of no other expedient but to set a greater number of slaves to work. In the ancient world, as the arts were all carried on by slaves, no machinery could be invented, because they had no stock; after the fall of the Roman Empire, too, this was the case all over Europe.

In a rude society nothing is honourable but war. In the Odyssey, Ulysses is sometimes asked, by way of affront, whether he be a pirate or a merchant. At that time a merchant was reckoned odious and despicable; but a pirate or robber, as he was a man of military bravery, was treated with honour. We may observe that those principles of the human mind which are most beneficial to society, are by no means marked by nature as the most honourable. Hunger, thirst, and the passion for sex are the great supports of the human species, yet almost every expression of these excites contempt. In the same manner, that principle in the mind which prompts to truck, barter, and exchange, though it is the great foundation of arts, commerce, and the division of labour, yet it is not marked with anything amiable. To perform anything, or to give anything without a reward, is always generous and noble, but to barter one thing for another is mean. The plain reason for this is that these principles are so strongly implanted by nature that they have no occasion for that additional force which the weaker principles need. In rude ages this contempt rises to the highest pitch, and even in a refined society it is not utterly extinguished. In this country a small retailer is even in some degree odious at this day. When the trade of a merchant or mechanic was thus depreciated in the beginnings of society, no wonder that it was confined to the lowest ranks of people. Even when emancipated slaves began to practice these trades, it was impossible that much stock could accumulate in their hands, for the government oppressed them severely, and they were obliged to pay licences for their liberty of trading. In Doomsday-book we have an account of all the different traders in every county, how many of them were under the king, and how many under

such a bishop, and what acknowledgments they were obliged to pay for their liberty of trading.

This mean and despicable idea which they had of merchants greatly obstructed the progress of commerce. The merchant is, as it were, the mean between the manufacturer and the consumer; the weaver must not go to the market himself, there must be somebody to do this for him. This person must be possessed of a considerable stock, to buy up the commodity and maintain the manufacturer; but when merchants were so despicable and laid under so great taxations for liberty of trade, they could never amass that degree of stock which is necessary for making the division of labour, and improving manufactures. The only persons in those days who made any money by trade were the Jews, who, as they were considered as vagabonds, had no liberty of purchasing lands, and had no other way to dispose of themselves but by becoming mechanics or merchants; their character could not be spoiled by merchandise, because they could not be more odious than their religion made them. Even they were grievously oppressed, and consequently the progress of opulence [was] greatly retarded.

Another thing which greatly retarded commerce was the imperfection of the law with regard to contracts, which were the last species of rights that sustained action, for originally the law gave no redress for any but those concluded on the spot. At present all considerable commerce is carried on by commissions, and unless these sustained action, little could be done. The first action on contracts extended only to the moveable goods of the contractor, neither his lands nor his person could be touched; his goods were often very inconsiderable, and probity is none of the most prevalent virtues among a rude people. It is commerce that introduces probity and punctuality.

Another obstacle to the improvement of commerce was the difficulty of conveyance from one place to another. The country was then filled with retainers, a species of idle people who depended on the lords, whose violence and disorders rendered the going from one place to another very difficult. Besides, there were then no good highways. The want of navigable rivers in many places was also an inconvenience. This is still the case in Asia and other Eastern countries: all inland commerce is carried on by great caravans, consisting of several thousands, for mutual defence, with waggons, &c. In our own country a man made his testament before he set out from Edinburgh to Aberdeen, and it was still more dangerous to go to foreign countries. The laws of every country to aliens and strangers are far from being favourable. It is difficult, or rather

impossible, for them to obtain satisfaction. After this was a little remedied still conveyance by sea remained difficult. Piracy was an honourable occupation. Men were ignorant of navigation, and exposed to dangers on this account. The price of all these risks was laid upon the goods, and by this means they were so much raised above the natural price that the improvement of commerce was greatly retarded.

Another piece of police which was thought a wise institution by our forefathers had the same effect. This was the fairs and markets all over Europe. Till the sixteenth century all commerce was carried on by fairs. The fairs of Bartholomew, of Leipzig, of Troy in Champaigne, and even of Glasgow, are much talked of in antiquity. These were the most centrical places, and best fitted for carrying on business. All linen and black cattle were brought in from the country to these assignations or trysts, and, lest the purchaser should be disappointed, they were all brought on a certain day, and were not allowed to be sold on any other day. Forestallers, who went up and down the country buying up commodities, were severely punished, as this was a temptation not to bring them to the market. This might be necessary when it was not safe to go anywhere alone, but though you make no fairs, buyers and sellers will find a way to each other. Easy conveyance and other conveniences of trafficking will be of more advantage than the bringing them to a fixed market and thereby confining buying and selling to a certain season. All fairs, however necessary they then were, are now real nuisances. It is absurd to preserve in people a regard for their old customs, when the causes of them are removed.

Another obstacle to commerce was staple towns, which had the exclusive privilege of selling a certain commodity within that district. Calais, when it belonged to the English, was long the staple for wool. As men were obliged to carry their wool to such a distance, its price was very high. It was however a very great advantage to any town to have the staple, and therefore the king gave it to that town with which he was best pleased, and took it away whenever it disobliged him. Staple towns had all the disadvantages of fairs and markets with this additional one, that the staple commodity could be sold at no fair nor market except one. By this the liberty of exchange, and consequently the division of labour, was diminished.

All taxes upon exportation and importation of goods also hinder commerce. Merchants at first were in so contemptible a state that the law, as it were, abandoned them, and it was no matter what they obliged them to pay. They, however, must lay the tax upon their goods, their

price is raised, fewer of them are bought, manufactures are discouraged, and the division of labour hindered.

All monopolies and exclusive privileges of corporations, for whatever good ends they were at first instituted, have the same bad effect. In like manner the statute of apprenticeship, which was originally an imposition on government, has a bad tendency. It was imagined that the cause of so much bad cloth was that the weaver had not been properly educated, and therefore they made a statute that he should serve a seven years apprenticeship before he pretended to make any. But this is by no means a sufficient security against bad cloth. You yourself cannot inspect a large piece of cloth, this must be left to the stampmaster, whose credit must be depended upon. Above all other causes the giving bounties for one commodity, and the discouraging another, diminishes the concurrence of opulence, and hurts the natural state of commerce.

Before we treat of the effects of police upon the manners of a people, we propose to consider taxes or revenue, which is in reality one of the causes that the progress of opulence has been so slow.

PART III: OF REVENUE

Introduction.

In the beginnings of society all public offices were performed by the magistrate without any reward, and he was fully satisfied with the eminence of his station. This is the case among the Tartars, Arabs, and Hottentots even to this day. Voluntary presents only are accepted, which have always a bad effect, but cannot be prevented while one is willing to give, and another to receive. It was in this manner, too, that the governors of the Roman provinces got their revenues. When government becomes so complex as to take up the whole attention of the public magistrate, he must undoubtedly have some reward, and if this be not given him by the public, he will fall upon some more dangerous method of obtaining it; few will be so generous as to exact nothing. When applications are made, every one must bring his present, and the man who pays best will be best heard.

When government is a little farther advanced, magazines must be provided, ships built, palaces and other public buildings erected and kept up, and consequently a public revenue levied. At first indeed among the Romans there was no revenue levied for carrying on war, because the soldiers required no pay. In savage nations this is always the case; every one of the Athenians went out to war at his own expense. The same was the case with our feudal lords; the burden of going to war was connected with the duty of the tenant or vassal. Such a practice cannot be of long duration, and accordingly we find that it ceased at Rome, and was the great cause of the dissolution of that republic. The governors of provinces made such grievous exactions from the people, that they alienated their affections, so that they gave no assistance in defending the state when it stood in need of assistance.

§ 1. Of Taxes on Possessions.

After the appropriation of land property, a portion of lands was commonly assigned for the maintenance of government. The free states of Greece had land set apart for this purpose, and we find Aristotle giving his opinion that private property should surround the royal lands, because those who were near a city were always for war, because they were sure of defence, and as the enemy would first come upon those lands which were near the boundaries. In all [barbarous] countries we find lands appropriated to the purposes of sovereignty, and therefore little occasion for taxes and customs. We shall show that this is a bad police, and one cause of the slow progress of opulence.

Let us conceive what an immense tract of land would be required to support the British government. The annual expense of it in times of peace amounts to 3 millions, the whole land rents amount to 24 millions. Therefore the government must have an eighth part in its own hands. If we conceive, further, how such a tract of land would be cultivated, the quantity requisite would be prodigious. Allow it but to be half as well cultivated as the rest, which for many reasons would not be the case, the government would have in its hands a fourth of the whole country. By this therefore the stock of the country would be greatly diminished, and fewer people maintained. After government becomes expensive, it is the worst possible method to support it by a land rent. We may observe that the government in a civilized country is much more expensive than in a barbarous one; and when we say that one government is more expensive than another, it is the same as if we said that the one country is farther advanced in improvement than another. To say that the government is expensive and the people not oppressed is to say that the people are rich. There are many expenses necessary in a civilized country for which there is no occasion in one that is barbarous. Armies, fleets, fortified places, and public buildings, judges, and officers of the revenue must be supported, and if they be neglected, disorder will ensue. A land rent, to serve all these purposes, would be the most improper thing in the world.

All taxes may be considered under two divisions, to wit, taxes upon possessions and taxes upon consumptions. These are the two ways of making the subjects contribute to the support of government. The land tax is of the former kind, and all taxes upon commodities of the latter.

Possessions are of three kinds, to wit, land, stock, and money. It is easy to levy a tax upon land, because it is evident what quantity every one possesses, but it is very difficult to lay a tax upon stock or money without very arbitrary proceedings. It is a hardship upon a man in trade to oblige him to show his books, which is the only way in which we can know how much he is worth. It is a breach of liberty, and may be productive of very bad consequences by ruining his credit; the circumstances of people in trade are at some times far worse than at others. But if on account of this difficulty you were to tax land, and neither tax money nor stock, ye would do a piece of very great injustice. But though it be a difficult thing to tax money or stock without being oppressive, yet this method is used in several countries. In France, for example, in order to ascertain the circumstances of the subject, every bill is assigned, and all business transacted in presence of a public notary, and entered into his books, so that land, stock, and money are there all taxed in the same manner. Of these three only land is taxed in England, because to tax the other two has some appearance of despotism, and would greatly enrage a free people. Excepting the land tax, our taxes are generally upon commodities, and in these there is a much greater inequality than in the taxes on land possession. The consumptions of people are not always according to what they possess, but in proportion to their liberality. When taxes are laid upon commodities, their prices must rise, the concurrence of tradesmen must be prevented, an artificial dearth occasioned, less industry excited, and a smaller quantity of goods produced.

Taxes upon land possessions have this great advantage, that they are levied without any great expense; the whole land tax of England does not cost the government above eight or ten thousand pounds. Collectors are chosen by the gentlemen of the county, and are obliged to produce proper security for their carrying safely to the exchequer the money which they collect. The taxes of customs and excise, which produce such immense sums, are almost eaten up by the legions of officers that are employed in collecting them. These officers must have supervisors over them to examine their proceedings. The supervisors have over them collectors, who are under the commissioners, who have to account to the exchequer; to support these officers there must be levied a great deal more than the government requires, which is a manifest disadvantage.

Another advantage of a land tax is, that it does not tend to raise the price of commodities, as it is not paid in proportion to the corn and cattle, but in proportion to the rent. If the tenant pay the tax, he pays just

so much less rent. Excise raises the price of commodities, and makes fewer people able to carry on business. If a man purchase £1000 worth of tobacco, he has an hundred pounds of tax to pay, and therefore cannot deal to such an extent as he would otherwise do; thus, as it requires greater stock to carry on trade, the dealers must be fewer, and the rich have, as it were, a monopoly against the poor. It was observed before that in England, from a kind of delicacy with regard to examining into the circumstances of particular persons, which is apparently an infringement upon liberty, no tax is laid upon stock or money, but all upon consumptions. Whatever advantages this method may have, there is evidently in it an inequality. The landlord who pays his annual land tax pays also a great part of the taxes on consumptions. On this account the landed interest complains first of a war, thinking the burden of it falls upon them, while on the other hand the monied men are gainers, and therefore oppose them. This perhaps occasions the continuance of what is called the Tory interest.

§ 2. Of Taxes on Consumptions.

Taxes upon possessions are naturally equal, but those upon consumptions naturally unequal, as they are sometimes paid by the merchant, sometimes by the consumer, and sometimes by the importer, who must be repaid it by the consumer. In Holland all goods are deposited in a public warehouse, one key of which is kept by the commissioner of the customs, and another by the owner of the goods. If the goods are exported, no tax is advanced, but if they go into the country the consumer pays down the price to the merchant and the custom to the commissioner. This method is much the same with the famous excise scheme of Sir Robert Walpole, which was at last his ruin. It was to this effect, that a general excise should be established, and all goods imported deposited in a public warehouse, and the tax should only be paid upon the inland sale of them. Though this scheme be liable to inconveniences, such as subjecting the owner to anxiety from not having his goods entirely in his own power, yet it is plainly this which gives the Dutch so great an advantage over all the other nations of Europe. The Dutch are in a manner the carriers of the other Europeans; they bring corn from the Baltic and those places where it is cheap, and wines from those places where there has been a good vintage, and keep them by them till they hear of a dearth, and then export them to the places where it is. But in England the moment you bring the commodities to the country, you must pay the tax and sell them where you please. Thus the merchant may lie out of his interest for a long time, and therefore must sell his commodities dearer. The Dutch, having no tax to pay but upon inland sale, are enabled to sell cheaper than the English or any other nation.

Taxes on consumptions have however some advantage over those on possessions. They are not felt, being paid imperceptibly; but a person possessed of a thousand pounds of land-rent feels very sensibly an hundred pounds going from him. The taxes on consumptions are not so much murmured against, because they are laid upon the merchant, who lays them on the price of goods, and thus they are insensibly paid by the people. When we buy a pound of tea we do not reflect that the most part of the price is a duty paid to the government, and therefore pay it contentedly, as though it were only the natural price of the commodity. In the same manner when an additional tax is laid upon beer, the price of it must be raised, but the mob do not directly vent their malice against the

government, who are the proper objects of it, but upon the brewers, as they confound the tax price with the natural one. Taxes upon consumptions therefore, which are paid by the merchant, seem most to favour liberty, and will always be favoured by this government. In Holland they buy a hogshead of wine and first pay the price to the merchant, and then so much to the officers of excise, as it were to get leave to drink it. We in reality do the very same thing, but as we do not feel it immediately, we imagine it all one price, and never reflect that we might drink port wine below sixpence a bottle, were it not for the duty.

Taxes on consumptions have still another advantage over those on possessions. If a person be possessed of a land-rent of an hundred pounds per annum, and this estate be valued at a high rate, he perhaps pays £20 to the government. The collector must be paid at a certain time of the year, and few people have so much self-command as to lay up money to be ready. He has therefore £20 to borrow to answer his present demands. When next payment comes, he has not only the tax to pay, but also the interest of the money borrowed the former year. He begins to encumber his estate; and thus upon examination it will be found that many landholders have been ruined. The best method of preventing this is to make the tenant pay the land tax in part payment of his rent. The taxes on consumptions are not liable to this inconvenience. When a person finds that he is spending too much on the elegancies of life, he can immediately diminish his consumption. Taxes upon consumptions are therefore more eligible than taxes upon possessions, as they have not so great a tendency to ruin the circumstances of individuals.

It is to be observed that taxes both on consumptions and possessions are more or less advantageous to industry according to the manner in which they are levied. The land tax in England is permanent and uniform, and does not rise with the rent, which is regulated by the improvement of the land; notwithstanding modern improvements it is the same that it was formerly. In France the tax rises proportionably to the rent, which is a great discouragement to the landholder. It has much the same effect with the tithes in England. When we know that the produce is to be divided with those who lay out nothing, it hinders us from laying out what we would otherwise do upon the improvement of our lands. We are better financiers than the French, as we have also the advantage of them in the following particulars.

In the method of levying our customs we have an advantage over the French. Our customs are all paid at once by the merchants, and goods, after their entry in the custom house books, may be carried by a permit

through any part of the country without molestation and expense, except some trifles upon tolls, &c. In France a duty is paid at the end of almost every town they go into, equal, if not greater, to what is paid by us at first; inland industry is embarrassed by theirs, and only foreign trade by ours.

We have another advantage in levying our taxes by commission, while theirs are levied by farm, by which means not one half of what they raise goes into the hands of the government. In England the whole expense of levying above seven millions does not come to £300,000. In France twenty-four millions are levied every year, and not above twelve goes to the expense of the government, the rest goes for defraying the expense of levying it, and for the profit of the farmer. In England no excise officers are requisite but at the seaports, except a few up and down the country. The profits of the farmers in France would pay the expense of them all. In the collecting of our excise there is a regular subordination of officers who have their fixed salaries and nothing more, but in France the highest bidder has the place, and, as the man who undertakes it must advance the sum at a certain time, and runs a risk of not getting it up, he deserves a very high profit: besides, in an auction of this kind there are few bidders, as none are capable of undertaking the office but those who are brought up to business, and are possessed both of a great stock and credit, and can produce good security. When there are few bidders they can easily enter into an association among themselves, and have the whole at a very easy rate. Upon the whole we may observe that the English are the best financiers in Europe, and their taxes are levied with more propriety than those of any country whatever.

Upon this subject it is in general to be observed that taxes upon exportation are much more hurtful than those upon importation. When the inhabitants of a country are in a manner prohibited by high taxes from exporting the produce of their industry, they are confined to home consumption, and their motives to industry are diminished. Taxes upon importation, on the contrary, encourage the manufacturing of these particular commodities. The tax upon Hamburgh linen, for example, hinders the importation of great quantities of it, and causes more linen to be manufactured at home. In general, however, all taxes upon importation are hurtful in this respect, that they divert the industry of the country to an unnatural channel. The more stock there is employed in one way, there is the less to be employed in another; but the effects of taxes upon exportation are still more pernicious. This is one great cause of the poverty of Spain; they have imposed a high tax on the exportation

of every commodity, and think that by this means the taxes are paid by foreigners, whereas, if they were to impose a tax on importation, it would be paid by their own subjects, not reflecting that by bringing a burden on the exportation of commodities, they so far confine the consumption of them, and diminish industry.

To conclude all that is to be said of taxes, we may observe that the common prejudice that wealth consists in money has not been in this respect so hurtful as might have been imagined, and has even given occasion to regulations not very inconvenient. Those nations to whom we give more goods than we receive, generally send us manufactured goods; those on the contrary, from whom we receive more goods than we give, or with respect to whom the balance is in our favour, generally send us unmanufactured goods. To Russia, for example, we send fine linen and other manufactured goods, and for a small quantity of these receive, in return, great quantities of unmanufactured goods. This kind of trade is very advantageous, because goods in an unmanufactured and rude state afford employment and maintenance to a great number of persons. It is merely from the absurd notion that wealth consists in money, that the British encourage most of those branches of foreign trade, where the balance is paid in money.

There are still some other species of taxes, but as their nature is much the same, it is unnecessary to mention them.

Having thus given a general view of taxes, it will not be improper here, on account of their connexion, to consider the nature of stocks, and the causes of their rising and falling.

§ 3. Of Stocks.

Soon after the Revolution, on account of the necessities of government, it was necessary to borrow money from subjects, generally at a higher rate than common interest, to be repaid in a few years. The funds allotted for payment of this interest were taxes on certain commodities. These taxes were at first laid on for a certain number of years, according to the term for which the money was borrowed; but when, by various arts of government, these loans came to be perpetual, the taxes came, of course, to be perpetual, and thus the funds were mortgaged. Though they were made perpetual when money could no longer be borrowed upon them, yet they were still redeemable upon paying up the money borrowed on them. When these taxes were laid on, nothing would have shocked people more, than to have thought that they were to be perpetual, but their progress was so insensible, that it was never murmured at. What shocks at first will soon become easy from custom, which sanctifies everything. Thus [the] taxes were first laid on, and thus they came to the situation in which they are at present. When a sum of money is lent to a private person, the creditor can come upon the debtor when he pleases for both capital and interest; but it is not on this footing that the government borrows money; they give you a right to a perpetual annuity of three or four per cent., but not to redemand your capital. It seems very odd at first sight that the creditor should consent to such an inconvenience as that his money should never be paid up, but this is really his advantage. If you lend to the government a thousand pounds in time of war, as they have immediate use for it, they will perhaps be obliged to give you five per cent. of interest, and when peace comes they continue your annuity. You have it in your power to dispose of your annuity, and as your money is perfectly secure, and interest is paid by no private person with so much punctuality as by the government, you may very often sell the annuity of your £1000 at £1100 or more. The government, finding that these annuities sold above par, and for the same reason that people were much disposed to subscribe to the government funds, they resolved, as the funds were still redeemable, to take the advantage by paying up the sums borrowed at five per cent., and borrowing money at a lower rate. This made the contractors with the government to be on their guard, and, as they saw their design, they would not lend them any more money, without at least some part of the

interest should be irredeemable, perhaps two per cent. of the four they were to receive. In every fund therefore there was a part irredeemable, which made them continue to sell above par.

In the reigns of King William, Queen Anne, and in the beginning of that of King George I, the funds rose and fell, according to the credit of the government, as there was still some risk of a revolution. Of late, though there be no danger of a revolution, even in the times of peace stocks are sometimes at ten, twenty, or even fifty per cent. below par, and sometimes as much above it. Nobody can suspect any risk of losing that money by change of government. How then comes it that stocks are thus everyday fluctuating without any visible cause? How comes it that good or bad news have such an influence on the rising and falling of stocks? The real cause is as follows:

Every misfortune in war makes peace to be at a greater distance, and every fortunate occurrence seems to favour its approach. When war continues, the necessities of government must be supplied, more money levied and new subscriptions opened for these purposes. As in war the interest must necessarily rise, every one is eager to be in the new subscription, and they who have annuities find that it will be for their advantage to sell out of the old stocks in prospect of a higher interest. The number of sellers, therefore, increases with the prospect of a war, and consequently stocks fall. On the other hand, whenever there is a prospect of peace, as there are no expectations that new subscriptions will be opened, they who have annuities are not fond of selling them; and therefore, the number of sellers decreasing, stocks must rise. In time of war, every one who has any stock runs to have it in the hands of the government, as it cannot be so advantageously employed anywhere else, as they get interest perhaps at seven or eight per cent., of which two or three perhaps is [ir]redeemable, and frequently a lottery ticket into the bargain. A person who has an annuity only at three per cent. will do all he can to sell it, that he may employ his stock to greater advantage, and for this reason will often sell it below par, and consequently stocks must necessarily fall. But in time of war, for the following reasons, even the new subscriptions come to sell below par.

As there are a great many stock-holders who are merchants, and who keep their stocks in the hands of the government that they may be ready to sell out on any sudden demand, and take the advantage of a good bargain when it casts up, and as these chances occur most frequently in time of war, they have often occasion to sell out, and thus more stock runs to the market, and the new subscriptions sink below par. But further,

in time of war, as was observed before, stock cannot be so advantageously employed, and everybody is tempted to subscribe. Even those whose circumstances are but very inconsiderable, subscribe for great sums in hopes that stocks will rise, and that they may sell out before the time of delivery, to great advantage; but when things do not answer their expectations, and they are forced to sell out one way or another to support their credit, they are often obliged to sell below par. In this manner the new subscriptions may fall. Stock-jobbers that are well acquainted with their business, observe particularly when a number of indigent persons are in the subscriptions, and as they are soon obliged to sell out, and consequently stocks fall, it is their proper time to purchase them.

§ 4. Of Stock-jobbing.

The practice of stock-jobbing, or the buying stocks by time has, too, on all occasions, a very considerable influence on the rise and fall of stocks. The method in which this practice is carried on is as follows. A man who has not perhaps £1000 in the world, subscribes for £100,000, which is to be delivered at several fixed times, and in certain portions. He therefore hopes to get these several portions sold out to great advantage by the rising of the stocks before they fall due, but as anything he is worth would go if the stocks should fall, he uses all means to make them rise, he spreads reports at Change Alley that victories are gained, that peace is to be concluded, &c. On the other hand, they who want to purchase a stock, and want that it should fall, propagate such reports as will sink the stocks as low as possible, such as that war will continue, that new subscriptions are thought on, &c. It is owing to this that, in time of war, our newspapers are so filled with invasions and schemes that never were thought of. In the language of Change Alley the buyer is called the bull, and the seller the bear, and as the bulls or bears predominate, stocks rise or fall. This practice of buying stocks by time is prohibited by the government, and accordingly, though they should not deliver up the stocks they have engaged for, the law gives no redress. There is no natural reason why £1000 in the stocks should not be delivered, or the delivery of it enforced, as well as £1000 worth of goods; but after the South Sea Scheme this was thought upon as an expedient to prevent such practices, though it proved ineffectual. In the same manner, all laws against gaming never hinder it, and though there is no redress for a sum above £5, yet all the great sums that are lost are punctually paid. Persons who game must keep their credit, else nobody will deal with them. It is quite the same in stock-jobbing, they who do not keep their credit will soon be turned out, and in the language of Change Alley be called lame duck. It is unnecessary here to give any account of particular funds, as they are all of the same nature, and the security equal. If the interest of any sum of money be not paid by the funds allotted for that purpose, it is paid out of the sinking fund, which is the surplus of all the rest. There is perhaps some little difference in the facility of payment, but this is by no means considerable, and merits not our attention.

§ 17. Of the Influence of Commerce on Manners.

It remains now that we consider the last division of police, and show the influence of commerce on the manners of a people. Whenever commerce is introduced into any country probity and punctuality always accompany it. These virtues in a rude and barbarous country are almost unknown. Of all the nations in Europe, the Dutch, the most commercial, are the most faithful to their word. The English are more so than the Scotch, but much inferior to the Dutch, and in the remote parts of this country they [are] far less so than in the commercial parts of it. This is not at all to be imputed to national character, as some pretend; there is no natural reason why an Englishman or a Scotchman should not be as punctual in performing agreements as a Dutchman. It is far more reducible to self-interest, that general principle which regulates the actions of every man, and which leads men to act in a certain manner from views of advantage, and is as deeply implanted in an Englishman as a Dutchman. A dealer is afraid of losing his character, and is scrupulous in observing every engagement. When a person makes perhaps twenty contracts in a day, he cannot gain so much by endeavouring to impose on his neighbours, as the very appearance of a cheat would make him lose. When people seldom deal with one another, we find that they are somewhat disposed to cheat, because they can gain more by a smart trick than they can lose by the injury which it does their character.

They whom we call politicians are not the most remarkable men in the world for probity and punctuality. Ambassadors from different nations are still less so; they are praised for any little advantage they can take, and pique themselves a good deal on this degree of refinement. The reason of this is that nations treat with one another not above twice or thrice in a century, and they may gain more by one piece of fraud, than [lose] by having a bad character. France has had this character with us ever since the reign of Lewis XIV, yet it has never in the least hurt either its interest or splendour. But if states were obliged to treat once or twice a day, as merchants do, it would be necessary to be more precise, in order to preserve their character. Wherever dealings are frequent, a man does not expect to gain so much by any one contract, as by probity and punctuality in the whole, and a prudent dealer, who is sensible of his real interest, would rather choose to lose what he has a right to, than give any

ground for suspicion. Everything of this kind is odious as it is rare. When the greater part of people are merchants, they always bring probity and punctuality into fashion, and these, therefore, are the principal virtues of a commercial nation.

There are some inconveniences, however, arising from a commercial spirit. The first we shall mention is that it confines the views of men. Where the division of labour is brought to perfection, every man has only a simple operation to perform; to this his whole attention is confined, and few ideas pass in his mind but what have an immediate connexion with it. When the mind is employed about a variety of objects, it is somehow expanded and enlarged, and on this account a country artist is generally acknowledged to have a range of thoughts much above a city one. The former is perhaps a joiner, a house carpenter, and a cabinet-maker, all in one, and his attention must of course be employed about a number of objects of very different kinds. The latter is perhaps only a cabinet-maker; that particular kind of work employs all his thoughts, and as he had not an opportunity of comparing a number of objects, his views of things beyond his own trade are by no means so extensive as those of the former. This must be much more the case when a person's whole attention is bestowed on the seventeenth part of a pin or the eightieth part of a button, so far divided are these manufactures. It is remarkable that in every commercial nation the low people are exceedingly stupid. The Dutch vulgar are eminently so, and the English are more so than the Scotch. The rule is general; in towns they are not so intelligent as in the country, nor in a rich country as in a poor one.

Another inconvenience attending commerce is that education is greatly neglected. In rich and commercial nations the division of labour, having reduced all trades to very simple operations, affords an opportunity of employing children very young. In this country, indeed, where the division of labour is not far advanced, even the meanest porter can read and write, because the price of education is cheap, and a parent can employ his child no other way at six or seven years of age. This, however, is not the case in the commercial parts of England. A boy of six or seven years of age at Birmingham can gain his threepence or sixpence a day, and parents find it to be their interest to set them soon to work; thus their education is neglected. The education which low people's children receive is not, indeed, at any rate considerable; however, it does them an immense deal of service, and the want of it is certainly one of their greatest misfortunes. By it they learn to read, and this gives them the benefit of religion, which is a great advantage, not only considered in

a pious sense, but as it affords them subject for thought and speculation. From this we may observe the benefit of country schools, and, however much neglected, must acknowledge them to be an excellent institution. But, besides this want of education, there is another great loss which attends the putting boys too soon to work. The boy begins to find that his father is obliged to him, and therefore throws off his authority. When he is grown up he has no ideas with which he can amuse himself. When he is away from his work he must therefore betake himself to drunkenness and riot. Accordingly we find that in the commercial parts of England, the tradesmen are for the most part in this despicable condition; their work through half the week is sufficient to maintain them, and through want of education they have no amusement for the other, but riot and debauchery. So it may very justly be said that the people who clothe the whole world are in rags themselves.

Another bad effect of commerce is that it sinks the courage of mankind, and tends to extinguish martial spirit. In all commercial countries the division of labour is infinite, and every one's thoughts are employed about one particular thing. In great trading towns, for example, the linen merchants are of several kinds, for the dealing in Hamburg and Irish linens are quite distinct professions. Some of the lawyers attend at King's Bench, some at the court of Common Pleas, and others at the Chancery. Each of them is, in a great measure, unacquainted with the business of his neighbour. In the same manner war comes to be a trade also. A man has then time to study only one branch of business, and it would be a great disadvantage to oblige every one to learn the military art and to keep himself in the practice of it. The defence of the country is therefore committed to a certain set of men who have nothing else ado, and among the bulk of the people military courage diminishes. By having their minds constantly employed on the arts of luxury, they grow effeminate and dastardly.

This is confirmed by universal experience.

In the year 1745 four or five thousand naked unarmed Highlanders took possession of the improved parts of this country without any opposition from the unwarlike inhabitants. They penetrated into England, and alarmed the whole nation, and had they not been opposed by a standing army, they would have seized the throne with little difficulty. Two hundred years ago such an attempt would have roused the spirit of the nation. Our ancestors were brave and warlike, their minds were not enervated by cultivating arts and commerce, and they were all ready with spirit and vigour to resist the most formidable foe. It is for the same

reason, too, that an army of four or five hundred Europeans have often penetrated into the Mogul’s country, and that the most numerous armies of the Chinese have always been overthrown by the Tartars. In those countries the division of labour and luxury have arrived at a very high pitch, they have no standing army, and the people are all intent on the arts of peace. Holland, were its barriers removed, would be an easy prey. In the beginning of this century the standing army of the Dutch was beat in the field, and the rest of the inhabitants, instead of rising in arms to defend themselves, formed a design of deserting their country, and settling in the East Indies. A commercial country may be formidable abroad, and may defend itself by fleets and standing armies, but when they are overcome, and the enemy penetrates into the country, the conquest is easy. The same observation may be made with respect to Rome and Carthage. The Carthaginians were often victorious abroad, but when the war was carried into their own country, they had no share with the Romans. These are the disadvantages of a commercial spirit. The minds of men are contracted, and rendered incapable of elevation. Education is despised, or at least neglected, and heroic spirit is almost utterly extinguished. To remedy these defects would be an object worthy of serious attention.

Thus we have finished the three first great objects of law, to wit, justice, police, and revenue. We proceed now to treat of arms, the fourth part of the general division of jurisprudence.

PART IV: OF ARMS

§ 1. Of Militias.

In the beginning of society the defence of the state required no police, nor particular provision for it. The whole body of the people rose up to oppose any attempt that was made against them, and he who was chief in time of peace, naturally preserved his influence in time of war. But after the division of labour took place, it became necessary that some should stay at home, to be employed in agriculture and other arts, while the rest went out to war. After the appropriation of lands and the distinction of ranks were in some measure introduced, the cultivation of the ground would naturally fall to the meanest rank. The less laborious, but more honourable employment of military service, would be claimed by the highest order. Accordingly we find that this was the practice of all nations in their primitive state. The Roman equites or knights were originally horsemen in the army, and no slaves or those who did not pay taxes ever went out to war. In like manner among our ancestors only they who held by what was called knight's service were employed in the defence of the state, and the ancient villains were never considered as a part of the national force.

When the state was thus defended by men of honour who would do their duty from this principle, there was no occasion for discipline. But when arts and manufactures increased, and were thought worthy of attention, and men found that they could rise in dignity by applying to them, and it became inconvenient for the rich to go out to war, from a principle of avarice, these arts, which were at first despised by the active and ambitious, soon came to claim their whole attention. The merchant who can make two or three thousand pounds at home will not incline to go out to war, but it was an amusement to an ancient knight who had nothing else ado. When the improvement of arts and manufactures was thought an object deserving the attention of the higher ranks, the defence of the state naturally became the province of the lower, because the rich can never be forced to do anything but what they please. In Rome, after the knights gave over serving in the army, the lowest of the people went in their stead, and in our own country, after the feudal militia went out, another of the lowest ranks succeeded. This therefore is the progress of military service in every country. Among a nation of hunters and shepherds, and even when a nation is advanced to agriculture, the whole body goes out together to make war. When arts and manufactures begin

to advance, the whole cannot go out, and as these arts are laborious, and not very lucrative, for the reasons formerly adduced, the highest go out. After that, when arts and commerce are still farther advanced, and begin to be very lucrative, it falls to the meanest to defend the state. This is our present condition in Great Britain.

§ 2. Of Discipline.

When the whole body went out together there could be no occasion for military discipline, they being all, as it were, upon the same level, and as their common cause was so well discerned, it was quite unnecessary. When the highest orders went out, a principle of honour would supply the place of discipline, but when this office fell upon the lowest order, the most severe and rigid discipline became necessary, and accordingly we find that it has been introduced into all standing armies. In general, it is necessary that they should be kept under such authority as to be more afraid of their general and officers than of the enemy. It is the fear of their officers and of the rigid penalties of the martial law, which is the chief cause of their good behaviour, and it is to this principle that we owe their valiant actions. In the late war eight hundred Prussians defended a pass a whole day against several thousands of Austrians, and at night in their retreat deserted almost to a man. What could be the foundation of this courage? It was not a principle of honour, nor love to their country, nor a regard to their officers, for these would still have detained them; it was nothing but the dread of their officers, who were hanging, as it were, over their heads, and whom they durst not disobey. This, by the by, shows the governableness of our nature, and may also show how much that manly courage we so much boast of depends upon external circumstances. We may further observe how far this principle of fear may be carried. If a bold, fierce, and tyrannic adjutant be succeeded by one of a mild and gentle disposition, the ideas of terror are conveyed with the coat, and it is some time before it be perceived that he is not so terrible as the other.

§ 3. Of Standing Armies.

In this manner standing armies came to be introduced, and where there are none, the country is an easy prey to its enemies. The only thing to be observed concerning them is that they should be raised in the most convenient way, and with as little hurt as possible to the country. However much standing armies may be exclaimed against, in a certain period of society they must be introduced. A militia commanded by landed gentlemen in possession of the public offices of the nation can never have any prospect of sacrificing the liberties of the country for any person whatever. Such a militia would no doubt be the best security against the standing army of another nation.

Standing armies are of two kinds: the first is when the government gives offices to particular persons, and so much for every man they levy. From such a standing army as this, which is the model of our own, there is less danger than from the second kind, when the government makes a slump bargain with a general to lead out a certain number of troops for their assistance, which is the model of the standing armies in some little states of Italy. They make a bargain with some chieftain in those parts where the arts have not yet reached, and as the officers are all dependent on him, and he independent of the state, his employers lie at his mercy. But a standing army like ours is not so apt to turn their arms against the government, because the officers are men of honour, and have great connexions in the country. Yet on some occasions a standing army has proved dangerous to the liberties of the people, when that question concerning the power of the sovereign came to be disputed, as has been the case in our own country, because the standing army generally takes the side of the king. The principle of the soldier is to obey his leader, and as the king appointed him and pays him, it is to him that he thinks he owes his service. This would never be the case if a proper militia were established. In Sweden, where it takes place, they are in no danger. Thus far concerning standing armies. It is needless to enter into any account of their pay, and other circumstances.

Having considered the laws of nature as we proposed, as they regard justice, police, revenue, and arms, we shall proceed to the last part of our plan, which is to consider the law of nations, or the claims which one nation may have upon another.

PART V: OF THE LAWS OF NATIONS

Introduction.

It is to be observed that the rules which nations ought to observe, or do observe with one another, cannot be treated so accurately as private or public law. We find the rules of property pretty exactly established in every nation. The extent of the sovereign's power, as well as the duty of the subject, so far as justice is concerned, are pretty uniform everywhere. But with respect to the laws of nations, we can scarce mention any one regulation which is established with the common consent of all nations, and observed as such at all times. This must necessarily be the case, for where there is no supreme legislative power nor judge to settle differences, we may always expect uncertainty and irregularity.

The laws of nations are such as take place either in peace or war. Those that take place in times of peace have been formerly explained, where it was shown with respect to aliens that they are entitled to security as to their persons and effects, but that they have no power to make a will, but all goes to the sovereign at their death. The laws or rules observed in time of war shall be considered in the following order:

First, what is a just cause of war, or according to the Latin phrase, quando liceat bellare?

Secondly, what it is lawful for one nation to do to another in time of war, or quantum liceat in bello, and upon this head we shall consider the differences between the ancient and modern governments, and the great modifications of the latter.

Thirdly, what is due to neutral nations from the belligerent powers.

Fourthly, the rights of ambassadors between different nations.

§ 1. When is War Lawful?

First, quando liceat bellare? In general whatever is the foundation of a proper law suit before a court of justice may be a just occasion of war. The foundation of a law suit is the violation of some perfect right whose performance may be extorted by force, and is so extorted in a rude society, but in modern times is decided by the magistrate, lest the society should be disturbed by every one taking justice at his own hands. When one nation encroaches on the property of another, or puts to death the subjects of another, imprisons them, or refuses them justice when injured, the sovereign is bound to demand satisfaction for the offence, as it is the intention of the government to protect its several members from foreign enemies, and if redress be refused, there is a foundation for war. In the same manner breach of contract, as when a debt is due by one nation to another, and payment refused, is a very just occasion of war. If, for example, the king of Prussia should refuse to pay the money advanced for him by the British nation in the time of the last war, a declaration of war against him would be just and reasonable. Every offence of the sovereign of one country against the sovereign of another, or of the sovereign against the subject, or of the subject of one country against the subject of another, without giving reasonable satisfaction, may be the cause of a war.

There seems to be only one exception to the general rule, that everything that is the subject of a law suit may be a cause of war, and that is with respect to quasi-contracts. In this case, indeed, it is difficult to determine whether a war would be reasonable or not, and we find no instance of a war declared upon the violation of this right. It must be allowed that the introduction of quasi-contract was the highest stretch of equity, and except in the Roman law it was never perfected nor introduced. In England, if you repair a man’s house in his absence, you must trust to him for the payment of it, for you have no action by law. In the same manner, if a Russian do a piece of service to an English merchant, which, if he had not done, the merchant would have suffered extremely, and afterwards demand satisfaction for his trouble, if he be refused it and apply to the courts of justice, they will tell him that he must depend on the honour of the merchant for payment. Excepting this, everything which is the foundation of a proper law suit, will also make war just and reasonable.

§ 2. What is Lawful in War?

[Second,] quantum liceat [in] bello? How far a nation may push the resentment of an injury against the nation which has injured them, is not easy to determine. The practice of ancient and modern nations differs extremely. In general, when an injury is clearly and distinctly done, or when it is plainly intended and satisfaction refused, resentment is necessary and just. There are a few cases in which it is lawful even without satisfaction being demanded. If a robber was plainly intending to kill you, it would be quite lawful in you to do all you could to prevent him. The injury is plain. In the same manner, when one nation seems to be conspiring against another, though it may have done no real injury, it is necessary that it should be obliged to declare its intentions, and to give security when this demand would not subject it to inconveniences. Though this satisfaction be not demanded, when the King of Prussia saw his dominions about to be overwhelmed by the Elector of Saxony and the Queen of Hungary, it was quite right in him to be beforehand with them, and to take possession of their territories, and nothing would have been more absurd than for him to have told them that he was going to attack them. On the other hand, if it be only a debt that is due, it would be as unreasonable to go to war without demanding satisfaction, and it is only upon the dilatory and evasive manner of giving satisfaction that a war in this case becomes lawful.

But to consider a little more particularly what is lawful in war, suppose a subject of any government is injured, they who have injured him become natural objects of resentment, and also the government which protects him if it refuse satisfaction, but the greater part of the nation is perfectly innocent, and knows nothing about the affair. In the late war with France, not one out of twenty, either of the French or us, knew anything of the offences done. Upon what principle or foundation of justice therefore do we take their goods from them, and distress them in all possible ways? This can by no means be founded upon justice and equity, properly so called, it must be upon necessity, which, indeed, in this case, is a part of justice.

Mr. Hutcheson indeed very ingeniously accounts for this, but if we examine his opinion thoroughly, we shall find that he has not built his reasoning on a proper foundation. Every nation, says he, maintains and

supports the government for its own good. If the government commit any offence against a neighbouring sovereign or subject, and its own people continue to support and protect it, as it were, in it, they thereby become accessory and liable to punishment along with [it]. As by the Roman law, if any of those slaves which every private person kept for his own advantage, had done any damage to another, one of these two things was to be done, he must either keep the slave no longer, or pay the damage, in like manner a nation must either allow itself to be liable for the damages, or give up the government altogether. It is to be observed that in this reasoning, though excessively ingenious, the cases are not in the smallest degree parallel. A man can do with his slave as he pleases, he can either put him away, or pay what damages he has occasioned, but a nation in most cases can neither do the one nor the other. A government is often maintained, not for the nation's preservation, but its own. It was never the doctrine of any public law that the subjects had a right to dispose of the sovereign, not even in England, where his right has been so much contested. How then comes it that a nation should be guilty of an injury which was not in its power?

The real cause why the whole nation is thought a reasonable object of resentment is that we do not feel for those at a distance as we do for those near us. We have been injured by France, our resentment rises against the whole nation instead of the government, and they, through a blind indiscriminating faculty natural to mankind, become the objects of an unreasonable resentment. In a war between France and us, a Dane would naturally enter into the same sentiments that we do, and would involve together without distinction both the guilty and the innocent. This is however quite contrary to the rules of justice, observed with regard to our own subjects. We would rather choose that ten guilty persons should escape than that one innocent person should suffer. Another cause is that it is often very difficult to get satisfaction from a subject or from a sovereign that may have offended. They are generally in the heart of the country, and perfectly well secured. If we could get at them no doubt they would be the first objects of our resentment, but as this is impossible, we must make reprisals some other way. We have suffered unjustly on account of our connexions, let them also suffer unjustly on account of theirs. In war there must always be the greatest injustice, but it is inevitable.

The practice of ancient and modern nations differs widely with regard to the length to which the outrages of war may be carried. Barbarians, if they do not kill those taken in war, may dispose of them as they please.

As all who made war were considered as robbers and violators of the peace of society, such punishments were by no means thought inadequate. Even among the Romans, if the battering ram had once struck the walls, no agreement nor capitulation was allowed, but everything fell into the hands of the conquerors, and they were at liberty to use it as they pleased. So much was this the case in Cicero's time that he represents it as the greatest stretch of humanity that a capitulation was allowed after the ram had once struck the walls. But though force and fraud were in former periods the great virtues of war, modern manners have come to a greater degree of refinement, both with respect to persons and effects. Captives in war are now by no means made slaves or liable to oppression: an officer is set free upon his parole or word of honour; and in the war between France and us, they generally treated our wounded prisoners better than their own wounded soldiers. Indeed, there is no nation that pushes this point of gallantry farther than we do. When the sixpence a day which was allowed the French prisoners at Edinburgh and elsewhere, was thought insufficient to maintain them on account of the diminution it sustained before it came to their hands by sub-contracts, &c., a collection of £10,000 was generously made for them. In general prisoners of war are now as well treated as other people.

In the same manner cartel treaties, by which soldiers and sailors are valued at so much, and exchanged at the end of every campaign, the nation which has lost most prisoners paying the balance, is an evidence of our refinement in humanity. In the late war indeed, we refused to enter into any such treaty with France for sailors, and by this wise regulation soon unmanned their navy, as we took a great many more than they. It was the want of humanity no doubt which rendered ancient towns so obstinate, for it was better to sustain the most terrible hardships than to surrender, but now the besieged know very well how they will be treated before they capitulate, and will run no great risk before they do so.

This superior degree of humanity was introduced during the time of Popery. We never find it among the Greeks and Romans, notwithstanding all their attainments. The Pope was considered as the common father of Christendom, the clergy were under his subjection, and he had intercourse by his legates with all the courts of Europe. By this they were more nearly connected, and he obliged them to treat one another with more humanity. The Holy War too, which at that time was undertaken by most of the princes in Europe, made them turn their arms against all those of a different religion, who they thought deserved to be treated in the most cruel manner, but when they came to be engaged in a war

among themselves, as they had all been on one side in that common cause, and as they thought that Christians should not be treated in the same manner with infidels, a greater degree of humanity was introduced. From these causes, moderns behave differently from the ancients with regard to the persons of prisoners.

It is more from motives of policy than humanity that the effects of enemies are secured. When a French army invades Germany, the general makes a law that all the people who will live quietly, and do not rise against him, shall be secure in their persons and possessions, and he will punish a soldier as severely for injuring the peasants of his enemy's country as those of his own. But this is not the case in a sea war. An admiral seizes and plunders all the merchant ships he can get. Many of the merchants have done as little harm as the peasants; why then this distinction? It is the interest of the general not to rob the peasants, because it would be difficult to march an army carrying all its provisions through the country of an enemy. But by engaging them to stay he is supplied without any other expedient. By this means war is so far from being a disadvantage in a well cultivated country, that many get rich by it. When the Netherlands is the seat of war all the peasants grow rich, for they pay no rent when the enemy are in the country, and provisions sell at a high rate. This is indeed at the expense of the landlords and better sort of people, who are generally ruined on such occasions. This is so much the case that all the poor people who are abroad, whenever they hear of a war, will not stay from their native country. It is quite otherways in a sea war. Every ship carries its own provisions, and has no dependence for them upon the ships which it meets.

Another cause of modern refinement is that courtesy, or rather gallantry, which takes place between hostile nations, by which even ambassadors are kept at their several courts. Anciently it was the greatest gallantry to kill the general of an army, but nothing could make a person more infamous at present than such a practice. When the king of France in person besieged a certain castle, the governor sent to know in what part of the camp the king lodged, that he might not cannonade it. The king of Prussia indeed did not grant the princes of Saxony this request, when they informed him where the royal tent stood, but this was because he was assured that the chief magazine was there. Now if there be any in a nation who have injured more than others, they are the king and generals. How comes it then that it is not now thought lawful to kill them as well as formerly? The plain reason is that monarchies, whose interest it always is to show respect to those in authority, set the example

at present, but republics, whose interest lies in adopting the opposite maxim, formerly led the fashion.

The same policy which makes us not so apt to go to war makes us also more favourable than formerly, after an entire conquest. Anciently an enemy forfeited all his possessions, and was disposed of at the pleasure of the conquerors. It was on this account that the Romans had often to people a country anew, and sent out colonies. It is not so now, a conquered country in a manner only changes masters, they may be subjected to new taxes and other regulations, but need no new people. The conqueror generally allows them the possession of their religion and laws, which is a practice much better than the ancient. Modern armies too, are less irritated at one another, because fire arms keep them at a greater distance. When they always fought sword in hand, their rage and fury were raised to the highest pitch, and as they were mixed with one another the slaughter was vastly greater.

§ 3. Of the Rights of Neutral Nations.

Third, we are next to show what is due to neutral nations from the belligerent powers.

The rule of justice with respect to neutral nations is, that as they have offended no party, they should suffer no injury. In a war between France and England the Dutch should have the liberty of trading to both countries, as in the time of peace, as they have injured neither party. Unless when they carry contraband goods, or are going to a town that is besieged, they can trade to any part of the country without molestation. A neutral bottom will not, however, protect the goods of the enemy, nor does the hostility of the bottom, so to speak, forfeit the goods of the neutral power. There is some difference between the practice of ancient and modern nations with respect to the ius postliminii, or the recovery of what was lost. The maxim in time of war anciently was, we are always in the right, and our enemies always in the wrong; whatever is taken from the enemy is justly taken, whatever is taken from us is unjustly taken. On this account, if a Carthaginian had sold to a Roman a Roman ship taken in war, the former owner, whenever he had an opportunity, took it back, as on the above principle it was unjustly taken from him. Now it is quite otherways; we consider everything done in war as just and equitable, and neither demand, nor would take back any captures made in it. If an English ship be taken by the French and sold to the Dutch, and come to a British harbour, the former owner pretends no claim to her, for he had lost all hopes of it when it had gone into the possession of the enemy.

It is to be observed that there is a very great difference in the conduct of belligerent nations towards one that is neutral, in a land war, from what [it] is in a sea war, which is more the effect of policy than humanity. When an army retreats, and the conqueror pursues into a neutral nation, unless it have power to hold out both, it becomes the seat of war, as is often the case, and little or no satisfaction is given for damages; but in a sea war, a ship taken from the most inconsiderable neutral power is always restored. The reason commonly assigned, that it injures their commerce more to take their ships than anything else, is unsatisfactory, for a land war hurts commerce more than it does. The real reason is that a small country has it not in its power to assert its neutrality in a land war, but the smallest is able to do it in a sea war. A

small fort can oblige of the greatest nation to respect the neutrality of its harbour.

§ 4. Of the Rights of Ambassadors.

Four[th], we are in the last place to consider the rights of ambassadors between different nations.

When nations came to have a great deal of business one with another, it was found necessary to send messengers betwixt them, who were the first ambassadors. Anciently, as there was little commerce carried on between different nations, ambassadors were only sent on particular occasions, and were what we now call ambassadors extraordinary, who returned home after their business was transacted. We find nothing like resident ambassadors in Rome or Greece; their whole office was on particular occasions to conclude peace, make alliances, &c. The first time that resident ambassadors were employed, was in the beginning of the seventeenth century, by Ferdinand, King of Spain. Even the word ambassador comes from the Spanish verb, ambassare, to send. The Pope, indeed, from the earliest times had residents, or legates, at all the courts of Europe. The very same reason that makes embassies now so frequent, induced the Pope formerly to fall upon this method. He had business in all the countries of Europe, and a great part of his revenue was collected from them, and as they were continually attempting to infringe the right he claimed, he found it necessary to have a person constantly residing at their courts, to see that his privileges were preserved. The Pope from this custom derived several advantages.

When commerce was introduced into Europe, and the privileges of every country, with the duties payable on goods in another, were settled, the merchants of one country had constant claims on those of another. They themselves were strangers in those countries, and would very readily be injured, and oftener think themselves so. It became necessary, therefore, to have one of their countrymen constantly residing at the courts of different nations to protect the rights of his fellow-subjects. Anciently, as was observed, there was little intercourse with different nations, and therefore no occasion for resident ambassadors, but now, as there is something almost every day to adjust betwixt dealers, it is necessary that there should be some person of weight and authority who has access to the court, to prevent any occasion of quarrel betwixt them. We have already observed that it was Ferdinand of Spain who established this practice. At first it gave great jealousy to the neighbouring nations to keep ambassadors residing at their courts. He,

indeed, pretended to have no right to do this, but by sending an ambassador upon a certain occasion, and starting different questions, he found means of keeping him there. This practice was soon imitated, and it immediately became the universal custom of the European princes, and was so far from being taken amiss that it was reckoned a great affront not to send one. Grotius, whose opinions are founded on the practice of ancient nations, declares against resident ambassadors, and calls them resident spies, but if he had lived in the present age, he would have found that extensive commerce renders it impossible to preserve peace a month, unless grievances be redressed by a man of authority, who knows the customs of the country, and is capable of explaining what injuries are really done. The custom of sending ambassadors preserves peace, and by giving intelligence, prevents one country from being invaded by another without timeous notice. When any kind of dispute happens and the ambassador is recalled, you can have intelligence by your communication with other courts, your ambassador there being informed, for ambassadors in general are acquainted with all the business in Europe.

Though one country might attain some kind of preeminence by the influence and assiduity of its ambassador, no attention was for a long time given to it, and that balance of power which has of late been so much talked of, was never then heard of. Every sovereign had enough to do within his own dominions, and could bestow little attention on foreign powers. Before the institution of residents they could have little intelligence, but ever since the beginning of the sixteenth century the nations of Europe were divided into two great alliances. On the one hand were England, Holland, Hungary, Muscovy, &c., on the other France, Spain, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, &c. In this manner a kind of alliance was kept up, sometimes one leaving the one side, and another joining it, as at present Prussia is with England, and Hungary on the other side. A system of this kind was established in Italy about [the] fifteenth century among the great families there. The resident ambassadors of these nations hinder any one country from domineering over another, either by sea or land, and are formed into a kind of council not unlike that of the Amphictyons in ancient Greece. They have power to advise and consult concerning matters, but not to determine any, and by combining together can threaten any one country pretending to superiority, or making an unreasonable demand. Post offices, too, are of great importance for procuring intelligence, as communication is open through all these

countries, both in peace and war, which makes commerce easy, and gives notice of every movement.

An ambassador’s person must be sacred, and not subject to any of the courts of justice in the country where he resides. If he contract debts, or do any injury, a complaint must be made to his country. When the Dutch arrested the Russian ambassador in the year 1718, it was complained of as a violation of the laws of nations. The goods which an ambassador buys are not subject to any custom. As a sovereign would be exempted from taxes, so must his ambassador who represents him. When an ambassador makes any attempt to disturb the peace by entering into conspiracies or the like, he may be imprisoned. By way of compliment, and to keep up the dignity of an ambassador, his house is considered as an asylum for offenders. He must be cautious, however, of this privilege, and extend his authority only to the protection of debtors and small delinquents, for the right will be broken through if he harbour those guilty of capital crimes. The servants of ambassadors, too, are entitled to some considerable privileges; if indeed they have contracted debts, they may be arrested, but this is never done voluntarily.

All the words that signify those persons employed by one court at another are derived from the Spanish language. The Spanish court was then the most ceremonious in the world, and Spanish dress was everywhere affected. As ambassadors were obliged to keep up much ceremony, they were hindered in the prosecution of their business. A man that has to negociate matters of the highest importance could not allow so much time to be spent in the endless ceremony of paying and returning visits. Envoys were therefore sent, to whom less ceremony was due, and who could be addressed on any occasion; their dignity, too, soon advanced, and incapacitated them to transact business. As they continued for some time, they were called resident ambassadors ordinary, being of an inferior order to the ambassadors extraordinary. Below this rank is the minister, who resides in the country on account of his own business, and has power to transact any little business of the country to which he belongs.

A consul is a particular magistrate who is a judge of all matters relating to the merchants of his own country, and takes care to do them justice in those places where it may not be very accurately administered.

These are the names and offices of the several persons employed in the foreign affairs of the nation, occasioned by the introduction of commerce, and now become absolutely necessary.

Thus we have considered both the laws of nature and the laws of nations.

The Biographies



Adam Smith lived with his mother in Kirkcaldy, Scotland, from 1767–1776. That house, on the High Street, is where he wrote 'The Wealth of Nations'. The house was torn down in 1834 and these buildings now stand in its place.

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADAM SMITH by Dugald Stewart



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FROM HIS BIRTH TILL THE PUBLICATION OF THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

Adam Smith, author of the Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, was the son of Adam Smith, comptroller of the customs at Kirkaldy,* and of Margaret Douglas, daughter of Mr. Douglas of Strathenry. He was the only child of the marriage, and was born at Kirkaldy, on the 5th of June, 1723, a few months after the death of his father.

His constitution during infancy was infirm and sickly, and required all the tender solicitude of his surviving parent. She was blamed for treating him with an unlimited indulgence; but it produced no unfavourable effects on his temper or his disposition: and he enjoyed the rare satisfaction of being able to repay her affection, by every attention that filial gratitude could dictate, during the long period of sixty years.

An accident which happened to him when he was about three years old, is of too interesting a nature to be omitted in the account of so valuable a life. He had been carried by his mother to Strathenry, on a visit to his uncle Mr. Douglas, and was one day amusing himself alone at the door of the house, when he was stolen by a party of that set of vagrants who are known in Scotland by the name of tinkers. Luckily he was soon missed by his uncle, who, hearing that some vagrants had passed, pursued them, with what assistance he could find, till he overtook them in Leslie wood; and was the happy instrument of preserving to the world a genius, which was destined, not only to extend the boundaries of science, but to enlighten and reform the commercial policy of Europe.

The school of Kirkaldy, where Mr. Smith received the first rudiments of his education, was then conducted by Mr. David Miller, a teacher, in his day, of considerable reputation, and whose name deserves to be recorded, on account of the eminent men whom that very obscure seminary produced while under his direction. Of these were Mr. Oswald, of Dunikeir;* his brother, Dr. John Oswald, afterwards Bishop of Raphoe; and our late excellent colleague, the Rev. Dr. John Drysdale: all of them nearly contemporary with Mr. Smith, and united with him through life by the closest ties of friendship. One of his school-fellows is

still alive;† and to his kindness I am principally indebted for the scanty materials which form the first part of this narrative.

Among these companions of his earliest years, Mr. Smith soon attracted notice, by his passion for books, and by the extraordinary powers of his memory. The weakness of his bodily constitution prevented him from partaking in their more active amusements; but he was much beloved by them on account of his temper, which, though warm, was, to an uncommon degree, friendly and generous. Even then he was remarkable for those habits which remained with him through life, of speaking to himself when alone, and of absence in company.

From the grammar-school of Kirkaldy, he was sent, in 1737, to the university of Glasgow, where he remained till 1740, when he went to Baliol College, Oxford, as an exhibitioner on Snell's foundation.

Dr. Maclaine, of the Hague, who was a fellow-student of Mr. Smith's at Glasgow, told me some years ago, that his favourite pursuits while at that university were mathematics and natural philosophy; and I remember to have heard my father remind him of a geometrical problem of considerable difficulty, about which he was occupied at the time when their acquaintance commenced, and which had been proposed to him as an exercise by the celebrated Dr. Simpson.

These, however, were certainly not the sciences in which he was formed to excel; nor did they long divert him from pursuits more congenial to his mind. What Lord Bacon says of Plato may be justly applied to him: "Illum, licet ad rempublicam non accessisset, tamen naturâ et inclinatione omnino ad res civiles propensum, vires eo præcipue intendisse; neque de Philosophia Naturali admodum sollicitum esse; nisi quatenus ad Philosophi nomen et celebritatem tuendam, et ad majestatem quandam moralibus et civilibus doctrinis addendam et aspergendam sufficeret."* The study of human nature in all its branches, more particularly of the political history of mankind, opened a boundless field to his curiosity and ambition; and while it afforded scope to all the various powers of his versatile and comprehensive genius, gratified his ruling passion of contributing to the happiness and the improvement of society. To this study, diversified at his leisure hours by the less severe occupations of polite literature, he seems to have devoted himself almost entirely from the time of his removal to Oxford; but he still retained, even in advanced years, a recollection of his early acquisitions, which not only added to the splendour of his conversation, but enabled him to exemplify some of his favourite theories concerning the natural progress of the mind in the investigation of truth, by the history of those sciences

in which the connection and succession of discoveries may be traced with the greatest advantage. If I am not mistaken, too, the influence of his early taste for the Greek Geometry may be remarked in the elementary clearness and fulness, bordering sometimes upon prolixity, with which he frequently states his political reasonings. The lectures of the profound and eloquent Dr. Hutcheson, which he had attended previous to his departure from Glasgow, and of which he always spoke in terms of the warmest admiration, had, it may be reasonably presumed, a considerable effect in directing his talents to their proper objects.*

I have not been able to collect any information with respect to that part of his youth which was spent in England. I have heard him say, that he employed himself frequently in the practice of translation (particularly from the French), with a view to the improvement of his own style: and he used often to express a favourable opinion of the utility of such exercises to all who cultivate the art of composition. It is much to be regretted, that none of his juvenile attempts in this way have been preserved; as the few specimens which his writings contain of his skill as a translator, are sufficient to show the eminence he had attained in a walk of literature, which, in our country, has been so little frequented by men of genius.

It was probably also at this period of his life, that he cultivated with the greatest care the study of languages. The knowledge he possessed of these, both ancient and modern, was uncommonly extensive and accurate; and, in him, was subservient, not to a vain parade of tasteless erudition, but to a familiar acquaintance with every thing that could illustrate the institutions, the manners, and the ideas of different ages and nations. How intimately he had once been conversant with the more ornamental branches of learning, in particular, with the works of the Roman, Greek, French, and Italian poets; appeared sufficiently from the hold which they kept of his memory, after all the different occupations and inquiries in which his maturer faculties had been employed.* In the English language, the variety of poetical passages which he was not only accustomed to refer to occasionally, but which he was able to repeat with correctness, appeared surprising even to those whose attention had never been directed to more important acquisitions.

After a residence at Oxford of seven years, he returned to Kirkaldy, and lived two years with his mother; engaged in study, but without any fixed plan for his future life. He had been originally destined for the Church of England, and with that view had been sent to Oxford; but not finding the ecclesiastical profession suitable to his taste, he chose to

consult, in this instance, his own inclination, in preference to the wishes of his friends; and abandoning at once all the schemes which their prudence had formed for him, he resolved to return to his own country, and to limit his ambition to the uncertain prospect of obtaining, in time, some one of those moderate preferments, to which literary attainments lead in Scotland.

In the year 1748, he fixed his residence at Edinburgh, and during that and the following years, read lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres, under the patronage of Lord Kames. About this time, too, he contracted a very intimate friendship, which continued without interruption till his death, with Mr. Alexander Wedderburn, now Lord Loughborough, and with Mr. William Johnstone, now Mr. Pulteney.

At what particular period his acquaintance with Mr. David Hume commenced, does not appear from any information that I have received; but from some papers, now in the possession of Mr. Hume's nephew, and which he has been so obliging as to allow me to peruse, their acquaintance seems to have grown into friendship before the year 1752. It was a friendship on both sides founded on the admiration of genius, and the love of simplicity; and which forms an interesting circumstance in the history of each of these eminent men, from the ambition which both have shown to record it to posterity.

In 1751, he was elected Professor of Logic in the University of Glasgow; and the year following, he was removed to the Professorship of Moral Philosophy in the same University, upon the death of Mr. Thomas Craigie, the immediate successor of Dr. Hutcheson. In this situation he remained thirteen years; a period he used frequently to look back to, as the most useful and happy of his life. It was indeed a situation in which he was eminently fitted to excel, and in which the daily labours of his profession were constantly recalling his attention to his favourite pursuits, and familiarising his mind to those important speculations he was afterwards to communicate to the world. In this view, though it afforded, in the meantime, but a very narrow scene for his ambition, it was probably instrumental, in no inconsiderable degree, to the future eminence of his literary character.

Of Mr. Smith's lectures while Professor at Glasgow, no part has been preserved, excepting what he himself published in the Theory of Moral Sentiments, and in the Wealth of Nations. For the following short account of them, I am indebted to a gentleman who was formerly one of Mr. Smith's pupils, and who continued till his death to be one of his most intimate and valued friends.*

“In the Professorship of Logic, to which Mr. Smith was appointed on his first introduction into this University, he soon saw the necessity of departing widely from the plan that had been followed by his predecessors, and of directing the attention of his pupils to studies of a more interesting and useful nature than the logic and metaphysics of the schools. Accordingly, after exhibiting a general view of the powers of the mind, and explaining so much of the ancient logic as was requisite to gratify curiosity with respect to an artificial method of reasoning, which had once occupied the universal attention of the learned, he dedicated all the rest of his time to the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles lettres. The best method of explaining and illustrating the various powers of the human mind, the most useful part of metaphysics, arises from an examination of the several ways of communicating our thoughts by speech, and from an attention to the principles of those literary compositions which contribute to persuasion or entertainment. By these arts, everything that we perceive or feel, every operation of our minds, is expressed and delineated in such a manner, that it may be clearly distinguished and remembered. There is, at the same time, no branch of literature more suited to youth at their first entrance upon philosophy than this, which lays hold of their taste and their feelings.

“It is much to be regretted, that the manuscript containing Mr. Smith’s lectures on this subject was destroyed before his death. The first part, in point of composition, was highly finished; and the whole discovered strong marks of taste and original genius. From the permission given to students of taking notes, many observations and opinions contained in these lectures have either been detailed in separate dissertations, or engrossed in general collections, which have since been given to the public. But these, as might be expected, have lost the air of originality and the distinctive character which they received from their first author, and are often obscured by that multiplicity of commonplace matter in which they are sunk and involved.

“About a year after his appointment to the Professorship of Logic, Mr. Smith was elected to the chair of Moral Philosophy. His course of lectures on this subject was divided into four parts. The first contained Natural Theology; in which he considered the proofs of the being and attributes of God, and those principles of the human mind upon which religion is founded. The second comprehended Ethics, strictly so called, and consisted chiefly of the doctrines which he afterwards published in his Theory of Moral Sentiments. In the third part, he treated at more length of that branch of morality which relates to justice, and which,

being susceptible of precise and accurate rules, is for that reason capable of a full and particular explanation.

“Upon this subject he followed the plan that seems to be suggested by Montesquieu; endeavouring to trace the gradual progress of jurisprudence, both public and private, from the rudest to the most refined ages, and to point out the effects of those arts which contribute to subsistence, and to the accumulation of property, in producing correspondent improvements or alterations in law and government. This important branch of his labours he also intended to give to the public; but this intention, which is mentioned in the conclusion of the Theory of Moral Sentiments, he did not live to fulfil.

“In the last part of his lectures, he examined those political regulations which are founded, not upon the principle of justice, but that of expediency, and which are calculated to increase the riches, the power, and the prosperity of a State. Under this view, he considered the political institutions relating to commerce, to finances, to ecclesiastical and military establishments. What he delivered on these subjects contained the substance of the work he afterwards published under the title of An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.

“There was no situation in which the abilities of Mr. Smith appeared to greater advantage than as a Professor. In delivering his lectures, he trusted almost entirely to extemporary elocution. His manner, though not graceful, was plain and unaffected; and, as he seemed to be always interested in the subject, he never failed to interest his hearers. Each discourse consisted commonly of several distinct propositions, which he successively endeavoured to prove and illustrate. These propositions, when announced in general terms, had, from their extent, not unfrequently something of the air of a paradox. In his attempts to explain them, he often appeared, at first, not to be sufficiently possessed of the subject, and spoke with some hesitation. As he advanced, however, the matter seemed to crowd upon him, his manner became warm and animated, and his expression easy and fluent. In points susceptible of controversy, you could easily discern, that he secretly conceived an opposition to his opinions, and that he was led upon this account to support them with greater energy and vehemence. By the fulness and variety of his illustrations, the subject gradually swelled in his hands, and acquired a dimension which, without a tedious repetition of the same views, was calculated to seize the attention of his audience, and to afford them pleasure, as well as instruction, in following the same object, through all the diversity of shades and aspects in which it was presented,

and afterwards in tracing it backwards to that original proposition or general truth from which this beautiful train of speculation had proceeded.

“His reputation as a Professor was accordingly raised very high, and a multitude of students from a great distance resorted to the University, merely upon his account. Those branches of science which he taught became fashionable at this place, and his opinions were the chief topics of discussion in clubs and literary societies. Even the small peculiarities in his pronounciation or manner of speaking, became frequently the objects of imitation.”

While Mr. Smith was thus distinguishing himself by his zeal and ability as a public teacher, he was gradually laying the foundation of a more extensive reputation, by preparing for the press his system of morals. The first edition of this work appeared in 1759, under the title of “The Theory of Moral Sentiments.”

Hitherto Mr. Smith had remained unknown to the world as an author; nor have I heard that he had made a trial of his powers in any anonymous publications, excepting in a periodical work called The Edinburgh Review, which was begun in the year 1755, by some gentlemen of distinguished abilities, but which they were prevented by other engagements from carrying further than the two first numbers. To this work Mr. Smith contributed a review of Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary of the English Language, and also a letter, addressed to the editors, containing some general observations on the state of literature in the different countries of Europe. In the former of these papers he points out some defects in Dr. Johnson’s plan, which he censures as not sufficiently grammatical. “The different significations of a word (he observes) are indeed collected; but they are seldom digested into general classes, or ranged under the meaning which the word principally expresses: And sufficient care is not taken to distinguish the words apparently synonymous.” To illustrate this criticism, he copies from Dr. Johnson the articles but and humour, and opposes to them the same articles digested agreeably to his own idea. The various significations of the word but are very nicely and happily discriminated. The other article does not seem to have been executed with equal care.

The observations on the state of learning in Europe are written with ingenuity and elegance; but are chiefly interesting, as they show the attention which the Author had given to the philosophy and literature of the Continent, at a period when they were not much studied in this island.

In the same volume with the Theory of Moral Sentiments, Mr. Smith published a Dissertation “On the Origin of Languages, and on the different Genius of those which are original and compounded.” The remarks I have to offer on these two discourses, I shall, for the sake of distinctness, make the subject of a separate section.

OF THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS, AND THE DISSERTATION ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGES.

The science of Ethics has been divided by modern writers into two parts; the one comprehending the theory of Morals, and the other its practical doctrines. The questions about which the former is employed, are chiefly the two following: First, By what principle of our constitution are we led to form the notion of moral distinctions; — whether by that faculty which, in the other branches of human knowledge, perceives the distinction between truth and falsehood; or by a peculiar power of perception (called by some the Moral Sense) which is pleased with one set of qualities, and displeased with another? Secondly, What is the proper object of moral approbation? or, in other words, What is the common quality or qualities belonging to all the different modes of virtue? Is it benevolence; or a rational self-love; or a disposition (resulting from the ascendancy of Reason over Passion) to act suitably to the different relations in which we are placed? These two questions seem to exhaust the whole theory of Morals. The scope of the one is to ascertain the origin of our moral ideas; that of the other, to refer the phenomena of moral perception to their most simple and general laws.

The practical doctrines of morality comprehend all those rules of conduct which profess to point out the proper ends of human pursuit, and the most effectual means of attaining them; to which we may add all those literary compositions, whatever be their particular form, which have for their aim to fortify and animate our good dispositions, by delineations of the beauty, of the dignity, or of the utility of Virtue.

I shall not inquire at present into the justness of this division. I shall only observe, that the words Theory and Practice are not, in this instance, employed in their usual acceptations. The theory of Morals does not bear, for example, the same relation to the practice of Morals, that the theory of Geometry bears to practical Geometery. In this last science, all the practical rules are founded on theoretical principles previously established. But in the former science, the practical rules are obvious to the capacities of all mankind; the theoretical principles form one of the most difficult subjects of discussion that have ever exercised the ingenuity of metaphysicians.

In illustrating the doctrines of practical morality (if we make allowance for some unfortunate prejudices produced or encouraged by violent and oppressive systems of policy), the ancients seem to have availed themselves of every light furnished by nature to human reason; and indeed those writers who, in later times, have treated the subject with the greatest success, are they who have followed most closely the footsteps of the Greek and the Roman philosophers. The theoretical question, too, concerning the essence of virtue, or the proper object of moral approbation, was a favourite topic of discussion in the ancient schools. The question concerning the principle of moral approbation, though not entirely of modern origin, has been chiefly agitated since the writings of Cudworth, in opposition to those of Hobbes; and it is this question accordingly (recommended at once by its novelty and difficulty to the curiosity of speculative men) that has produced most of the theories which characterise and distinguish from each other the later systems of moral philosophy.

It was the opinion of Dr. Cudworth, and also of Dr. Clarke, that moral distinctions are perceived by that power of the mind, which distinguishes truth from falsehood. This system it was one great object of Dr. Hutcheson's philosophy to refute, and in opposition to it, to show that the words Right and Wrong express certain agreeable and disagreeable qualities in actions, which it is not the province of reason but of feeling to perceive; and to that power of perception which renders us susceptible of pleasure or of pain from the view of virtue or of vice, he gave the name of the Moral Sense. His reasonings upon this subject are in the main acquiesced in, both by Mr. Hume and Mr. Smith; but they differ from him in one important particular, — Dr. Hutcheson plainly supposing, that the moral sense is a simple principle of our constitution, of which no account can be given; whereas the other two philosophers have both attempted to analyze it into other principles more general. Their systems, however, with respect to it are very different from each other. According to Mr. Hume, all the qualities which are denominated virtuous, are useful either to ourselves or to others, and the pleasure which we derive from the view of them is the pleasure of utility. Mr. Smith, without rejecting entirely Mr. Hume's doctrine, proposes another of his own, far more comprehensive; a doctrine with which he thinks all the most celebrated theories of morality invented by his predecessors coincide in part, and from some partial view of which he apprehends that they have all proceeded.

Of this very ingenious and original theory, I shall endeavour to give a short abstract. To those who are familiarly acquainted with it as it is stated by its author, I am aware that the attempt may appear superfluous; but I flatter myself that it will not be wholly useless to such as have not been much conversant in these abstract disquisitions, by presenting to them the leading principles of the system in one connected view, without those interruptions of the attention which necessarily arise from the author's various and happy illustrations, and from the many eloquent digressions which animate and adorn his composition.

The fundamental principle of Mr. Smith's theory is, that the primary objects of our moral perceptions are the actions of other men; and that our moral judgments with respect to our own conduct are only applications to ourselves of decisions which we have already passed on the conduct of our neighbour. His work accordingly includes two distinct inquiries, which, although sometimes blended together in the execution of his general design, it is necessary for the reader to discriminate carefully from each other, in order to comprehend all the different bearings of the argument. The aim of the former inquiry is, to explain in what manner we learn to judge of the conduct of our neighbour; that of the latter, to show how, by applying these judgments to ourselves, we acquire a sense of duty, and a feeling of its paramount authority over all our other principles of action.

Our moral judgments, both with respect to our own conduct and that of others, include two distinct perceptions: first, A perception of conduct as right or wrong; and, secondly, A perception of the merit or demerit of the agent. To that quality of conduct which moralists, in general, express by the word Rectitude, Mr. Smith gives the name of Propriety; and he begins his theory with inquiring in what it consists, and how we are led to form the idea of it. The leading principles of his doctrine on this subject are comprehended in the following propositions: —

It is from our own experience alone, that we can form any idea of what passes in the mind of another person on any particular occasion; and the only way in which we can form this idea, is by supposing ourselves in the same circumstances with him, and conceiving how we should be affected if we were so situated. It is impossible for us, however, to conceive ourselves placed in any situation, whether agreeable or otherwise, without feeling an effect of the same kind with what would be produced by the situation itself; and consequently the attention we give at any time to the circumstances of our neighbour, must

affect us somewhat in the same manner, although by no means in the same degree, as if these circumstances were our own.

That this imaginary change of situation, is the real source of the interest we take in their fortunes, Mr. Smith attempts to prove by various instances. “When we see a stroke aimed, and just ready to fall upon the leg or arm of another person, we naturally shrink and draw back our own leg or our own arm; and when it does fall, we feel it in some measure, and are hurt by it as well as the sufferer. The mob, when they are gazing at a dancer on the slack-rope, naturally writhe and twist and balance their own bodies, as they see him do, and as they feel that they themselves must do if in his situation.” The same thing takes place, according to Mr. Smith, in every case in which our attention is turned to the condition of our neighbour. Whatever is the passion which arises from any object in the person principally concerned, an analogous emotion springs up, at the thought of his situation, in the breast of every attentive spectator. In every passion of which the mind of man is susceptible, the emotions of the bystander always correspond to what, by bringing the case home to himself, he imagines should be the sentiments of the sufferer.

To this principle of our nature which leads us to enter into the situations of other men, and to partake with them in the passions which these situations have a tendency to excite, Mr. Smith gives the name of sympathy or fellow-feeling, which two words he employs as synonymous. He acknowledges that, upon some occasions, sympathy arises merely from the view of a certain emotion in another person; but that in general it arises, not so much from the view of the emotion, as from that of the situation which excites it.

A sympathy or fellow-feeling between different persons is always agreeable to both. When I am in a situation which excites any passion, it is pleasant to me to know, that the spectators of my situation enter with me into all its various circumstances, and are affected with them in the same manner as I am myself. On the other hand, it is pleasant to the spectator to observe this correspondence of his emotions with mine.

When the spectator of another man’s situation, upon bringing home to himself all its various circumstances, feels himself affected in the same manner with the person principally concerned, he approves of the affection or passion of this person as just and proper, and suitable to its object. The exceptions which occur to this observation are, according to Mr. Smith, only apparent. “A stranger, for example, passes by us in the street with all the marks of the deepest affliction: and we are immediately told, that he has just received the news of the death of his

father. It is impossible that, in this case, we should not approve of his grief; yet it may often happen, without any defect of humanity on our part, that, so far from entering into the violence of his sorrow, we should scarce conceive the first movements of concern upon his account. We have learned, however, from experience, that such a misfortune naturally excites such a degree of sorrow; and we know, that if we took time to examine his situation fully, and in all its parts, we should, without doubt, most sincerely sympathise with him. It is upon the consciousness of this conditional sympathy that our approbation of his sorrow is founded, even in those cases in which that sympathy does not actually take place; and the general rules derived from our preceding experience of what our sentiments would commonly correspond with, correct upon this, as upon many other occasions, the impropriety of our present emotions."

By the propriety therefore of any affection or passion exhibited by another person, is to be understood its suitableness to the object which excites it. Of this suitableness I can judge only from the coincidence of the affection with that which I feel, when I conceive myself in the same circumstances; and the perception of this coincidence is the foundation of the sentiment of moral approbation.

Although, when we attend to the situation of another person, and conceive ourselves to be placed in his circumstances, an emotion of the same kind with that which he feels naturally arises in our own mind, yet this sympathetic emotion bears but a very small proportion, in point of degree, to what is felt by the person principally concerned. In order, therefore, to obtain the pleasure of mutual sympathy, nature teaches the spectator to strive, as much as he can, to raise his emotion to a level with that which the object would really produce: and, on the other hand, she teaches the person whose passion this object has excited, to bring it down, as much as he can, to a level with that of the spectator.

Upon these two different efforts are founded two different sets of virtues. Upon the effort of the spectator to enter into the situation of the person principally concerned, and to raise his sympathetic emotions to a level with the emotions of the actor, are founded the gentle, the amiable virtues; the virtues of candid condescension and indulgent humanity. Upon the effort of the person principally concerned to lower his own emotions, so as to correspond as nearly as possible with those of the spectator, are founded the great, the awful, and respectable virtues; the virtues of self-denial, of self-government, of that command of the passions, which subjects all the movements of our nature to what our own dignity and honour, and the propriety of our own conduct, require.

As a farther illustration of the foregoing doctrine, Mr. Smith considers particularly the degrees of the different passions which are consistent with propriety, and endeavours to show, that, in every case, it is decent or indecent to express a passion strongly, according as mankind are disposed, or not disposed, to sympathize with it. It is unbecoming, for example, to express strongly any of those passions which arise from a certain condition of the body; because other men, who are not in the same condition, cannot be expected to sympathize with them. It is unbecoming to cry out with bodily pain; because the sympathy felt by the spectator bears no proportion to the acuteness of what is felt by the sufferer. The case is somewhat similar with those passions which take their origin from a particular turn or habit of the imagination.

In the case of the unsocial passions of hatred and resentment, the sympathy of the spectator is divided between the person who feels the passion, and the person who is the object of it. “We are concerned for both, and our fear for what the one may suffer damps our resentment for what the other has suffered.” Hence the imperfect degree in which we sympathise with such passions; and the propriety, when we are under their influence, of moderating their expression to a much greater degree than is required in the case of any other emotions.

The reverse of this takes place with respect to all the social and benevolent affections. The sympathy of the spectator with the person who feels them, coincides with his concern for the person who is the object of them. It is this redoubled sympathy which renders these affections so peculiarly becoming and agreeable.

The selfish emotions of grief and joy, when they are conceived on account of our own private good or bad fortune, hold a sort of middle place between our social and our unsocial passions. They are never so graceful as the one set, nor so odious as the other. Even when excessive, they are never so disagreeable as excessive resentment; because no opposite sympathy can ever interest us against them: and when most suitable to their objects, they are never so agreeable as impartial humanity and just benevolence; because no double sympathy can ever interest us for them.

After these general speculations concerning the propriety of actions, Mr. Smith examines how far the judgments of mankind concerning it are liable to be influenced, in particular cases, by the prosperous or the adverse circumstances of the agent. The scope of his reasoning on this subject is directed to show (in opposition to the common opinion), that when there is no envy in the case, our propensity to sympathise with joy

is much stronger than our propensity to sympathise with sorrow; and, of consequence, that it is more easy to obtain the approbation of mankind in prosperity than in adversity. From the same principle he traces the origin of ambition, or of the desire of rank and pre-eminence; the great object of which passion is, to attain that situation which sets a man most in the view of general sympathy and attention, and gives him an easy empire over the affections of others.

Having finished the analysis of our sense of propriety and of impropriety, Mr. Smith proceeds to consider our sense of merit and demerit; which he thinks has also a reference, in the first instance, not to our own characters, but to the characters of our neighbours. In explaining the origin of this part of our moral constitution, he avails himself of the same principle of sympathy, into which he resolves the sentiment of moral approbation.

The words propriety and impropriety, when applied to an affection of the mind, are used in this theory (as has been already observed) to express the suitableness or unsuitableness of the affection to its exciting cause. The words merit and demerit have always a reference (according to Mr. Smith) to the effect which the affection tends to produce. When the tendency of an affection is beneficial, the agent appears to us a proper object of reward; when it is hurtful, he appears the proper object of punishment.

The principles in our nature which most directly prompt us to reward and to punish, are gratitude and resentment. To say of a person, therefore, that he is deserving of reward or of punishment, is to say, in other words, that he is a proper object of gratitude or of resentment; or, which amounts to the same thing, that he is to some person or persons the object of a gratitude or of a resentment, which every reasonable man is ready to adopt and sympathise with.

It is, however, very necessary to observe, that we do not thoroughly sympathize with the gratitude of one man towards another, merely because this other has been the cause of his good fortune, unless he has been the cause of it from motives which we entirely oppose. Our sense, therefore, of the good desert of an action, is a compounded sentiment, made up of an indirect sympathy with the person to whom the action is beneficial, and of a direct sympathy with the affections and motives of the agent. The same remark applies, mutatis mutandis, to our sense of demerit, or of ill-desert.

From these principles, it is inferred, that the only actions which appear to us deserving of reward, are actions of a beneficial tendency,

proceeding from proper motives; the only actions which seem to deserve punishment, are actions of a hurtful tendency, proceeding from improper motives. A mere want of beneficence exposes to no punishment; because the mere want of beneficence tends to do no real positive evil. A man, on the other hand, who is barely innocent, and contents himself with observing strictly the laws of justice with respect to others, can merit only, that his neighbours, in their turn, should observe religiously the same laws with respect to him.

These observations lead Mr. Smith to anticipate a little the subject of the second great division of his work, by a short inquiry into the origin of our sense of justice, as applicable to our own conduct; and also of our sentiments of remorse, and of good desert.

The origin of our sense of justice, as well as of all our other moral sentiments, he accounts for by means of the principle of sympathy. When I attend only to the feelings of my own breast, my own happiness appears to me of far greater consequence than that of all the world besides. But I am conscious, that, in this excessive preference, other men cannot possibly sympathize with me, and that to them I appear only one of the crowd, in whom they are no more interested than in any other individual. If I wish, therefore, to secure their sympathy and approbation (which, according to Mr. Smith, are the objects of the strongest desire of my nature), it is necessary for me to regard my happiness, not in that light in which it appears to myself, but in that light in which it appears to mankind in general. If an unprovoked injury is offered to me, I know that society will sympathize with my resentment; but if I injure the interests of another, who never injured me, merely because they stand in the way of my own, I perceive evidently, that society will sympathize with his resentment, and that I shall become the object of general indignation.

When, upon any occasion, I am led by the violence of passion to overlook these considerations, and in the case of a competition of interests, to act according to my own feelings, and not according to those of impartial spectators, I never fail to incur the punishment of remorse. When my passion is gratified, and I begin to reflect coolly on my conduct, I can no longer enter into the motives from which it proceeded; it appears as improper to me as to the rest of the world; I lament the effects it has produced; I pity the unhappy sufferer whom I have injured; and I feel myself a just object of indignation to mankind. “Such,” says Mr. Smith, “is the nature of that sentiment which is properly called remorse. It is made up of shame from the sense of the impropriety of past conduct; of grief for the effects of it; of pity for those who suffer by it;

and of the dread and terror of punishment from the consciousness of the justly provoked resentment of all rational creatures.”

The opposite behaviour of him who, from proper motives, has performed a generous action, inspires, in a similar manner, the opposite sentiment of conscious merit, or of deserved reward.

The foregoing observations contain a general summary of Mr. Smith’s principles with respect to the origin of our moral sentiments, in so far at least as they relate to the conduct of others. He acknowledges, at the same time, that the sentiments of which we are conscious, on particular occasions, do not always coincide with these principles; and that they are frequently modified by other considerations, very different from the propriety or impropriety of the affections of the agent, and also from the beneficial or hurtful tendency of these affections. The good or bad consequences which accidentally follow from an action, and which, as they do not depend on the agent, ought undoubtedly, in point of justice, to have no influence on our opinion, either of the propriety or the merit of his conduct, scarcely ever fail to influence considerably our judgment with respect to both; by leading us to form a good or a bad opinion of the prudence with which the action was performed, and by animating our sense of the merit or demerit of his design. These facts, however, do not furnish any objections which are peculiarly applicable to Mr. Smith’s theory; for whatever hypothesis we may adopt with respect to the origin of our moral perceptions, all men must acknowledge, that, in so far as the prosperous or the unprosperous event of an action depends on fortune or on accident, it ought neither to increase nor to diminish our moral approbation or disapprobation of the agent. And accordingly it has, in all ages of the world, been the complaint of moralists, that the actual sentiments of mankind should so often be in opposition to this equitable and indisputable maxim. In examining, therefore, this irregularity of our moral sentiments, Mr. Smith is to be considered, not as obviating an objection peculiar to his own system, but as removing a difficulty which is equally connected with every theory on the subject which has ever been proposed. So far as I know, he is the first philosopher who has been fully aware of the importance of the difficulty, and he has indeed treated it with great ability and success. The explanation which he gives of it is not warped in the least by any peculiarity in his own scheme; and, I must own, it appears to me to be the most solid and valuable improvement he has made in this branch of science. It is impossible to give any abstract of it in a sketch of this kind; and therefore I must content myself with remarking, that it consists of three parts. The first explains the causes of

this irregularity of sentiment; the second, the extent of its influence; and the third, the important purposes to which it is subservient. His remarks on the last of these heads are more particularly ingenious and pleasing; as their object is to show, in opposition to what we should be disposed at first to apprehend, that when nature implanted the seeds of this irregularity in the human breast, her leading intention was, to promote the happiness and perfection of the species.

The remaining part of Mr. Smith's theory is employed in showing, in what manner our sense of duty comes to be formed, in consequence of an application to ourselves of the judgments we have previously passed on the conduct of others.

In entering upon this inquiry, which is undoubtedly the most important in the work, and for which the foregoing speculations are, according to Mr. Smith's theory, a necessary preparation, he begins with stating the fact concerning our consciousness of merited praise or blame; and it must be owned, that the first aspect of the fact, as he himself states it, appears not very favourable to his principles. That the great object of a wise and virtuous man is not to act in such a manner as to obtain the actual approbation of those around him, but to act so as to render himself the just and proper object of their approbation, and that his satisfaction with his own conduct depends much more on the consciousness of deserving this approbation than from that of really enjoying it, he candidly acknowledges; but still he insists, that although this may seem, at first view, to intimate the existence of some moral faculty, which is not borrowed from without, our moral sentiments have always some secret reference, either to what are, or to what upon a certain condition would be, or to what we imagine ought to be, the sentiments of others; and that if it were possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, or of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. There is indeed a tribunal within the breast, which is the supreme arbiter of all our actions, and which often mortifies us amidst the applause, and supports us under the censure of the world; yet still, he contends, that if we inquire into the origin of its institution, we shall find, that its jurisdiction is, in a great measure, derived from the authority of that very tribunal whose decisions it so often and so justly reverses.

When we first come into the world, we, for some time, fondly pursue the impossible project of gaining the good-will and approbation of everybody. We soon however find, that this universal approbation is

unattainable; that the most equitable conduct must frequently thwart the interests or the inclinations of particular persons, who will seldom have candour enough to enter into the propriety of our motives, or to see that this conduct, how disagreeable soever to them, is perfectly suitable to our situation. In order to defend ourselves from such partial judgments, we soon learn to set up in our own minds, a judge between ourselves and those we live with. We conceive ourselves as acting in the presence of a person, who has no particular relation, either to ourselves, or to those whose interests are affected by our conduct; and we study to act in such a manner as to obtain the approbation of this supposed impartial spectator. It is only by consulting him that we can see whatever relates to ourselves in its proper shape and dimensions.

There are two different occasions, on which we examine our own conduct, and endeavour to view it in the light in which the impartial spectator would view it. First, when we are about to act; and, secondly, after we have acted. In both cases, our views are very apt to be partial.

When we are about to act, the eagerness of passion seldom allows us to consider what we are doing with the candour of an indifferent person. When the action is over, and the passions which prompted it have subsided, although we can undoubtedly enter into the sentiments of the indifferent spectator much more coolly than before, yet it is so disagreeable to us to think ill of ourselves, that we often purposely turn away our view from those circumstances which might render our judgment unfavourable. Hence that self-deceit which is the source of half the disorders of human life.

In order to guard ourselves agsinst its delusions, nature leads us to form insensibly, by our continual observations upon the conduct of others, certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done or avoided. Some of their actions shock all our natural sentiments; and when we observe other people affected in the same manner with ourselves, we are confirmed in the belief, that our disapprobation was just. We naturally, therefore, lay it down as a general rule, that all such actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or punishable; and we endeavour, by habitual reflection, to fix this general rule in our minds, in order to correct the misrepresentations of self-love, if we should ever be called on to act in similar circumstances. The man of furious resentment, if he were to listen to the dictates of that passion, would, perhaps, regard the death of his enemy as but a small compensation for a trifling wrong. But his observations on the conduct of others have taught him how horrible such sanguinary revenges are; and

he has impressed it on his mind as an invariable rule, to abstain from them upon all occasions. This rule preserves its authority with him, checks the impetuosity of his passion, and corrects the partial views which self-love suggests; although, if this had been the first time in which he considered such an action, he would undoubtedly have determined it to be just and proper, and what every impartial spectator would approve of. A regard to such general rules of morality constitutes, according to Mr. Smith, what is properly called the sense of duty.

I before hinted, that Mr. Smith does not reject entirely from his system that principle of utility, of which the perception in any action or character constitutes, according to Mr. Hume, the sentiment of moral approbation. That no qualities of the mind are approved of as virtues, but such as are useful or agreeable, either to the person himself or to others, he admits to be a proposition that holds universally; and he also admits, that the sentiment of approbation with which we regard virtue, is enlivened by the perception of this utility, or, as he explains the fact, it is enlivened by our sympathy with the happiness of those to whom the utility extends: But still he insists, that it is not the view of this utility which is either the first or principal source of moral approbation.

To sum up the whole of his doctrine in a few words. “When we approve of any character or action, the sentiments which we feel are derived from four different sources. First, we sympathize with the motives of the agent; secondly, we enter into the gratitude of those who receive the benefit of his actions; thirdly, we observe that his conduct has been agreeable to the general rules by which those two sympathies generally act; and, lastly, when we consider such actions as making a part of a system of behaviour which tends to promote the happiness either of the individual or of society, they appear to derive a beauty from this utility, not unlike that which we ascribe to any well-contrived machine.” These different sentiments, he thinks, exhaust completely, in every instance that can be supposed, the compounded sentiment of moral approbation. “After deducting,” says he, “in any one particular case, all that must be acknowledged to proceed from some one or other of these four principles, I should be glad to know what remains; and I shall freely allow this overplus to be ascribed to a moral sense, or to any other peculiar faculty, provided anybody will ascertain precisely what this overplus is.”

Mr. Smith’s opinion concerning the nature of virtue, is involved in his theory concerning the principle of moral approbation. The idea of virtue, he thinks, always implies the idea of propriety, or of the suitableness of

the affection to the object which excites it; which suitableness, according to him, can be determined in no other way than by the sympathy of impartial spectators with the motives of the agent. But still he apprehends that this description of virtue is incomplete; for although in every virtuous action propriety is an essential ingredient — it is not always the sole ingredient. Beneficent actions have in them another quality, by which they appear, not only to deserve approbation, but recompense, and excite a superior degree of esteem, arising from a double sympathy with the motives of the agent, and the gratitude of those who are the objects of his affection. In this respect beneficence appears to him to be distinguished from the inferior virtues of prudence, vigilance, circumspection, temperance, constancy, firmness, which are always regarded with approbation, but which confer no merit. This distinction, he apprehends, has not been sufficiently attended to by moralists; the principles of some affording no explanation of the approbation we bestow on the inferior virtues; and those of others accounting as imperfectly for the peculiar excellency which the supreme virtue of beneficence is acknowledged to possess.

Such are the outlines of Mr. Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments; a work which must be allowed by all to be a singular effort of invention, ingenuity, and subtilty.*

It contains a large mixture of important truth and, although the author has sometimes been misled by too great a desire of generalizing his principles, he has had the merit of directing the attention of philosophers to a view of human nature which had formerly in a great measure escaped their notice. Of the great proportion of just and sound reasoning which the theory involves, its striking plausibility is a sufficient proof; for, as the author himself has remarked, no system in morals can well gain our assent, if it does not border, in some respects, upon the truth. "A system of natural philosophy (he observes) may appear very plausible, and be for a long time very generally received in the world, and yet have no foundation in nature; but the author who should assign as the cause of any natural sentiment, some principle which neither had any connection with it, nor resembled any other principle which had some connection, would appear absurd and ridiculous to the most injudicious and inexperienced reader." The merit, however, of Mr. Smith's performance does not rest here. No work, undoubtedly, can be mentioned, ancient or modern, which exhibits so complete a view of those facts with respect to our moral perceptions, which it is one great object of this branch of science to refer to their general laws; and, upon this account it well

deserves the careful study of all whose taste leads them to prosecute similar inquiries. These facts are indeed frequently expressed in a language which involves the author’s peculiar theories: But they are always presented in the most happy and beautiful lights; and it is easy for an attentive reader, by stripping them of hypothetical terms, to state them to himself with that logical precision, which, in such very difficult disquisitions, can alone conduct us with certainty to the truth.

It is proper to observe farther, that with the theoretical doctrines of the book, there are everywhere interwoven, with singular taste and address, the purest and most elevated maxims concerning the practical conduct of life; and that it abounds throughout with interesting and instructive delineations of characters and manners. A considerable part of it, too, is employed in collateral inquiries, which, upon every hypothesis that can be formed concerning the foundation of morals, are of equal importance. Of this kind is the speculation formerly mentioned, with respect to the influence of fortune on our moral sentiments, and another speculation, no less valuable, with respect to the influence of custom and fashion on the same part of our constitution.

The style in which Mr. Smith has conveyed the fundamental principles on which his theory rests, does not seem to me to be so perfectly suited to the subject as that which he employs on most other occasions. In communicating ideas which are extremely abstract and subtile, and about which it is hardly possible to reason correctly, without the scrupulous use of appropriated terms, he sometimes presents to us a choice of words, by no means strictly synonymous, so as to divert the attention from a precise and steady conception of his proposition: and a similar effect is, in other instances, produced by that diversity of forms which, in the course of his copious and seducing composition, the same truth insensibly assumes. When the subject of his work leads him to address the imagination and the heart, the variety and felicity of his illustrations; the richness and fluency of his eloquence; and the skill with which he wins the attention and commands the passions of his readers, leave him, among our English moralists, without a rival.

The Dissertation on the Origin of Languages, which now forms a part of the same volume with the Theory of Moral Sentiments, was, I believe, first annexed to the second edition of that work. It is an essay of great ingenuity, and on which the author himself set a high value; but, in a general review of his publications, it deserves our attention less, on account of the opinions it contains, than as a specimen of a particular sort

of inquiry, which, so far as I know, is entirely of modern origin, and which seems, in a peculiar degree, to have interested Mr. Smith's curiosity. Something very similar to it may be traced in all his different works, whether moral, political, or literary; and on all these subjects he has exemplified it with the happiest success.

When, in such a period of society as that in which we live, we compare our intellectual acquirements, our opinions, manners, and institutions, with those which prevail among rude tribes, it cannot fail to occur to us as an interesting question, by what gradual steps the transition has been made from the first simple efforts of uncultivated nature, to a state of things so wonderfully artificial and complicated. Whence has arisen that systematical beauty which we admire in the structure of a cultivated language; that analogy which runs through the mixture of languages spoken by the most remote and unconnected nations; and those peculiarities by which they are all distinguished from each other? Whence the origin of the different sciences and of the different arts; and by what chain has the mind been led from their first rudiments to their last and most refined improvements? Whence the astonishing fabric of the political union: the fundamental principles which are common to all governments; and the different forms which civilized society has assumed in different ages of the world? On most of these subjects very little information is to be expected from history; for long before that stage of society when men begin to think of recording their transactions, many of the most important steps of their progress have been made. A few insulated facts may, perhaps, be collected from the casual observations of travellers, who have viewed the arrangements of rude nations; but nothing, it is evident, can be obtained in this way, which approaches to a regular and connected detail of human improvement.

In this want of direct evidence, we are under a necessity of supplying the place of fact by conjecture; and when we are unable to ascertain how men have actually conducted themselves upon particular occasions, of considering in what manner they are likely to have proceeded, from the principles of their nature, and the circumstances of their external situation. In such inquiries, the detached facts which travels and voyages afford us, may frequently serve as land-marks to our speculations; and sometimes our conclusions, a priori, may tend to confirm the credibility of facts, which, on a superficial view, appeared to be doubtful or incredible.

Nor are such theoretical views of human affairs subservient merely to the gratification of curiosity. In examining the history of mankind, as well as in examining the phenomena of the material world, when we cannot trace the process by which an event has been produced, it is often of importance to be able to show how it may have been produced by natural causes. Thus, in the instance which has suggested these remarks, although it is impossible to determine with certainty what the steps were by which any particular language was formed, yet if we can show, from the known principles of human nature, how all its various parts might gradually have arisen, the mind is not only to a certain degree satisfied, but a check is given to that indolent philosophy, which refers to a miracle, whatever appearances, both in the natural and moral worlds, it is unable to explain.

To this species of philosophical investigation, which has no appropriated name in our language, I shall take the liberty of giving the title of Theoretical or Conjectural History; an expression which coincides pretty nearly in its meaning with that of Natural History, as employed by Mr. Hume,* and with what some French writers have called Histoire Raisonnée.

The mathematical sciences, both pure and mixed, afford, in many of their branches, very favourable subjects for theoretical history; and a very competent judge, the late M. d'Alembert, has recommended that arrangement of their elementary principles, which is founded on the natural succession of inventions and discoveries, as the best adapted for interesting the curiosity and exercising the genius of students. The same author points out as a model a passage in Montucla's History of Mathematics, where an attempt is made to exhibit the gradual progress of philosophical speculation, from the first conclusions suggested by a general survey of the heavens, to the doctrines of Copernicus. It is somewhat remarkable, that a theoretical history of this very science (in which we have, perhaps, a better opportunity than in any other instance whatever, of comparing the natural advances of the mind with the actual succession of hypothetical systems) was one of Mr. Smith's earliest compositions, and is one of the very small number of his manuscripts which he did not destroy before his death.

I have already hinted, that inquiries perfectly analogous to these may be applied to the modes of government, and to the municipal institutions which have obtained among different nations. It is but lately, however, that these important subjects have been considered in this point of view; the greater part of politicians before the time of Montesquieu having

contented themselves with an historical statement of facts, and with a vague reference of laws to the wisdom of particular legislators, or to accidental circumstances, which it is now impossible to ascertain. Montesquieu, on the contrary, considered laws as originating chiefly from the circumstances of society; and attempted to account, from the changes in the condition of mankind, which take place in the different stages of their progress, for the corresponding alterations which their institutions undergo. It is thus that, in his occasional elucidations of the Roman jurisprudence, instead of bewildering himself among the erudition of scholiasts and of antiquaries, we frequently find him borrowing his lights from the most remote and unconnected quarters of the globe, and combining the casual observations of illiterate travellers and navigators, into a philosophical commentary on the history of law and of manners.

The advances made in this line of inquiry since Montesquieu's time have been great. Lord Kames, in his Historical Law Tracts, has given some excellent specimens of it, particularly in his Essays on the History of Property and of Criminal Law, and many ingenious speculations of the same kind occur in the works of Mr. Millar.

In Mr. Smith's writings, whatever be the nature of his subject, he seldom misses an opportunity of indulging his curiosity, in tracing from the principles of human nature, or from the circumstances of society, the origin of the opinions and the institutions which he describes. I formerly mentioned a fragment concerning the History of Astronomy which he has left for publication; and I have heard him say more than once, that he had projected, in the earlier part of his life, a history of the other sciences on the same plan. In his Wealth of Nations, various disquisitions are introduced which have a like object in view, particularly the theoretical delineation he has given of the natural progress of opulence in a country; and his investigation of the causes which have inverted this order in the different countries of modern Europe. His lectures on jurisprudence seem, from the account of them formerly given, to have abounded in such inquiries.

I am informed by the same gentleman who favoured me with the account of Mr. Smith's lectures at Glasgow, that he had heard him sometimes hint an intention of writing a treatise upon the Greek and Roman republics. "And after all that has been published on that subject, I am convinced (says he) that the observations of Mr. Smith would have suggested many new and important views concerning the internal and domestic circumstances of those nations, which would have displayed

their several systems of policy, in a light much less artificial than that in which they have hitherto appeared.”

The same turn of thinking was frequently, in his social hours, applied to more familiar subjects; and the fanciful theories which, without the least affectation of ingenuity, he was continually starting upon all the common topics of discourse, gave to his conversation a novelty and variety that were quite inexhaustible. Hence, too, the minuteness and accuracy of his knowledge on many trifling articles, which, in the course of his speculations, he had been led to consider from some new and interesting point of view; and of which his lively and circumstantial descriptions amused his friends the more, that he seemed to be habitually inattentive, in so remarkable a degree, to what was passing around him.

I have been led into these remarks by the Dissertation on the Formation of languages, which exhibits a very beautiful specimen of theoretical history, applied to a subject equally curious and difficult. The analogy between the train of thinking from which it has taken its rise, and that which has suggested a variety of his other disquisitions, will, I hope, be a sufficient apology for the length of this digression; more particularly, as it will enable me to simplify the account which I am to give afterwards, of his inquiries concerning political economy.

I shall only observe farther on this head, that when different theoretical histories are proposed by different writers, of the progress of the human mind in any one line of exertion, these theories are not always to be understood as standing in opposition to each other. If the progress delineated in all of them be plausible, it is possible at least, that they may all have been realized; for human affairs never exhibit, in any two instances, a perfect uniformity. But whether they have been realized or no, is often a question of little consequence. In most cases it is of more importance to ascertain the progress that is most simple, than the progress that is most agreeable to fact; for, paradoxical as the proposition may appear, it is certainly true that the real progress is not always the most natural. It may have been determined by particular accidents, which are not likely again to occur, and which cannot be considered as forming any part of that general provision which nature has made for the improvement of the race.

In order to make some amends for the length (I am afraid I may add for the tediousness) of this section, I shall subjoin to it an original letter of Mr. Hume’s addressed to Mr. Smith, soon after the publication of his Theory. It is strongly marked with that easy and affectionate pleasantry which distinguished Mr. Hume’s epistolary correspondence, and is

entitled to a place in this Memoir, on account of its connection with an important event of Mr. Smith's life, which soon after removed him into a new scene, and influenced, to a considerable degree, the subsequent course of his studies. The letter is dated from London, 12th April, 1759.

"I give you thanks for the agreeable present of your Theory. Wedderburn and I made presents of our copies to such of our acquaintances as we thought good judges, and proper to spread the reputation of the book. I sent one to the Duke of Argyll, to Lord Lyttleton, Horace Walpole, Soame Jennyns, and Burke, an Irish gentleman, who wrote lately a very pretty treatise on the Sublime. Millar desired my permission to send one in your name to Dr. Warburton. I have delayed writing to you till I could tell you something of the success of the book, and could prognosticate with some probability, whether it should be finally damned to oblivion, or should be registered in the temple of immortality. Though it has been published only a few weeks, I think there appear already such strong symptoms, that I can almost venture to foretell its fate. It is in short this —— . But I have been interrupted in my letter by a foolish impertinent visit of one who has lately come from Scotland. He tells me that the University of Glasgow intend to declare Rouet's office vacant, upon his going abroad with Lord Hope. I question not but you will have our friend Ferguson in your eye, in case another project for procuring him a place in the University of Edinburgh should fail. Ferguson has very much polished and improved his treatise on Refinement,* and with some amendments it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and a singular genius. The Epigoniad, I hope, will do; but it is somewhat uphill work. As I doubt not but you consult the reviews sometimes at present, you will see in the Critical Review a letter upon that poem; and I desire you to employ your conjectures in finding out the author. Let me see a sample of your skill in knowing hands by your guessing at the person. I am afraid of Lord Kames's Law Tracts. A man might as well think of making a fine sauce by a mixture of wormwood and aloes, as an agreeable composition by joining metaphysics and Scotch law. However, the book, I believe, has merit; though few people will take the pains of diving into it. But to return to your book, and its success in this town, I must tell you —— . A plague of interruptions! I ordered myself to be denied; and yet here is one that has broke in upon me again. He is a man of letters, and we have had a good deal of literary conversation. You told me that you was curious of literary anecdotes, and therefore I shall inform you of a few that have come to my knowledge. I believe I have mentioned to you

already Helvetius’s book de l’Esprit. It is worth your reading, not for its philosophy, which I do not highly value, but for its agreeable composition. I had a letter from him a few days ago, wherein he tells me that my name was much oftener in the manuscript, but that the Censor of books at Paris obliged him to strike it out. Voltaire has lately published a small work called Candide, ou l’Optimisme. I shall give you a detail of it —— . But what is all this to my book? say you. — My dear Mr. Smith have patience: Compose yourself to tranquillity: Show yourself a philosopher in practice as well as profession: Think on the emptiness, and rashness, and futility of the common judgments of men: How little they are regulated by reason in any subject, much more in philosophical subjects, which so far exceed the comprehension of the vulgar.

—— —— — Non si quid turbida Roma,
Elevet, accedas: examenve improbum in illa
Castiges trutina: nec te quæsiveris extra.

A wise man’s kingdom is his own breast; or, if he ever looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few, who are free from prejudices, and capable of examining his work. Nothing, indeed, can be a stronger presumption of falsehood than the approbation of the multitude; and Phocion, you know, always suspected himself of some blunder when he was attended with the applauses of the populace.

“Supposing, therefore, that you have duly prepared yourself for the worst by all these reflections, I proceed to tell you the melancholy news, that your book has been very unfortunate; for the public seem disposed to applaud it extremely. It was looked for by the foolish people with some impatience; and the mob of literati are beginning already to be very loud in its praises. Three Bishops called yesterday at Millar’s shop in order to buy copies, and to ask questions about the author. The Bishop of Peterborough said he had passed the evening in a company where he heard it extolled above all books in the world. The Duke of Argyll is more decisive than he uses to be in its favour. I suppose he either considers it as an exotic, or thinks the author will be serviceable to him in the Glasgow elections. Lord Lyttleton says, that Robertson and Smith and Bower are the glories of English literature. Oswald protests he does not know whether he has reaped more instruction or entertainment from it. But you may easily judge what reliance can be put on his judgment who has been engaged all his life in public business, and who never sees any faults in his friends. Millar exults and brags that two-thirds of the edition are already sold, and that he is now sure of success. You see what

a son of the earth that is, to value books only by the profit they bring him. In that view, I believe, it may prove a very good book.

“Charles Townsend, who passes for the cleverest fellow in England, is so taken with the performance, that he said to Oswald he would put the Duke of Buccleuch under the author’s care, and would make it worth his while to accept of that charge. As soon as I heard this I called on him twice, with a view of talking with him about the matter, and of convincing him of the propriety of sending that young Nobleman to Glasgow: For I could not hope that he could offer you any terms which would tempt you to renounce your Professorship. But I missed him. Mr. Townsend passes for being a little uncertain in his resolutions: so perhaps you need not build much on this sally.

“In recompense for so many mortifying things, which nothing but truth could have extorted from me, and which I could easily have multiplied to a greater number, I doubt not but you are so good a Christian as to return good for evil; and to flatter my vanity by telling me that all the godly in Scotland abuse me for my account of John Knox and the Reformation. I suppose you are glad to see my paper end, and that I am obliged to conclude with

Your humble servant,

David Hume.”

FROM THE PUBLICATION OF THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS, TILL THAT OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS.

After the publication of the Theory of Moral Sentiments, Mr. Smith remained four years at Glasgow, discharging his official duties with unabated vigour, and with increasing reputation. During that time the plan of his lectures underwent a considerable change. His ethical doctrines, of which he had now published so valuable a part, occupied a much smaller portion of the course than formerly; and accordingly, his attention was naturally directed to a more complete illustration of the principles of jurisprudence and of political economy.

To this last subject his thoughts appear to have been occasionally turned from a very early period of life. It is probable that the uninterrupted friendship he had always maintained with his old companion Mr. Oswald, had some tendency to encourage him in prosecuting this branch of his studies; and the publication of Mr. Hume's political discourses, in the year 1752, could not fail to confirm him in those liberal views of commercial policy which had already opened to him in the course of his own inquiries. His long residence in one of the most enlightened mercantile towns in this island, and the habits of intimacy in which he lived with the most respectable of its inhabitants, afforded him an opportunity of deriving what commercial information he stood in need of, from the best sources; and it is a circumstance no less honourable to their liberality than to his talents, that notwithstanding the reluctance so common among men of business to listen to the conclusions of mere speculation, and the direct opposition of his leading principles to all the old maxims of trade, he was able, before he quitted his situation in the university, to rank some very eminent merchants in the number of his proselytes.*

Among the students who attended his lectures, and whose minds were not previously warped by prejudice, the progress of his opinions, it may be reasonably supposed, was much more rapid. It was this class of his friends accordingly that first adopted his system with eagerness, and diffused a knowledge of its fundamental principles over this part of the kingdom.

Towards the end of 1763 Mr. Smith received an invitation from Mr. Charles Townsend to accompany the Duke of Buccleuch on his travels;

and the liberal terms in which the proposal was made to him, added to the strong desire he had felt of visiting the Continent of Europe, induced him to resign his office at Glasgow. With the connection which he was led to form in consequence of this change in his situation, he had reason to be satisfied in an uncommon degree, and he always spoke of it with pleasure and gratitude. To the public it was not, perhaps, a change equally fortunate; as it interrupted that studious leisure for which nature seems to have destined him, and in which alone he could have hoped to accomplish those literary projects which had flattered the ambition of his youthful genius.

The alteration, however, which, from this period, took place in his habits, was not without its advantages. He had hitherto lived chiefly within the walls of an university; and although to a mind like his, the observation of human nature on the smallest scale is sufficient to convey a tolerably just conception of what passes on the great theatre of the world, yet it is not to be doubted, that the variety of scenes through which he afterwards passed, must have enriched his mind with many new ideas, and corrected many of those misapprehensions of life and manners which the best descriptions of them can scarcely fail to convey. But whatever were the lights that his travels afforded to him as a student of human nature, they were probably useful in a still greater degree, in enabling him to perfect that system of political economy, of which he had already delivered the principles in his lectures at Glasgow, and which it was now the leading object of his studies to prepare for the public. The coincidence between some of these principles and the distinguishing tenets of the French economists, who were at that very time in the height of their reputation, and the intimacy in which he lived with some of the leaders of that sect, could not fail to assist him in methodizing and digesting his speculations; while the valuable collection of facts, accumulated by the zealous industry of their numerous adherents, furnished him with ample materials for illustrating and confirming his theoretical conclusions.

After leaving Glasgow, Mr. Smith joined the Duke of Buccleuch at London early in the year 1764, and set out with him for the Continent in the month of March following. At Dover they were met by Sir James Macdonald, who accompanied them to Paris, and with whom Mr. Smith laid the foundation of a friendship, which he always mentioned with pleasure, and of which he often lamented the short duration. The panegyrics with which the memory of this accomplished and amiable person has been honoured by so many distinguished characters in the

different countries of Europe, are a proof how well fitted his talents were to command general admiration. The esteem in which his abilities and learning were held by Mr. Smith, is a testimony to his extraordinary merit of still superior value. Mr. Hume, too, seems, in this instance, to have partaken of his friend's enthusiasm. "Were you and I together (says he in a letter to Mr. Smith), we should shed tears at present for the death of poor Sir James Macdonald. We could not possibly have suffered a greater loss than in that valuable young man."

In this first visit to Paris the Duke of Buccleuch and Mr. Smith employed only ten or twelve days,* after which they proceeded to Toulouse, where they fixed their residence for eighteen months; and where, in addition to the pleasure of an agreeable society, Mr. Smith had an opportunity of correcting and extending his information concerning the internal policy of France, by the intimacy in which he lived with some of the principal persons of the Parliament.

From Toulouse they went, by a pretty extensive tour, through the south of France to Geneva. Here they passed two months. The late Earl of Stanhope, for whose learning and worth Mr. Smith entertained a sincere respect, was then an inhabitant of that republic.

About Christmas 1765 they returned to Paris, and remained there till October following. The society in which Mr. Smith spent these ten months, may be conceived from the advantages he enjoyed, in consequence of the recommendations of Mr. Hume. Turgot, Quesnai, Necker, d'Alembert, Helvetius, Marmontel, Madame Riccoboni, were among the number of his acquaintances; and some of them he continued ever afterwards to reckon among his friends. From Madame d'Anville, the respectable mother of the late excellent and much lamented Duke of Rochefoucauld, he received many attentions, which he always recollected with particular gratitude.

It is much to be regretted that he preserved no journal of this very interesting period of his history: and such was his aversion to write letters, that I scarcely suppose any memorial of it exists in his correspondence with his friends. The extent and accuracy of his memory, in which he was equalled by few, made it of little consequence to himself to record in writing what he heard or saw; and from his anxiety before his death to destroy all the papers in his possession, he seems to have wished that no materials should remain for his biographers, but what were furnished by the lasting monuments of his genius, and the exemplary worth of his private life.

The satisfaction he enjoyed in the conversation of Turgot may be easily imagined. Their opinions on the most essential points of political economy were the same; and they were both animated by the same zeal for the best interests of mankind. The favourite studies, too, of both, had directed their inquiries to subjects on which the understandings of the ablest and the best informed are liable to be warped, to a great degree, by prejudice and passion; and on which, of consequence, a coincidence of judgment is peculiarly gratifying. We are told by one of the biographers of Turgot, that after his retreat from the ministry, he occupied his leisure in a philosophical correspondence with some of his old friends; and, in particular, that various letters on important subjects passed between him and Mr. Smith. I take notice of this anecdote chiefly as a proof of the intimacy which was understood to have subsisted between them; for in other respects, the anecdote seems to me to be somewhat doubtful. It is scarcely to be supposed that Mr. Smith would destroy the letters of such a correspondent as Turgot; and still less probable, that such an intercourse was carried on between them without the knowledge of any of Mr. Smith's friends. From some inquiries that have been made at Paris by a gentleman of this Society since Mr. Smith's death, I have reason to believe, that no evidence of the correspondence exists among the papers of M. Turgot, and that the whole story has taken its rise from a report suggested by the knowledge of their former intimacy. This circumstance I think it of importance to mention, because a good deal of curiosity has been excited by the passage in question, with respect to the fate of the supposed letters.

Mr. Smith was also well known to M. Quesnai, the profound and original author of the Economical Table; a man (according to Mr. Smith's account of him) "of the greatest modesty and simplicity;" and whose system of political economy he has pronounced "with all its imperfections," to be "the nearest approximation to the truth that has yet been published on the principles of that very important science." If he had not been prevented by Quesnai's death, Mr. Smith had once an intention (as he told me himself) to have inscribed to him his "Wealth of Nations."

It was not, however, merely the distinguished men who about this period fixed so splendid an era in the literary history of France, that excited Mr. Smith's curiosity while he remained in Paris. His acquaintance with the polite literature, both of ancient and modern times, was extensive; and amidst his various other occupations, he had never neglected to cultivate a taste for the fine arts; — less, it is probable, with

a view to the peculiar enjoyments they convey (though he was by no means without sensibility to their beauties), than on account of their connection with the general principles of the human mind; to an examination of which they afford the most pleasing of all avenues. To those who speculate on this very delicate subject, a comparison of the modes of taste that prevail among different nations, affords a valuable collection of facts; and Mr. Smith, who was always disposed to ascribe to custom and fashion their full share in regulating the opinions of mankind with respect to beauty, may naturally be supposed to have availed himself of every opportunity which a foreign country afforded him of illustrating his former theories.

Some of his peculiar notions, too, with respect to the imitative arts, seem to have been much confirmed by his observations while abroad. In accounting for the pleasure we receive from these arts, it had early occurred to him as a fundamental principle, that a very great part of it arises from the difficulty of the imitation; a principle which was probably suggested to him by that of the difficulté surmontée, by which some French critics had attempted to explain the effect of versification and of rhyme.* This principle Mr. Smith pushed to the greatest possible length, and referred to it, with singular ingenuity, a great variety of phenomena in all the different fine arts. It led him, however, to some conclusions, which appear, at first view at least, not a little paradoxical; and I cannot help thinking that it warped his judgment in many of the opinions which he was accustomed to give on the subject of poetry.

The principles of dramatic composition had more particularly attracted his attention; and the history of the theatre, both in ancient and modern times, had furnished him with some of the most remarkable facts on which his theory of the imitative arts was founded. From this theory it seemed to follow as a consequence, that the same circumstances which, in tragedy, give to blank verse an advantage over prose, should give to rhyme an advantage over blank verse; and Mr. Smith had always inclined to that opinion. Nay, he had gone so far as to extend the same doctrine to comedy; and to regret that those excellent pictures of life and manners which the English stage affords, had not been executed after the model of the French school. The admiration with which he regarded the great dramatic authors of France tended to confirm him in these opinions; and this admiration (resulting originally from the general character of his taste, which delighted more to remark that pliancy of genius which accommodates itself to established rules, than to wonder at the bolder

flights of an undisciplined imagination) was increased to a great degree, when he saw the beauties that had struck him in the study, heightened by the utmost perfection of theatrical exhibition. In the last years of his life he sometimes amused himself, at a leisure hour, in supporting his theoretical conclusions on these subjects, by the facts which his subsequent studies and observations had suggested: and he intended, if he had lived, to have prepared the result of these labours for the press. Of this work he has left for publication a short fragment; but he had not proceeded far enough to apply his doctrine to versification and to the theatre. As his notions, however, with respect to these were a favourite topic of his conversation, and were intimately connected with his general principles of criticism, it would have been improper to pass them over in this sketch of his life; and I have even thought it proper to detail them at greater length than the comparative importance of the subject would have justified, if he had carried his plans into execution. Whether his love of system, added to his partiality for the French drama, may not have led him, in this instance, to generalize a little too much his conclusions, and to overlook some peculiarities in the language and versification of that country, I shall not take upon me to determine.

In October, 1766, the Duke of Buccleuch returned to London. His Grace, to whom I am indebted for several particulars in the foregoing narrative, will, I hope, forgive the liberty I take in transcribing one paragraph in his own words: “In October, 1766, we returned to London, after having spent near three years together, without the slightest disagreement or coolness; — on my part, with every advantage that could be expected from the society of such a man. We continued to live in friendship till the hour of his death; and I shall always remain with the impression of having lost a friend whom I loved and respected, not only for his great talents, but for every private virtue.”

The retirement in which Mr. Smith passed his next ten years, formed a striking contrast to the unsettled mode of life he had been for some time accustomed to, but which was so congenial to his natural disposition, and to his first habits, that it was with the utmost difficulty he was ever persuaded to leave it. During the whole of this period (with the exception of a few visits to Edinburgh and London), he remained with his mother at Kirkaldy; occupied habitually in intense study, but unbending his mind at times in the company of some of his old school-fellows, whose “sober wishes” had attached them to the place of their birth. In the society of such men Mr. Smith delighted; and to them he was endeared, not only by his simple and unassuming manners, but by the perfect knowledge they

all possessed of those domestic virtues which had distinguished him from his infancy.

Mr. Hume, who (as he tells us himself) considered “a town as the true scene for a man of letters,” made many attempts to seduce him from his retirement. In a letter, dated in 1772, he urges him to pass some time with him in Edinburgh. “I shall not take any excuse from your state of health, which I suppose only a subterfuge invented by indolence and love of solitude. Indeed, my dear Smith, if you continue to hearken to complaints of this nature, you will cut yourself out entirely from human society, to the great loss of both parties.” In another letter, dated in 1769, from his house in James’s Court (which commanded a prospect of the Frith of Forth, and of the opposite coast of Fife), “I am glad (says he) to have come within sight of you; but as I would also be within speaking terms of you, I wish we could concert measures for that purpose. I am mortally sick at sea, and regard with horror and a kind of hydrophobia the great gulf that lies between us. I am also tired of travelling, as much as you ought naturally to be of staying at home. I therefore propose to you to come hither, and pass some days with me in this solitude. I want to know what you have been doing, and propose to exact a rigorous account of the method in which you have employed yourself during your retreat. I am positive you are in the wrong in many of your speculations, especially where you have the misfortune to differ from me. All these are reasons for our meeting, and I wish you would make me some reasonable proposal for that purpose. There is no habitation in the island of Inchkeith, otherwise I should challenge you to meet me on that spot, and neither of us ever to leave the place till we were fully agreed on all points of controversy. I expect General Conway here to-morrow, whom I shall attend to Roseneath, and I shall remain there a few days. On my return I hope to find a letter from you, containing a bold acceptance of this defiance.”

At length (in the beginning of the year 1776) Mr. Smith accounted to the world for his long retreat, by the publication of his “Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.” A letter of congratulation on this event, from Mr. Hume, is now before me. It is dated 1st April, 1776 (about six months before Mr. Hume’s death), and discovers an amiable solicitude about his friend’s literary fame. “Euge! Belle! Dear Mr. Smith: I am much pleased with your performance, and the perusal of it has taken me from a state of great anxiety. It was a work of so much expectation, by yourself, by your friends, and by the public, that I trembled for its appearance; but am now much relieved. Not but that the

reading of it necessarily requires so much attention, and the public is disposed to give so little, that I shall still doubt for some time of its being at first very popular. But it has depth and solidity and acuteness, and is so much illustrated by curious facts, that it must at last take the public attention. It is probably much improved by your last abode in London. If you were here at my fire-side I should dispute some of your principles. . . . But these, and a hundred other points, are fit only to be discussed in conversation. I hope it will be soon; for I am in a very bad state of health, and cannot afford a long delay."

Of a book which is now so universally known as "The Wealth of Nations," it might be considered perhaps as superfluous to give a particular analysis; and, at any rate, the limits of this essay make it impossible for me to attempt it at present. A few remarks, however, on the object and tendency of the work, may, I hope, be introduced without impropriety. The history of a philosopher's life can contain little more than the history of his speculations; and in the case of such an author as Mr. Smith, whose studies were systematically directed from his youth to subjects of the highest importance to human happiness, a review of his writings, while it serves to illustrate the peculiarities of his genius, affords the most faithful picture of his character as a man.

OF THE INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS.

An historical view of the different forms under which human affairs have appeared in different ages and nations, naturally suggests the question, Whether the experience of former times may not now furnish some general principles to enlighten and direct the policy of future legislators? The discussion, however, to which this question leads, is of singular difficulty: as it requires an accurate analysis of by far the most complicated class of phenomena that can possibly engage our attention, those which result from the intricate and often imperceptible mechanism of political society; — a subject of observation which seems, at first view, so little commensurate to our faculties, that it has been generally regarded with the same passive emotions of wonder and submission, with which, in the material world, we survey the effects produced by the mysterious and uncontrollable operation of physical causes. It is fortunate that upon this, as upon many other occasions, the difficulties which had long baffled the efforts of solitary genius begin to appear less formidable to the united exertions of the race; and that in proportion as the experience and the reasonings of different individuals are brought to bear upon the same objects, and are combined in such a manner as to illustrate and to limit each other, the science of politics assumes more and more that systematical form which encourages and aids the labours of future inquirers.

In prosecuting the science of politics on this plan, little assistance is to be derived from the speculations of ancient philosophers, the greater part of whom, in their political inquiries, confined their attention to a comparison of the different forms of government, and to an examination of the provisions made for perpetuating their own existence, and for extending the glory of the state. It was reserved for modern times to investigate those universal principles of justice and of expediency, which ought, under every form of government, to regulate the social order; and of which the object is, to make as equitable a distribution as possible, among all the different members of a community, of the advantages arising from the political union.

The invention of printing was perhaps necessary to prepare the way for these researches. In those departments of literature and of science, where genius finds within itself the materials of its labours; in poetry, in

pure geometry, and in some branches of moral philosophy; the ancients have not only laid the foundations on which we are to build, but have left great and finished models for our imitation. But in physics, where our progress depends on an immense collection of facts, and on a combination of the accidental lights daily struck out in the innumerable walks of observation and experiment; and in politics, where the materials of our theories are equally scattered, and are collected and arranged with still greater difficulty, the means of communication afforded by the press have, in the course of two centuries, accelerated the progress of the human mind, far beyond what the most sanguine hopes of our predecessors could have imagined.

The progress already made in this science, inconsiderable as it is in comparison of what may be yet expected, has been sufficient to show, that the happiness of mankind depends, not on the share which the people possesses, directly or indirectly, in the enactment of laws, but on the equity and expediency of the laws that are enacted. The share which the people possesses in the government is interesting, chiefly to the small number of men whose object is the attainment of political importance; but the equity and expediency of the laws are interesting to every member of the community; and more especially to those whose personal insignificance leaves them no encouragement but what they derive from the general spirit of the government under which they live.

It is evident, therefore, that the most important branch of political science is that which has for its object to ascertain the philosophical principles of jurisprudence; or (as Mr. Smith expresses it) to ascertain “the general principles which ought to run through and be the foundation of the laws of all nations.”* In countries where the prejudices of the people are widely at variance with these principles, the political liberty which the constitution bestows, only furnishes them with the means of accomplishing their own ruin: And if it were possible to suppose these principles completely realized in any system of laws, the people would have little reason to complain that they were not immediately instrumental in their enactment. The only infallible criterion of the excellence of any constitution is to be found in the detail of its municipal code; and the value which wise men set on political freedom, arises chiefly from the facility it is supposed to afford for the introduction of those legislative improvements which the general interests of the community recommend. I cannot help adding, that the capacity of a people to exercise political rights with utility to themselves and to their country, presupposes a diffusion of knowledge and of good morals,

which can only result from the previous operation of laws favourable to industry, to order, and to freedom.

Of the truth of these remarks enlightened politicians seem now to be in general convinced; for the most celebrated works which have been produced in the different countries of Europe, during the last thirty years, by Smith, Quesnai, Turgot, Campomanes, Beccaria, and others, have aimed at the improvement of society, — not by delineating plans of new constitutions, but by enlightening the policy of actual legislators. Such speculations, while they are more essentially and more extensively useful than any others, have no tendency to unhinge established institutions, or to inflame the passions of the multitude. The improvements they recommend are to be effected by means too gradual and slow in their operation, to warm the imaginations of any but the speculative few; and in proportion as they are adopted, they consolidate the political fabric, and enlarge the basis upon which it rests.

To direct the policy of nations with respect to one most important class of its laws, those which form its system of political economy, is the great aim of Mr. Smith’s Inquiry: And he has unquestionably had the merit of presenting to the world, the most comprehensive and perfect work that has yet appeared, on the general principles of any branch of legislation. The example which he has set will be followed, it is to be hoped, in due time, by other writers, for whom the internal policy of states furnishes many other subjects of discussion no less curious and interesting; and many accelerate the progress of that science which Lord Bacon has so well described in the following passage: “Finis et scopus quem leges intueri, atque ad quem jussiones et sanctiones suas dirigere debent, non alius est, quam ut cives feliciter degant; id fiet, si pietate et religione recte instituti; moribus honesti; armis adversus hostes externos tuti; legum auxilio adversus seditiones et privatas injurias muniti; imperio et magistratibus obsequentes; copiis et opibus locupletes et florentes fuerint. —— Certe cognitio ista ad viros civiles proprie spectat; qui optime nôrunt, quid ferat societas humana, quid salus populi, quid æquitas naturalis, quid gentium mores, quid rerumpublicarum formæ diversæ: ideoque possint de legibus, ex principiis et præceptis tam æquitatis naturalis, quam politices decernere. Quamobrem id nunc agatur, ut fontes justitiæ et utilitatis publicæ petantur, et in singulis juris partibus character quidam et idea justi exhibeatur, ad quam particularium regnorum et rerumpublicarum leges probare, atque inde emendationem moliri, quisque, cui hoc cordi erit et curæ, possit.”

The enumeration contained in the foregoing passage, of the different objects of law, coincides very nearly with that given by Mr. Smith in the conclusion of his Theory of Moral Sentiments; and the precise aim of the political speculations which he then announced, and of which he afterwards published so valuable a part in his Wealth of Nations, was to ascertain the general principles of justice and of expediency, which ought to guide the institutions of legislators on these important articles; — in the words of Lord Bacon, to ascertain those leges legum, “ex quibus informatio peti possit, quid in singulis legibus bene aut perperam positum aut constitutum sit.”

The branch of legislation which Mr. Smith has made choice of as the subject of his work, naturally leads me to remark a very striking contrast between the spirit of ancient and of modern policy in respect to the Wealth of Nations.* The great object of the former was to counteract the love of money and a taste for luxury, by positive institutions; and to maintain in the great body of the people, habits of frugality, and a severity of manners. The decline of states is uniformly ascribed by the philosophers and historians, both of Greece and Rome, to the influence of riches on national character; and the laws of Lycurgus, which, during a course of ages, banished the precious metals from Sparta, are proposed by many of them as the most perfect model of legislation devised by human wisdom. How opposite to this is the doctrine of modern politicians! Far from considering poverty as an advantage to a state, their great aim is to open new sources of national opulence, and to animate the activity of all classes of the people, by a taste for the comforts and accommodations of life.

One principal cause of this difference between the spirit of ancient and of modern policy, may be found in the difference between the sources of national wealth in ancient and in modern times. In ages when commerce and manufactures were yet in their infancy, and among states constituted like most of the ancient republics, a sudden influx of riches from abroad was justly dreaded as an evil, alarming to the morals, to the industry, and to the freedom of a people. So different, however, is the case at present, that the most wealthy nations are those where the people are the most laborious, and where they enjoy the greatest degree of liberty. Nay, it was the general diffusion of wealth among the lower orders of men, which first gave birth to the spirit of independence in modern Europe, and which has produced under some of its governments, and especially under our own, a more equal diffusion of freedom and of

happiness than took place under the most celebrated constitutions of antiquity.

Without this diffusion of wealth among the lower orders, the important effects resulting from the invention of printing would have been extremely limited; for a certain degree of ease and independence is necessary to inspire men with the desire of knowledge, and to afford them the leisure which is requisite for acquiring it; and it is only by the rewards which such a state of society holds up to industry and ambition, that the selfish passions of the multitude can be interested in the intellectual improvement of their children. The extensive propagation of light and refinement arising from the influence of the press, aided by the spirit of commerce, seems to be the remedy provided by nature, against the fatal effects which would otherwise be produced, by the subdivision of labour accompanying the progress of the mechanical arts: Nor is anything wanting to make the remedy effectual, but wise institutions to facilitate general instruction, and to adapt the education of individuals to the stations they are to occupy. The mind of the artist, which, from the limited sphere of his activity, would sink below the level of the peasant or the savage, might receive in infancy the means of intellectual enjoyment, and the seeds of moral improvement; and even the insipid uniformity of his professional engagements, by presenting no object to awaken his ingenuity or to distract his attention, might leave him at liberty to employ his faculties, on subjects more interesting to himself, and more extensively useful to others.

These effects, notwithstanding a variety of opposing causes which still exist, have already resulted, in a very sensible degree, from the liberal policy of modern times. Mr. Hume, in his Essay on Commerce, after taking notice of the numerous armies raised and maintained by the small republics in the ancient world, ascribes the military power of these states to their want of commerce and luxury. “Few artizans were maintained by the labour of the farmers, and therefore more soldiers might live upon it.” He adds, however, that “the policy of ancient times was violent, and contrary to the natural course of things;” — by which, I presume, he means, that it aimed too much at modifying, by the force of positive institutions, the order of society, according to some preconceived idea of expediency; without trusting sufficiently to those principles of the human constitution, which, wherever they are allowed free scope, not only conduct mankind to happiness, but lay the foundation of a progressive improvement in their condition and in their character. The advantages which modern policy possesses over the

ancient, arise principally from its conformity, in some of the most important articles of political economy, to an order of things recommended by nature; and it would not be difficult to show, that, where it remains imperfect, its errors may be traced to the restraints it imposes on the natural course of human affairs. Indeed, in these restraints may be discovered the latent seeds of many of the prejudices and follies which infect modern manners, and which have so long bid defiance to the reasonings of the philosopher and the ridicule of the satirist.

The foregoing very imperfect hints appear to me to form, not only a proper, but in some measure a necessary introduction to the few remarks I have to offer on Mr. Smith's Inquiry; as they tend to illustrate a connection between his system of commercial politics, and those speculations of his earlier years, in which he aimed more professedly at the advancement of human improvement and happiness. It is this view of political economy that can alone render it interesting to the moralist, and can dignify calculations of profit and loss in the eye of the philosopher. Mr. Smith has alluded to it in various passages of his work, but he has nowhere explained himself fully on the subject; and the great stress he has laid on the effects of the division of labour in increasing its productive powers, seems, at first sight, to point to a different and very melancholy conclusion; — that the same causes which promote the progress of the arts, tend to degrade the mind of the artist; and, of consequence, that the growth of national wealth implies a sacrifice of the character of the people.

The fundamental doctrines of Mr. Smith's system are now so generally known, that it would be tedious to offer any recapitulation of them in this place; even if I could hope to do justice to the subject, within the limits which I have prescribed to myself. I shall content myself, therefore, with remarking, in general terms, that the great and leading object of his speculations is, to illustrate the provisions made by nature in the principles of the human mind, and in the circumstances of man's external situation, for a gradual and progressive augmentation in the means of national wealth; and to demonstrate that the most effectual plan for advancing a people to greatness, is to maintain that order of things which nature has pointed out; by allowing every man, as long as he observes the rules of justice, to pursue his own interest in his own way, and to bring both his industry and his capital into the freest competion with those of his fellow-citizens. Every system of policy which endeavours, either by extraordinary encouragements to draw towards a

particular species of industry a greater share of the capital of the society than what would naturally go to it, or, by extraordinary restraints, to force from a particular species of industry some share of the capital which would otherwise be employed in it, is, in reality, subversive of the great purpose which it means to promote.

What the circumstances are, which, in modern Europe, have contributed to disturb this order of nature, and, in particular, to encourage the industry of towns, at the expense of that of the country, Mr. Smith has investigated with great ingenuity; and in such a manner, as to throw much new light on the history of that state of society which prevails in this quarter of the globe. His observations on this subject tend to show, that these circumstances were, in their first origin, the natural and the unavoidable result of the peculiar situation of mankind during a certain period; and that they took their rise, not from any general scheme of policy, but from the private interests and prejudices of particular orders of men.

The state of society, however, which at first arose from a singular combination of accidents, has been prolonged much beyond its natural period, by a false system of political economy, propagated by merchants and manufacturers; a class of individuals, whose interest is not always the same with that of the public, and whose professional knowledge gave them many advantages, more particularly in the infancy of this branch of science, in defending those opinions which they wished to encourage. By means of this system a new set of obstacles to the progress of national prosperity has been created. Those which arose from the disorders of the feudal ages, tended directly to disturb the internal arrangements of society, by obstructing the free circulation of labour and of stock, from employment to employment, and from place to place. The false system of political economy, which has been hitherto prevalent, as its professed object has been to regulate the commercial intercourse between different nations, has produced its effect in a way less direct and less manifest, but equally prejudicial to the states that have adopted it.

On this system, as it took its rise from the prejudices or rather from the interested views of mercantile speculators, Mr. Smith bestows the title of the Commercial or Mercantile System; and he has considered at great length its two principal expedients for enriching a nation; restraints upon importation, and encouragements to exportation. Part of these expedients, he observes, have been dictated by the spirit of monopoly, and part by a spirit of jealousy against those countries with which the balance of trade is supposed to be disadvantageous. All of them appear

clearly, from his reasonings, to have a tendency unfavourable to the wealth of the nation which imposes them. His remarks with respect to the jealousy of commerce are expressed in a tone of indignation, which he seldom assumes in his political writings.

“In this manner,” says he, “the sneaking arts of underling tradesmen are erected into political maxims for the conduct of a great empire. By such maxims as these, nations have been taught that their interest consisted in beggaring all their neighbours. Each nation has been made to look with an invidious eye upon the prosperity of all the nations with which it trades, and to consider their gain as its own loss. Commerce, which ought naturally to be, among nations as among individuals, a bond of union and friendship, has become the most fertile source of discord and animosity. The capricious ambition of kings and ministers has not, during the present and the preceding century, been more fatal to the repose of Europe, than the impertinent jealousy of merchants and manufacturers. The violence and injustice of the rulers of mankind is an ancient evil, for which, perhaps, the nature of human affairs can scarce admit of a remedy. But the mean rapacity, the monopolizing spirit of merchants and manufacturers, who neither are nor ought to be the rulers of mankind, though it cannot perhaps be corrected, may very easily be prevented from disturbing the tranquillity of anybody but themselves.”

Such are the liberal principles which, according to Mr. Smith, ought to direct the commercial policy of nations; and of which it ought to be the great object of legislators to facilitate the establishment. In what manner the execution of the theory should be conducted in particular instances, is a question of a very different nature, and to which the answer must vary in different countries, according to the different circumstances of the case. In a speculative work, such as Mr. Smith’s, the consideration of this question did not fall properly under his general plan; but that he was abundantly aware of the danger to be apprehended from a rash application of political theories, appears not only from the general strain of his writings, but from some incidental observation which he has expressly made upon the subject. “So unfortunate,” says he, in one passage, “are the effects of all the regulations of the mercantile system, that they not only introduce very dangerous disorders into the state of the body politic, but disorders which it is often difficult to remedy, without occasioning, for a time at least, still greater disorders. In what manner, therefore, the natural system of perfect liberty and justice ought gradually to be restored we must leave to the wisdom of future statesmen and legislators to determine.” In the last edition of his Theory

of Moral Sentiments, he has introduced some remarks, which have an obvious reference to the same important doctrine. The following passage seems to refer more particularly to those derangements of the social order which derived their origin from the feudal institutions:

The man whose public spirit is prompted altogether by humanity and benevolence, will respect the established powers and privileges even of individuals, and still more of the great orders and societies into which the state is divided. Though he should consider some of them as in some measure abusive, he will content himself with moderating what he often cannot annihilate without great violence. When he cannot conquer the rooted prejudices of the people by reason and persuasion, he will not attempt to subdue them by force; but will religiously observe what, by Cicero, is justly called the divine maxim of Plato, never to use violence to his country any more than to his parents. He will accommodate, as well as he can, his public arrangements to the confirmed habits and prejudices of the people; and will remedy, as well as he can, the inconveniences which may flow from the want of those regulations which the people are averse to submit to. When he cannot establish the right, he will not disdain to ameliorate the wrong; but, like Solon, when he cannot establish the best system of laws, he will endeavour to establish the best that the people can bear.

These cautions with respect to the practical application of general principles were peculiarly necessary from the author of “The Wealth of Nations;” as the unlimited freedom of trade, which it is the chief aim of his work to recommend, is extremely apt, by flattering the indolence of the statesman, to suggest to those who are invested with absolute power, the idea of carrying it into immediate execution. “Nothing is more adverse to the tranquillity of a statesman,” says the author of an Eloge on the Administration of Colbert, “than a spirit of moderation; because it condemns him to perpetual observation, shows him every moment the insufficiency of his wisdom, and leaves him the melancholy sense of his own imperfection; while, under the shelter of a few general principles, a systematical politician enjoys a perpetual calm. By the help of one alone, that of a perfect liberty of trade, he would govern the world, and would leave human affairs to arrange themselves at pleasure, under the operation of the prejudices and the self-interests of individuals. If these run counter to each other, he gives himself no anxiety about the consequence; he insists that the result cannot be judged of till after a century or two shall have elapsed. If his contemporaries, in consequence of the disorder into which he has thrown public affairs, are scrupulous

about submitting quietly to the experiment, he accuses them of impatience. They alone, and not he, are to blame for what they have suffered; and the principle continues to be inculcated with the same zeal and the same confidence as before." These are the words of the ingenious and eloquent author of the Eloge on Colbert, which obtained the prize from the French Academy in the year 1763; a performance which, although confined and erroneous in its speculative views, abounds with just and important reflections of a practical nature. How far his remarks apply to that particular class of politicians whom he evidently aimed at in the foregoing passage, I shall not presume to decide.

It is hardly necessary for me to add to these observations, that they do not detract in the least from the value of those political theories which attempt to delineate the principles of a perfect legislation. Such theories (as I have elsewhere observed*) ought to be considered merely as descriptions of the ultimate objects at which the statesman ought to aim. The tranquillity of his administration, and the immediate success of his measures, depend on his good sense and his practical skill; and his theoretical principles only enable him to direct his measures steadily and wisely, to promote the improvement and happiness of mankind, and prevent him from being ever led astray from these important ends, by more limited views of temporary expedience. "In all cases," says Mr. Hume, "it must be advantageous to know what is most perfect in the kind, that we may be able to bring any real constitution or form of government as near it as possible, by such gentle alterations and innovations as may not give too great disturbance to society."

The limits of this Memoir make it impossible for me to examine particularly the merit of Mr. Smith's work in point of originality. That his doctrine concerning the freedom of trade and of industry coincides remarkably with that which we find in the writings of the French Economists, appears from the slight view of their system which he himself has given. But it surely cannot be pretended by the warmest admirers of that system, that any one of its numerous expositors has approached to Mr. Smith in the precision and perspicuity with which he has stated it, or in the scientific and luminous manner in which he has deduced it from elementary principles. The awkardness of their technical language, and the paradoxical form in which they have chosen to present some of their opinions, are acknowledged even by those who are most willing to do justice to their merits: whereas it may be doubted, with respect to Mr. Smith's Inquiry, if there exists any book beyond the circle

of the mathematical and physical sciences, which is at once so agreeable in its arrangement to the rules of a sound logic, and so accessible to the examination of ordinary readers. Abstracting entirely from the author's peculiar and original speculations, I do not know that, upon any subject whatever, a work has been produced in our times, containing so methodical, so comprehensive, and so judicious a digest of all the most profound and enlightened philosophy of the age.

In justice also to Mr. Smith, it must be observed, that although some of the economical writers had the start of him in publishing their doctrines to the world, these doctrines appear, with respect to him, to have been altogether original, and the result of his own reflections. Of this, I think, every person must be convinced, who reads the Inquiry with due attention, and is at pains to examine the gradual and beautiful progress of the author's ideas: But in case any doubt should remain on this head, it may be proper to mention, that Mr. Smith's political lectures, comprehending the fundamental principles of his Inquiry, were delivered at Glasgow as early as the year 1752 or 1753; at a period, surely, when there existed no French performance on the subject, that could be of much use to him in guiding his researches.* In the year 1756, indeed, M. Turgot (who is said to have imbibed his first notions concerning the unlimited freedom of commerce from an old merchant, M. Gournay) published in the Encyclopédie, an article which sufficiently shows how completely his mind was emancipated from the old predjudices in favour of commercial regulations: but that even then, these opinions were confined to a few speculative men in France, appears from a passage in the Mémoires sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de M. Turgot; in which, after a short quotation from the article just mentioned, the author adds: "These ideas were then considered as paradoxical; they are since become common, and they will one day be adopted universally."

The Political Discourses of Mr. Hume were evidently of greater use to Mr. Smith, than any other book that had appeared prior to his lectures. Even Mr. Hume's theories, however, though always plausible and ingenious, and in most instances profound and just, involve some fundamental mistakes; and, when compared with Mr. Smith's, afford a striking proof, that, in considering a subject so extensive and so complicated, the most penetrating sagacity, if directed only to particular questions, is apt to be led astray by first appearances; and that nothing can guard us effectually against error, but a comprehensive survey of the whole field of discussion, assisted by an accurate and patient analysis of the ideas about which our reasonings are employed. It may be worth

while to add, that Mr. Hume's Essay "on the Jealousy of Trade," with some other of his Political Discourses, received a very flattering proof of M. Turgot's approbation, by his undertaking the task of translating them into the French language.†

It does not belong to my present undertaking (even if I were qualified for such a task) to attempt a separation of the solid and important doctrines of Mr. Smith's book from those which appear exceptionable or doubtful. I acknowledge that there are some of his conclusions to which I would not be understood to subscribe implicitly; more particularly in that chapter, where he treats of the principles of taxation; — a subject which he has certainly examined in a manner more loose and unsatisfactory than most of the others which have fallen under his review.*

It would be improper for me to conclude this section without taking notice of the manly and dignified freedom with which the author uniformly delivers his opinions, and of the superiority which he discovers throughout, to all the little passions connected with the factions of the times in which he wrote. Whoever takes the trouble to compare the general tone of his composition with the period of its first publication, cannot fail to feel and acknowledge the force of this remark. It is not often that a disinterested zeal for truth has so soon met with its just reward. Philosophers (to use an expression of Lord Bacon's) are "the servants of posterity;" and most of those who have devoted their talents to the best interests of mankind, have been obliged, like Bacon, to "bequeath their fame" to a race yet unborn, and to console themselves with the idea of sowing what another generation was to reap:

Insere Daphni pyros, carpent tua poma nepotes.

Mr. Smith was more fortunate; or rather, in this respect, his fortune was singular. He survived the publication of his work only fifteen years; and yet, during that short period, he had not only the satisfaction of seeing the opposition it at first excited, gradually subside, but witnessing the practical influence of his writings on the commercial policy of his country.

CONCLUSION OF THE NARRATIVE.

About two years after the publication of “The Wealth of Nations,” Mr. Smith was appointed one of the Commissioners of his Majesty’s Customs in Scotland; a preferment which, in his estimation, derived an additional value from its being bestowed on him at the request of the Duke of Buccleuch. The greater part of these two years he passed in London, enjoying a society too extensive and varied to afford him any opportunity of indulging his taste for study. His time, however, was not lost to himself; for much of it was spent with some of the first names in English literature. Of these no unfavourable specimen is preserved by Dr. Barnard, in his well-known “Verses addressed to Sir Joshua Reynolds and his friends.”

If I have thoughts, and can’t express ’em,
Gibbon shall teach me how to dress ’em
In words select and terse:
Jones teach me modesty and Greek,
Smith how to think, Burke how to speak,
And Beauclerc to converse.*

In consequence of Mr. Smith’s appointment to the Board of Customs, he removed, in 1778, to Edinburgh, where he spent the last twelve years of his life; enjoying an affluence which was more than equal to all his wants; and, what was to him of still greater value, the prospect of passing the remainder of his days among the companions of his youth.

His mother, who, though now in extreme old age, still possessed a considerable degree of health, and retained all her faculties unimpaired, accompanied him to town; and his cousin Miss Jane Douglas (who had formerly been a member of his family at Glasgow, and for whom he had always felt the affection of a brother) while she divided with him those tender attentions which her aunt’s infirmities required, relieved him of a charge for which he was peculiarly ill qualified, by her friendly superintendence of his domestic economy.

The accession to his income which his new office brought him, enabled him to gratify, to a much greater extent than his former circumstances admitted of, the natural generosity of his disposition; and the state of his funds at the time of his death, compared with his very

moderate establishment, confirmed, beyond a doubt, what his intimate acquaintances had often suspected, that a large proportion of his annual savings was allotted to offices of secret charity. A small, but excellent library, which he had gradually formed with great judgment in the selection, and a simple, though hospitable table, where, without the formality of an invitation, he was always happy to receive his friends, were the only expenses that could be considered as his own.†

The change in his habits which his removal to Edinburgh produced, was not equally favourable to his literary pursuits. The duties of his office, though they required but little exertion of thought, were yet sufficient to waste his spirits and to dissipate his attention; and now that his career is closed, it is impossible to reflect on the time they consumed, without lamenting, that it had not been employed in labours more profitable to the world, and more equal to his mind.

During the first years of his residence in this city, his studies seemed to be entirely suspended; and his passion for letters served only to amuse his leisure, and to animate his conversation. The infirmities of age, of which he very early began to feel the approaches, reminded him at last, when it was too late, of what he yet owed to the public, and to his own fame. The principal materials of the works which he had announced, had been long collected; and little probably was wanting, but a few years of health and retirement, to bestow on them that systematical arrangement in which he delighted; and the ornaments of that flowing, and apparently artless style, which he had studiously cultivated, but which, after all his experience in composition, he adjusted, with extreme difficulty, to his own taste.*

The death of his mother in 1784, which was followed by that of Miss Douglas, in 1788, contributed, it is probable, to frustrate these projects. They had been the objects of his affection for more than sixty years; and in their society he had enjoyed, from his infancy, all that he ever knew of the endearments of a family.† He was now alone, and helpless; and, though he bore his loss with equanimity, and regained apparently his former cheerfulness, yet his health and strength gradually declined till the period of his death, which happened in July, 1790, about two years after that of his cousin, and six after that of his mother. His last illness, which arose from a chronic obstruction in his bowels, was lingering and painful; but had every consolation to soothe it which he could derive from the tenderest sympathy of his friends, and from the complete resignation of his own mind.

A few days before his death, finding his end approach rapidly, he gave orders to destroy all his manuscripts, excepting some detached essays, which he intrusted to the care of his executors; and they were accordingly committed to the flames. What were the particular contents of these papers is not known even to his most intimate friends; but there can be no doubt that they consisted, in part, of the letters on rhetoric, which he read at Edinburgh in the year 1748, and of the lectures on natural religion and on jurisprudence, which formed part of his course at Glasgow. That this irreparable injury to letters proceeded, in some degree, from an excessive solicitude in the author about his posthumous reputation, may, perhaps, be true; but with respect to some of his manuscripts, may we not suppose, that he was influenced by higher motives? It is but seldom that a philosopher, who has been occupied from his youth with moral or with political inquiries, succeeds completely to his wish in stating to others, the grounds upon which his own opinions are founded; and hence it is, that the known principles of an individual, who has approved to the public his candour, his liberality, and his judgment, are entitled to a weight and an authority, independent of the evidence which he is able, upon any particular occasion, to produce in their support. A secret consciousness of this circumstance, and an apprehension that, by not doing justice to an important argument, the progress of truth may be rather retarded than advanced, have probably induced many authors to withhold from the world the unfinished results of their most valuable labours; and to content themselves with giving the general sanction of their suffrages to truths which they regarded as peculiarly interesting to the human race.*

The additions to the Theory of Moral Sentiments, most of which were composed under severe disease, had fortunately been sent to the press in the beginning of the preceding winter; and the author lived to see the publication of the work. The moral and serious strain that prevails through these additions, when connected with the circumstance of his declining health, adds a peculiar charm to his pathetic eloquence, and communicates a new interest, if possible, to those sublime truths, which in the academical retirement of his youth, awakened the first ardours of his genius, and on which the last efforts of his mind reposed.

In a letter addressed, in the year 1787, to the Principal of the University of Glasgow, in consequence of being elected Rector of that learned body, a pleasing memorial remains of the satisfaction with which he always recollected that period of his literary career, which had been more peculiarly consecrated to these important studies. “No preferment,”

says he, “could have given me so much real satisfaction. No man can owe greater obligations to a society than I do to the University of Glasgow. They educated me; they sent me to Oxford. Soon after my return to Scotland, they elected me one of their own members; and afterwards preferred me to another office, to which the abilities and virtues of the never-to-be-forgotten Dr. Hutcheson had given a superior degree of illustration. The period of thirteen years which I spent as a member of that society, I remember as by far the most useful, and therefore as by far the happiest and most honourable period of my life; and now after three-and-twenty years absence, to be remembered in so very agreeable a manner by my old friends and protectors, gives me a heart felt joy which I cannot easily express to you.”

The short narrative which I have now finished, however barren of incident, may convey a general idea of the genius and character of this illustrious man. Of the intellectual gifts and attainments by which he was so eminently distinguished; of the originality and comprehensiveness of his views; the extent, the variety, and the correctness of his information; the inexhaustible fertility of his invention; and the ornaments which his rich and beautiful imagination had borrowed from classical culture; he has left behind him lasting monuments. To his private worth the most certain of all testimonies may be found in that confidence, respect, and attachment, which followed him through all the various relations of life. The serenity and gaiety he enjoyed, under the pressure of his growing infirmities, and the warm interest he felt to the last, in every thing connected with the welfare of his friends, will be long remembered by a small circle, with whom, as long as his strength permitted, he regularly spent an evening in the week; and to whom the recollection of his worth still forms a pleasing, though melancholy bond of union.

The more delicate and characteristic features of his mind, it is perhaps impossible to trace. That there were many peculiarities both in his manners and in his intellectual habits, was manifest to the most superficial observer; but although, to those who knew him, these peculiarities detracted nothing from the respect which his abilities commanded; and although, to his intimate friends, they added an inexpressible charm to his conversation, while they displayed, in the most interesting light, the artless simplicity of his heart; yet it would require a very skilful pencil to present them to the public eye. He was certainly not fitted for the general commerce of the world, or for the business of active life. The comprehensive speculations with which he had been occupied from his youth, and the variety of materials which his

own invention continually supplied to his thoughts, rendered him habitually inattentive to familiar objects, and to common occurrences; and he frequently exhibited instances of absence, which have scarcely been surpassed by the fancy of La Bruyere. Even in company, he was apt to be engrossed with his studies; and appeared, at times, by the motion of his lips, as well as by his looks and gestures, to be in the fervour of composition. I have often, however, been struck, at the distance of years, with his accurate memory of the most trifling particulars; and am inclined to believe, from this and some other circumstances, that he possessed a power, not perhaps uncommon among absent men, of recollecting, in consequence of subsequent efforts of reflection, many occurrences, which, at the time when they happened, did not seem to have sensibly attracted his notice.

To the defect now mentioned, it was probably owing, in part, that he did not fall in easily with the common dialogue of conversation, and that he was somewhat apt to convey his own ideas in the form of a lecture. When he did so, however, it never proceeded from a wish to engross the discourse, or to gratify his vanity. His own inclination disposed him so strongly to enjoy in silence the gaiety of those around him, that his friends were often led to concert little schemes, in order to engage him in the discussions most likely to interest him. Nor do I think I shall be accused of going too far, when I say, that he was scarcely ever known to start a new topic himself, or to appear unprepared upon those topics that were introduced by others. Indeed, his conversation was never more amusing than when he gave a loose to his genius, upon the very few branches of knowledge of which he only possessed the outlines.

The opinions he formed of men, upon a slight acquaintance, were frequently erroneous; but the tendency of his nature inclined him much more to blind partiality, than to ill-founded prejudice. The enlarged views of human affairs, on which his mind habitually dwelt, left him neither time nor inclination to study, in detail, the uninteresting peculiarities of ordinary characters; and accordingly, though intimately acquainted with the capacities of the intellect, and the workings of the heart, and accustomed, in his theories, to mark, with the most delicate hand, the nicest shades, both of genius and of the passions; yet, in judging of individuals, it sometimes happened that his estimates were, in a surprising degree, wide of the truth.

The opinions, too, which, in the thoughtlessness and confidence of his social hours, he was accustomed to hazard on books, and on questions of speculation, were not uniformly such as might have been expected from

the superiority of his understanding, and the singular consistency of his philosophical principles. They were liable to be influenced by accidental circumstances, and by the humour of the moment; and when retailed by those who only saw him occasionally, suggested false and contradictory ideas of his real sentiments. On these, however, as on most other occasions, there was always much truth, as well as ingenuity, in his remarks; and if the different opinions which, at different times, he pronounced upon the same subject, had been all combined together, so as to modify and limit each other, they would probably have afforded materials for a decision, equally comprehensive and just. But, in the society of his friends, he had no disposition to form those qualified conclusions that we admire in his writings; and he generally contented himself with a bold and masterly sketch of the object, from the first point of view in which his temper, or his fancy, presented it. Something of the same kind might be remarked, when he attempted, in the flow of his spirits, to delineate those characters which, from long intimacy, he might have been supposed to understand thoroughly. The picture was always lively, and expressive; and commonly bore a strong and amusing resemblance to the original, when viewed under one particular aspect; but seldom, perhaps, conveyed a just and complete conception of it in all its dimensions and proportions. In a word, it was the fault of his unpremeditated judgments, to be too systematical, and too much in extremes.

But, in whatever way these trifling peculiarities in his manners may be explained, there can be no doubt, that they were intimately connected with the genuine artlessness of his mind. In this amiable quality, he often recalled to his friends the accounts that are given of good La Fontaine; a quality which in him derived a peculiar grace from the singularity of its combination with those powers of reason and of eloquence, which, in his political and moral writings, have long engaged the admiration of Europe.

In his external form and appearance, there was nothing uncommon. When perfectly at ease, and when warmed with conversation, his gestures were animated, and not ungraceful; and, in the society of those he loved, his features were often brightened with a smile of inexpressible benignity. In the company of strangers, his tendency to absence, and perhaps still more his consciousness of this tendency, rendered his manner somewhat embarrassed; — an effect which was probably not a little heightened by those speculative ideas of propriety, which his recluse habits tended at once to perfect in his conception, and to diminish

his power of realizing. He never sat for his picture; but the medallion of Tassie conveys an exact idea of his profile, and of the general expression of his countenance.

His valuable library, together with the rest of his property, was bequeathed to his cousin Mr. David Douglas, Advocate. In the education of this young gentleman, he had employed much of his leisure; and it was only two years before his death (at a time when he could ill spare the pleasure of his society), that he had sent him to study law at Glasgow, under the care of Mr. Millar; — the strongest proof he could give of his disinterested zeal for the improvement of his friend, as well as of the esteem in which he held the abilities of that eminent Professor.

The executors of his will were Dr. Black and Dr. Hutton; with whom he had long lived in habits of the most intimate and cordial friendship; and who, to the many other testimonies which they had given him of their affection, added the mournful office of witnessing his last moments.

LIFE OF ADAM SMITH by John Rae



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CHAPTER XXXII. LAST DAYS

PREFACE

The fullest account we possess of the life of Adam Smith is still the memoir which Dugald Stewart read to the Royal Society of Edinburgh on two evenings of the winter of 1793, and which he subsequently published as a separate work, with many additional illustrative notes, in 1810. Later biographers have made few, if any, fresh contributions to the subject. But in the century that has elapsed since Stewart wrote, many particulars about Smith and a number of his letters have incidentally and by very scattered channels found their way into print. It will be allowed to be generally desirable, in view of the continued if not even increasing importance of Smith, to obtain as complete a view of his career and work as it is still in our power to recover; and it appeared not unlikely that some useful contribution to this end might result if all those particulars and letters to which I have alluded were collected together, and if they were supplemented by such unpublished letters and information as it still remained possible to procure. In this last part of my task I have been greatly assisted by the Senatus of the University of Glasgow, who have most kindly supplied me with an extract of every passage in the College records bearing on Smith; by the Council of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, who have granted me every facility for using the *Hume Correspondence*, which is in their custody; and by the Senatus of the University of Edinburgh for a similar courtesy with regard to the *Carlyle Correspondence* and the David Laing MSS. in their library. I am also deeply indebted, for the use of unpublished letters or for the supply of special information, to the Duke of Buccleuch, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Professor R.O. Cunningham of Queen’s College, Belfast, Mr. Alfred Morrison of Fonthill, Mr. F. Barker of Brook Green, and Mr. W. Skinner, W.S., late Town Clerk of Edinburgh.

CHAPTER I. EARLY DAYS AT KIRKCALDY

1723-1737

Adam Smith was born at Kirkcaldy, in the county of Fife, Scotland, on the 5th of June 1723. He was the son of Adam Smith, Writer to the Signet, Judge Advocate for Scotland and Comptroller of the Customs in the Kirkcaldy district, by Margaret, daughter of John Douglas of Strathendry, a considerable landed proprietor in the same county.

Of his father little is known. He was a native of Aberdeen, and his people must have been in a position to make interest in influential quarters, for we find him immediately after his admission to the Society of Writers to the Signet in 1707, appointed to the newly-established office of Judge Advocate for Scotland, and in the following year to the post of Private Secretary to the Scotch Minister, the Earl of Loudon. When he lost this post in consequence of Lord Loudon's retirement from office in 1713, he was provided for with the Comptrollership of Customs at Kirkcaldy, which he continued to hold, along with the Judge Advocateship, till his premature death in 1723. The Earl of Loudon having been a zealous Whig and Presbyterian, it is perhaps legitimate to infer that his secretary must have been the same, and from the public appointments he held we may further gather that he was a man of parts. The office of Judge Advocate for Scotland, which was founded at the Union, and which he was the first to fill, was a position of considerable responsibility, and was occupied after him by men, some of them of great distinction. Alexander Fraser Tytler, the historian, for example, was Judge Advocate till he went to the bench as Lord Woodhouselee. The Judge Advocate was clerk and legal adviser to the Courts Martial, but as military trials were not frequent in Scotland, the duties of this office took up but a minor share of the elder Smith's time. His chief business, at least for the last ten years of his life, was his work in the Custom-house, for though he was bred a Writer to the Signet — that is, a solicitor privileged to practise before the Supreme Court — he never seems to have actually practised that profession. A local collectorship or controllership of the Customs was in itself a more important administrative office at that period, when duties were levied on twelve hundred articles, than it is now, when duties are levied on twelve only, and it was much sought after for the younger, or even the elder, sons of

the gentry. The very place held by Smith's father at Kirkcaldy was held for many years after his day by a Scotch baronet, Sir Michael Balfour. The salary was not high. Adam Smith began in 1713 with £30 a year, and had only £40 when he died in 1723, but then the perquisites of those offices in the Customs were usually twice or thrice the salary, as we know from the *Wealth of Nations* itself (Book V. chap. ii.). Smith had a cousin, a third Adam Smith, who was in 1754 Collector of Customs at Alloa with a salary of £60 a year, and who writes his cousin, in connection with a negotiation the latter was conducting on behalf of a friend for the purchase of the office, that the place was worth £200 a year, and that he would not sell it for less than ten years' purchase.

Smith's father died in the spring of 1723, a few months before his famous son was born. Some doubt has been cast upon this fact by an announcement quoted by President M'Cosh, in his *Scottish Philosophy*, from the Scots Magazine of 1740, of the promotion of Adam Smith, Comptroller of the Customs, Kirkcaldy, to be Inspector-General of the Outports. But conclusive evidence exists of the date of the death of Smith's father in a receipt for his funeral expenses, which is in the possession of Professor Cunningham, and which, as a curious illustration of the habits of the time, I subjoin in a note below. The promotion of 1740 is the promotion not of Smith's father but of his cousin, whom I have just had occasion to mention, and who appears from Chamberlayne's *Notitia Angliæ* to have been Comptroller of the Customs at Kirkcaldy from about 1734 till somewhere before 1741. In the *Notitia Angliæ* for 1741 the name of Adam Smith ceases to appear as Comptroller in Kirkcaldy, and appears for the first time as Inspector-General of the Outports, exactly in accordance with the intimation quoted by Dr. M'Cosh. It is curious that Smith, who was to do so much to sweep away the whole system of the Customs, should have been so closely connected with that branch of administration. His father, his only known relation on his father's side, and himself, were all officials in the Scotch Customs.

On the mother's side his kindred were much connected with the army. His uncle, Robert Douglas of Strathendry, and three of his uncle's sons were military officers, and so was his cousin, Captain Skene, the laird of the neighbouring estate of Pitlour. Colonel Patrick Ross, a distinguished officer of the times, was also a relation, but on which side I do not know. His mother herself was from first to last the heart of Smith's life. He being an only child, and she an only parent, they had been all in all to one another during his infancy and boyhood, and after he was full of

years and honours her presence was the same shelter to him as it was when a boy. His friends often spoke of the beautiful affection and worship with which he cherished her. One who knew him well for the last thirty years of his life, and was very probably at one time a boarder in his house, the clever and bustling Earl of Buchan, elder brother of Lord Chancellor Erskine, says the principal avenue to Smith's heart always was by his mother. He was a delicate child, and afflicted even in childhood with those fits of absence and that habit of speaking to himself which he carried all through life. Of his infancy only one incident has come down to us. In his fourth year, while on a visit to his grandfather's house at Strathendry on the banks of the Leven, the child was stolen by a passing band of gipsies, and for a time could not be found. But presently a gentleman arrived who had met a gipsy woman a few miles down the road carrying a child that was crying piteously. Scouts were immediately despatched in the direction indicated, and they came upon the woman in Leslie wood. As soon as she saw them she threw her burden down and escaped, and the child was brought back to his mother. He would have made, I fear, a poor gipsy. As he grew up in boyhood his health became stronger, and he was in due time sent to the Burgh School of Kirkcaldy.

The Burgh School of Kirkcaldy was one of the best secondary schools of Scotland at that period, and its principal master, Mr. David Millar, had the name of being one of the best schoolmasters of his day. When Smith first went to school we cannot say, but it seems probable that he began Latin in 1733, for *Eutropius* is the class-book of a beginner in Latin, and the *Eutropius* which Smith used as a class-book still exists, and contains his signature with the date of that year. As he left school in 1737, he thus had at least four years' training in the classics before he proceeded to the University. Millar, his classical master, had adventured in literature. He wrote a play, and his pupils used to act it. Acting plays was in those days a common exercise in the higher schools of Scotland. The presbyteries often frowned, and tried their best to stop the practice, but the town councils, which had the management of these schools, resented the dictation of the presbyteries, and gave the drama not only the support of their personal presence at the performances, but sometimes built a special stage and auditorium for the purpose. Sir James Steuart, the economist, played the king in *Henry the Fourth* when he was a boy at the school of North Berwick in 1735. The pupils of Dalkeith School, where the historian Robertson was educated, played *Julius Cæsar* in 1734. In the same year the boys of Perth Grammar School played *Cato* in the teeth of an explicit presbyterial anathema, and again in the same year —

in the month of August — the boys of the Burgh School of Kirkcaldy, which Smith was at the time attending, enacted the piece their master had written. It bore the rather unromantic and uninviting title of “A Royal Council for Advice, or the Regular Education of Boys the Foundation of all other Improvements.” The *dramatis personæ* were first the master and twelve ordinary members of the council, who sat gravely round a table like senators, and next a crowd of suitors, standing at a little distance off, who sent representatives to the table one by one to state their grievances — first a tradesman, then a farmer, then a country gentleman, then a schoolmaster, a nobleman, and so on. Each of them received advice from the council in turn, and then, last of all, a gentleman came forward, who complimented the council on the successful completion of their day’s labours. Smith would no doubt have been present at this performance, but whether he played an active part either as councillor or as spokesman for any class of petitioners, or merely stood in the crowd of suitors, a silent super, cannot now be guessed.

Among those young actors at this little provincial school were several besides Smith himself who were to play important and even distinguished parts afterwards on the great stage of the world. James Oswald — the Right Hon. James Oswald, Treasurer of the Navy — who is sometimes said to have been one of Smith’s schoolfellows, could not have been so, as he was eight years Smith’s senior, but his younger brother John, subsequently Bishop of Raphoe, doubtless was; and so was Robert Adam, the celebrated architect, who built the London Adelphi, Portland Place, and — probably his finest work — Edinburgh University. Though James Oswald was not at school with Smith, he was one of his intimate home friends from the first. The Dunnikier family lived in the town, and stood on such a footing of intimacy with the Smiths that, as we have seen, it was “Mr. James of Dunnikier” — the father of the James Oswald now in question — who undertook on behalf of Mrs. Smith the arrangements for her husband’s funeral; and the friendship of James Oswald, as will presently appear, was, after the affection of his mother, the best thing Smith carried into life with him from Kirkcaldy. The Adam family also lived in the town, though the father was a leading Scotch architect — King’s Mason for Scotland, in fact — and was proprietor of a fair estate not far away; and the four brothers Adam were the familiars of Smith’s early years. They continued to be among his familiars to the last. Another of his school companions who played a creditable part in his time was John Drysdale, the minister’s son, who became one of the

ministers of Edinburgh, doctor of divinity, chaplain to the king, leader of an ecclesiastical party — of the Moderates in succession to Robertson — twice Moderator of the General Assembly, though in his case, as in so many others, the path of professional success has led but to oblivion. Still he deserves mention here, because, as his son-in-law, Professor Dalzel tells us, he and Smith were much together again in their later Edinburgh days, and there was none of all Smith's numerous friends whom he liked better or spoke of with greater tenderness than Drysdale. Drysdale's wife was a sister of the brothers Adam, and Robert Adam stayed with Drysdale on his visits to Edinburgh.

A small town like Kirkcaldy — it had then only 1500 inhabitants — is a not unfavourable observatory for beginning one's knowledge of the world. It has more sorts and conditions of men to exhibit than a rural district can furnish, and it exhibits each more completely in all their ways, pursuits, troubles, characters, than can possibly be done in a city. Smith, who, spite of his absence of mind, was always an excellent observer, would grow up in the knowledge of all about everybody in that little place, from the "Lady Dunnikier," the great lady of the town, to its poor colliers and salters who were still bondsmen. Kirkcaldy, too, had its shippers trading with the Baltic, its customs officers, with many a good smuggling story, and it had a nailery or two, which Smith is said to have been fond of visiting as a boy, and to have acquired in them his first rough idea of the value of division of labour. However that may be, Smith does draw some of his illustrations of the division of labour from that particular business, which would necessarily be very familiar to his mind, and it may have been in Kirkcaldy that he found the nailers paid their wages in nails, and using these nails afterwards as a currency in making their purchases from the shopkeepers.

At school Smith was marked for his studious disposition, his love of reading, and his power of memory; and by the age of fourteen he had advanced sufficiently in classics and mathematics to be sent to Glasgow College, with a view to obtaining a Snell exhibition to Oxford.

CHAPTER II. STUDENT AT GLASGOW COLLEGE

A.D. 1737-1740. *Aet.* 14-17

Smith entered Glasgow College in 1737, no doubt in October, when the session began, and he remained there till the spring of 1740. The arts curriculum at that time extended over five sessions, so that Smith did not complete the course required for a degree. In the three sessions he attended he would go through the classes of Latin, Greek, Mathematics, and Moral Philosophy, and have thus listened to the lectures of the three eminent teachers who were then drawing students to this little western College from the most distant quarters, and keeping its courts alive with a remarkable intellectual activity. Dr. A. Carlyle, who came to Glasgow College for his divinity classes after he had finished his arts course at Edinburgh, says he found a spirit of inquiry and a zeal for learning abroad among the students of Glasgow which he remembered nothing like among the students of Edinburgh. This intellectual awakening was the result mainly of the teaching of three professors — Alexander Dunlop, Professor of Greek, a man of fine scholarship and taste, and an unusually engaging method of instruction; Robert Simson, the professor of Mathematics, an original if eccentric genius, who enjoyed a European reputation as the restorer of the geometry of the ancients; and above all, Francis Hutcheson, a thinker of great original power, and an unrivalled academic lecturer.

Smith would doubtless improve his Greek to some extent under Dunlop, though from all we know of the work of that class, he could not be carried very far there. Dunlop spent most of his first year teaching the elements of Greek grammar with Verney’s Grammar as his textbook, and reading a little of one or two easy authors as the session advanced. Most of the students entered his class so absolutely ignorant of Greek that he was obliged to read a Latin classic with them for the first three months till they learnt enough of the Greek grammar to read a Greek one. In the second session they were able to accompany him through some of the principal Greek classics, but the time was obviously too short for great things. Smith, however, appears at this time to have shown a marked predilection for mathematics. Dugald Stewart’s father, Professor

Matthew Stewart of Edinburgh, was a class-fellow of Smith's at Glasgow; and Dugald Stewart has heard his father reminding Smith of a "geometrical problem of considerable difficulty by which he was occupied at the time when their acquaintance commenced, and which had been proposed to him as an exercise by the celebrated Dr. Simson." The only other fellow-student of his at Glasgow of whom we have any knowledge is Dr. Maclaine, the translator of Mosheim, and author of several theological works; and Dr. Maclaine informed Dugald Stewart, in private conversation, of Smith's fondness for mathematics in those early days. For his mathematical professor, Robert Simson himself, Smith always retained the profoundest veneration, and one of the last things he ever wrote — a passage he inserted in the new edition of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, published immediately before his death in 1790 — contains a high tribute to the gifts and character of that famous man. In this passage Smith seeks to illustrate a favourite proposition of his, that men of science are much less sensitive to public criticism and much more indifferent to unpopularity or neglect than either poets or painters, because the excellence of their work admits of easy and satisfactory demonstration, whereas the excellence of the poet's work or the painter's depends on a judgment of taste which is more uncertain; and he points to Robert Simson as a signal example of the truth of that proposition. "Mathematicians," he says, "who may have the most perfect assurance of the truth and of the importance of their discoveries, are frequently very indifferent about the reception which they may meet with from the public. The two greatest mathematicians that I ever have had the honour to be known to, and I believe the two greatest that have lived in my time, Dr. Robert Simson of Glasgow and Dr. Matthew Stewart of Edinburgh, never seemed to feel even the slightest uneasiness from the neglect with which the ignorance of the public received some of their most valuable works." And it ought to be remembered that when Smith wrote thus of Simson he had been long intimate with D'Alembert.

But while Smith improved his Greek under Dunlop, and acquired a distinct ardour for mathematics under the inspiring instructions of Simson, the most powerful and enduring influence he came under at Glasgow was undoubtedly that of Hutcheson— "the never-to-be-forgotten Hutcheson," as he styled him half a century later in recalling his obligations to his old College on the occasion of his election to the Rectorship. No other man, indeed, whether teacher or writer, did so much to awaken Smith's mind or give a bent to his ideas. He is sometimes considered a disciple of Hume and sometimes considered a

disciple of Quesnay; if he was any man's disciple, he was Hutcheson's. Hutcheson was exactly the stamp of man fitted to stir and mould the thought of the young. He was, in the first place, one of the most impressive lecturers that ever spoke from an academic chair. Dugald Stewart, who knew many of his pupils, states that every one of them told of the extraordinary impression his lectures used to make on their hearers. He was the first professor in Glasgow to give up lecturing in Latin and speak to his audience in their own tongue, and he spoke without notes and with the greatest freedom and animation. Nor was it only his eloquence, but his ideas themselves were rousing. Whatever he touched upon, he treated, as we may still perceive from his writings, with a certain freshness and decided originality which must have provoked the dullest to some reflection, and in a bracing spirit of intellectual liberty which it was strength and life for the young mind to breathe. He was not long in Glasgow, accordingly, till he was bitterly attacked by the older generation outside the walls of the College as a "new light" fraught with dangers to all accepted beliefs, and at the same time worshipped like an idol by the younger generation inside the walls, who were thankful for the light he brought them, and had no quarrel with it for being new. His immediate predecessor in that chair, Professor Gershom Carmichael, the reputed father of the Scottish Philosophy, was still a Puritan of the Puritans, wrapt in a gloomy Calvinism, and desponding after signs that would never come. But Hutcheson belonged to a new era, which had turned to the light of nature for guidance, and had discovered by it the good and benevolent Deity of the eighteenth century, who lived only for human welfare, and whose will was not to be known from mysterious signs and providences, but from a broad consideration of the greater good of mankind— "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Hutcheson was the original author of that famous phrase.

All this was anathema to the exponents of the prevailing theology with which, indeed, it seemed only too surely to dispense; and in Smith's first year at Glasgow the local Presbytery set the whole University in a ferment by prosecuting Hutcheson for teaching to his students, in contravention of his subscription to the Westminster Confession, the following two false and dangerous doctrines: 1st, that the standard of moral goodness was the promotion of the happiness of others; and 2nd, that we could have a knowledge of good and evil without and prior to a knowledge of God. This trial of course excited the profoundest feeling among the students, and they actually made a formal appearance before the Presbytery, and defended their hero zealously both by word and

writing. Smith, being only a bajan — a first year's student — would play no leading part in these proceedings, but he could not have lived in the thick of them unmoved, and he certainly — either then or afterwards, when he entered Hutcheson's class and listened to his lectures on natural theology, or perhaps attended his private class on the Sundays for special theological study — adopted the religious optimism of Hutcheson for his own creed, and continued under its influence to the last of his days.

In politics also Hutcheson's lectures exercised important practical influence on the general opinion of his students. The principles of religious and political liberty were then so imperfectly comprehended and so little accepted that their advocacy was still something of a new light, and we are informed by one of Hutcheson's leading colleagues, Principal Leechman, that none of his lectures made a deeper or wider impression than his exposition of those principles, and that very few of his pupils left his hands without being imbued with some of the same love of liberty which animated their master. Smith was no exception, and that deep strong love of all reasonable liberty which characterised him must have been, if not first kindled, at any rate quickened by his contact with Hutcheson.

Interesting traces of more specific influence remain. Dugald Stewart seems to have heard Smith himself admit that it was Hutcheson in his lectures that suggested to him the particular theory of the right of property which he used to teach in his own unpublished lectures on jurisprudence, and which founded the right of property on the general sympathy of mankind with the reasonable expectation of the occupant to enjoy unmolested the object which he had acquired or discovered. But it is most probable that his whole theory of moral sentiments was suggested by the lectures of Hutcheson, perhaps the germs of it even when he was passing through the class. For Hutcheson in the course of his lectures expressly raises and discusses the question, Can we reduce our moral sentiments to sympathy? He answered the question himself in the negative, on the ground that we often approve of the actions of people with whom we have no sympathy, our enemies for example, and his pupil's contribution to the discussion was an ingenious attempt to surmount that objection by the theory of sympathy with an impartial spectator.

Hutcheson's name occurs in no history of political economy, but he lectured systematically on that subject — as Smith himself subsequently did — as a branch of his course on natural jurisprudence, a discussion of contracts requiring him to examine the principles of value, interest,

currency, etc., and these lectures, though fragmentary, are remarkable for showing a grasp of economic questions before his time, and presenting, with a clear view of their importance, some of Smith's most characteristic positions. He is free from the then prevailing mercantilist fallacies about money. His remarks on value contain what reads like a first draft of Smith's famous passage on value in use and value in exchange. Like Smith, he holds labour to be the great source of wealth and the true measure of value, and declares every man to have the natural right to use his faculties according to his own pleasure for his own ends in any work or recreation that inflicts no injury on the persons or property of others, except when the public interests may otherwise require. This is just Smith's system of natural liberty in matters industrial, with a general limitation in the public interest such as Smith also approves. In the practical enforcement of this limitation he would impose some particular restraints which Smith might not, but, on the other hand, he would abolish other particular restraints which Smith, and even Quesnay, would still retain, *e.g.* the fixing of interest by law. His doctrine was essentially the doctrine of industrial liberty with which Smith's name is identified, and in view of the claims set up on behalf of the French Physiocrats that Smith learnt that doctrine in their school, it is right to remember that he was brought into contact with it in Hutcheson's class-room at Glasgow some twenty years before any of the Physiocrats had written a line on the subject, and that the very first ideas on economic subjects which were presented to his mind contained in germ — and in very active and sufficient germ — the very doctrines about liberty, labour, and value on which his whole system was afterwards built.

Though Smith was a mere lad of sixteen at that time, his mind had already, under Hutcheson's stimulating instructions, begun to work effectively on the ideas lodged in it and to follow out their suggestions in his own thought. Hutcheson seems to have recognised his quality, and brought him, young though he was, under the personal notice of David Hume. There is a letter written by Hume to Hutcheson on the 4th of March 1740 which is not indeed without its difficulties, but if, as Mr. Burton thinks, the Mr. Smith mentioned in it be the economist, it would appear as if Smith had, while attending Hutcheson's class, — whether as a class exercise or otherwise, — written an abstract of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, then recently published, that Smith's abstract was to be sent to some periodical for publication, and that Hume was so pleased with it that he presented its young author with a copy of his own work.

“My bookseller,” Hume writes, “has sent to Mr. Smith a copy of my book, which I hope he has received as well as your letter. I have not yet heard what he has done with the abstract. Perhaps you have. I have got it printed in London, but not in the *Works of the Learned*, there having been an article with regard to my book somewhat abusive before I sent up the abstract.” If the Mr. Smith of this letter is Adam Smith, then he must have been away from Glasgow at that time, for Hutcheson was communicating with him by letter, but that may possibly be explained by the circumstance that he had been appointed to one of the Snell exhibitions at Balliol College, Oxford, and might have gone home to Kirkcaldy to make preparations for residence at the English University, though he did not actually set out for it till June.

These Snell exhibitions, which were practically in the gift of the Glasgow professors, were naturally the prize of the best student of Glasgow College at the time they fell vacant, and they have been held in the course of the two centuries of their existence by many distinguished men, including Sir William Hamilton and Lockhart, Archbishop Tait and Lord President Inglis. They were originally founded by an old Glasgow student, a strong Episcopalian, for the purpose of educating Scotchmen for the service of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. By the terms of his will the holders were even to be bound under penalty of £500 “to enter holy orders and return to serve the Church in Scotland,” and it has sometimes been concluded from that circumstance that Smith must have accepted the Snell exhibition with a view to the Episcopal ministry. But the original purpose of the founder was frustrated by the Revolution settlement, which made “the Church in Scotland” Presbyterian, and left scarce any Episcopal remnant to serve, and the original condition has never been practically enforced. The last attempt to impose it was made during Smith’s own tenure of the exhibition, and failed. In the year 1744 the Vice-Chancellor and the heads of Colleges at Oxford raised a process in the Court of Chancery for compelling the Snell exhibitioners “to submit and conform to the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England, and to enter into holy orders when capable thereof by the canons of the Church of England”; but the Court of Chancery refused to interfere, and the exhibitioners were left entirely free to choose their sect, their profession, and their country, as seemed best to themselves. It may be added that in Smith’s time the Snell foundation yielded five exhibitions of £40 a year each, tenable for eleven years.

Of Smith’s friends among his fellow-students at Glasgow, no names have been preserved for us except those already mentioned, Professor

Matthew Stewart, and Dr. Maclaine, the embassy chaplain at the Hague. He continued on a footing of great intimacy with Stewart, whom, as we have seen, he considered to be, after Robert Simson, the greatest mathematician of his time, and he seems to have enjoyed occasional opportunities of renewing his acquaintance with Dr. Maclaine, though the opportunities could not have been frequent, as Maclaine spent his whole active life abroad as English chaplain at the Hague. But the remark made by Smith to Dr. William Thompson, a historical writer of the last century, seems to imply his having had some intercourse with his early friend. Thompson, Dr. Watson the historian of Philip II., and Dr. Maclaine, seem all to have been writing the history of the Peace of Utrecht, and Smith, who knew all three, said Watson was much afraid of Maclaine, and Maclaine was just as much afraid of Watson, but he could have told them of one they had much more cause to fear, and that was Thompson himself.

CHAPTER III. AT OXFORD

1740-1746. *Aet.* 17-23

Smith left Scotland for Oxford in June 1740, riding the whole way on horseback, and, as he told Samuel Rogers many years afterwards, being much struck from the moment he crossed the Border with the richness of the country he was entering, and the great superiority of its agriculture over that of his own country. Scotch agriculture was not born in 1740, even in the Lothians; the face of the country everywhere was very bare and waste, and, as he was rather pointedly reminded on the day of his arrival at Oxford, even its cattle were still lean and poor, compared with the fat oxen of England. Among the stories told of his absence of mind is one he is said by a writer in the *Monthly Review* to have been fond of relating himself whenever a particular joint appeared on his own table. The first day he dined in the hall at Balliol he fell into a reverie at table and for a time forgot his meal, whereupon the servitor roused him to attention, telling him he had better fall to, because he had never seen such a piece of beef in Scotland as the joint then before him. His nationality, as will presently appear, occasioned him worse trouble at Oxford than this good-natured gibe.

He matriculated at the University on the 7th of July. Professor Thorold Rogers, who has collected the few particulars that can now be learned of Smith's residence at Oxford from official records, gives us the matriculation entry: "Adamus Smith e Coll. Ball., Gen. Fil. Jul. 7mo 1740," and mentions that it is written in a round school-boy hand — a style of hand, we may add, which Smith retained to the last. He has himself said that literary composition never grew easier to him with experience; neither apparently did handwriting. His letters are all written in the same big round characters, connected together manifestly by a slow, difficult, deliberate process.

He remained at Oxford till the 15th of August 1746; after that day his name appears no longer in the Buttery Books of the College; but up till that day he resided at Oxford continuously from the time of his matriculation. He did not leave between terms, and was thus six years on end away from home. A journey to Scotland was in those days a serious and expensive undertaking; it would have taken more than half Smith's exhibition of £40 to pay for the posting alone of a trip to Kirkcaldy and

back. When Professor Rouet of Glasgow was sent up to London a few years later to push on the tedious twenty years' lawsuit between Glasgow College and Balliol about the Snell exhibitions, the single journey cost him £11:15s., exclusive of personal expenses, for which he was allowed 6s. 8d. a day. Now Smith out of his £40 a year had to pay about £30 for his food; Mr. Rogers mentions that his first quarter's maintenance came to £7:5s., about the usual cost of living, he adds, at Oxford at that period. Then the tutors, though they seem to have ceased to do any tutoring, still took their fees of 20s. a quarter all the same, and Smith's remaining £5 would be little enough to meet other items of necessary expenditure. It appears from Salmon's *Present State of the Universities*, published in 1744, during Smith's residence at Oxford, that an Oxford education then cost £32 a year as a minimum, but that there was scarce a commoner in the University who spent less than £60.

Smith's name does not appear in Bliss's list of Oxford graduates, and although in Mr. Foster's recent *Alumni Oxonienses* other particulars are given about him, no mention is made of his graduation; but Professor Rogers has discovered evidence in the Buttery Books of Balliol which seems conclusively to prove that Smith actually took the degree of B.A., whatever may be the explanation of the apparent omission of his name from the official graduation records. In those Buttery Books he is always styled Dominus from and after the week ending 13th April 1744. Now Dominus was the usual designation of a B.A., and in April 1744 Smith would have kept the sixteen terms that were then, we may say, the only qualification practically necessary for that degree. He had possibly omitted some step requisite for the formal completion of the graduation.

Smith's residence at Oxford fell in a time when learning lay there under a long and almost total eclipse. This dark time seems to have lasted most of that century. Crousaz visited Oxford about the beginning of the century and found the dons as ignorant of the new philosophy as the savages of the South Sea. Bishop Butler came there as a student twenty years afterwards, and could get nothing to satisfy his young thirst for knowledge except "frivolous lectures" and "unintelligible disputations." A generation later he could not even have got that; for Smith tells us in the *Wealth of Nations* that the lecturers had then given up all pretence of lecturing, and a foreign traveller, who describes a public disputation he attended at Oxford in 1788, says the Præses Respondent and three Opponents all sat consuming the statutory time in profound silence, absorbed in the novel of the hour. Gibbon, who resided

there not long after Smith, tells that his tutor neither gave nor sought to give him more than one lesson, and that the conversation of the common-room, to which as a gentleman commoner he was privileged to listen, never touched any point of literature or scholarship, but "stagnated in a round of College business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal." Bentham, a few years after Gibbon, has the same tale to tell; it was absolutely impossible to learn anything at Oxford, and the years he spent there were the most barren and unprofitable of his life. Smith's own account of the English universities in the *Wealth of Nations*, though only published in 1776, was substantially true of Oxford during his residence there thirty years before. Every word of it is endorsed by Gibbon as the word of "a moral and political sage who had himself resided at Oxford." Now, according to that account, nobody was then taught, or could so much as find "the proper means of being taught, the sciences which it is the business of those incorporated bodies to teach." The lecturers had ceased lecturing; "the tutors contented themselves with teaching a few unconnected shreds and parcels" of the old unimproved traditionary course, "and even these they commonly taught very negligently and superficially"; being paid independently of their personal industry, and being responsible only to one another, "every man consented that his neighbour might neglect his duty provided he himself were allowed to neglect his own"; and the general consequence was a culpable dislike to improvement and indifference to all new ideas, which made a rich and well-endowed university the "sanctuary in which exploded systems and obsolete prejudices find shelter and protection after they have been hunted out of every corner of the world." Coming up from a small university in the North, which was cultivating letters with such remarkable spirit on its little oatmeal wisely dispensed, Smith concluded that the stagnation of learning which prevailed in the wealthy universities of England was due at bottom to nothing but their wealth, because it was distributed on a bad system.

Severely, however, as Smith has censured the order of things he found prevailing at Oxford, it is worthy of notice that he never, like Gibbon and Bentham, thought of the six years he spent there as being wasted. Boswell and others have pronounced him ungrateful for the censures he deemed meet to pass upon that order of things, but that charge is of course unreasonable, because the censures were undeniably true and undeniably useful, and I refer to it here merely to point out that as a matter of fact Smith not only felt, but has publicly expressed, gratitude for his residence at the University of Oxford. He does so in his letter to

the Principal of Glasgow College in 1787 accepting the Rectorship, when in enumerating the claims which Glasgow College had upon his grateful regard, he expressly mentions the fact that it had sent him as a student to Oxford. In truth, his time was not wasted at Oxford. He did not allow it to be wasted. He read deeply and widely in many subjects and in many languages; he read and thought for six years, and for that best kind of education the negligence of tutors and lecturers, such as they then were, was probably better than their assiduity.

For this business of quiet reading Smith seems to have been happily situated in Balliol. Balliol was not then a reading college as it is now. A claim is set up in behalf of some of the other Oxford colleges that they kept the lamp of learning lit even in the darkest days of last century, but Balliol is not one of them. It was chiefly known in that age for the violence of its Jacobite opinions. Only a few months after Smith left it a party of Balliol students celebrated the birthday of Cardinal York in the College, and rushing out into the streets, mauled every Hanoverian they met, and created such a serious riot that they were sentenced to two years' imprisonment for it by the Court of King's Bench; but for this grave offence the master of the College, Dr. Theophilus Leigh, and the other authorities, had thought the culprits entitled to indulgence on account of the anniversary they were celebrating, and had decided that the case would be sufficiently met by a Latin imposition. If Balliol, however, was not more enlightened than any of the other colleges of the day, it had one great advantage, it possessed one of the best college libraries at Oxford. The Bodleian was not then open to any member of the University under the rank of a bachelor of arts of two years' standing, and Smith was only a bachelor of arts of two years' standing for a few months before he finally quitted Oxford. He could therefore have made little use of the Bodleian and its then unrivalled treasures, but in his own college library at Balliol he was allowed free range, and availed himself of his privilege with only too great assiduity, to the injury of his health.

His studies took a new turn at Oxford; he laid aside the mathematics for which he showed a liking at Glasgow, and gave his strength to the ancient Latin and Greek classics, possibly for no better reason than that he could get nobody at Oxford to take the trouble of teaching him the former, and that the Balliol library furnished him with the means of cultivating the latter by himself. He did so, moreover, to some purpose, for all through life he showed a knowledge of Greek and Latin literature not only uncommonly extensive but uncommonly exact. Dalzel, the professor of Greek at Edinburgh, was one of Smith's most intimate

friends during those latter years of his life when he was generally found with one of the classical authors before him, in conformity with his theory that the best amusement of age was to renew acquaintance with the writers who were the delight of one's youth; and Dalzel used always to speak to Dugald Stewart with the greatest admiration of the readiness and accuracy with which Smith remembered the works of the Greek authors, and even of the mastery he exhibited over the niceties of Greek grammar. This knowledge must of course have been acquired at Oxford. Smith had read the Italian poets greatly too, and could quote them easily; and he paid special care to the French classics on account of their style, spending much time indeed, we are told, in trying to improve his own style by translating their writings into English.

There was only one fruit in the garden of which he might not freely eat, and that was the productions of modern rationalism. A story has come down which, though not mentioned by Dugald Stewart, is stated by M'Culloch to rest on the best authority, and by Dr. Strang of Glasgow to have been often told by Smith himself, to the effect that he was one day detected reading Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* — probably the very copy presented him by the author at the apparent suggestion of Hutcheson — and was punished by a severe reprimand and the confiscation of the evil book. It is at least entirely consistent with all we know of the spirit of darkness then ruling in Oxford that it should be considered an offence of peculiar aggravation for a student to read a great work of modern thought which had been actually placed in his hands by his professor at Glasgow, and the only wonder is that Smith escaped so lightly, for but a few years before three students were expelled from Oxford for coquetting with Deism, and a fourth, of whom better hopes seem to have been formed, had his degree deferred for two years, and was required in the interval to translate into Latin as a reformatory exercise the whole of Leslie's *Short and Easy Method with the Deists*.

Except for the great resource of study, Smith's life at Oxford seems not to have been a very happy one. For one thing, he was in poor health and spirits a considerable part of the time, as appears from the brief extracts from his letters published by Lord Brougham. When Brougham was writing his account of Smith he got the use of a number of letters written by the latter to his mother from Oxford between 1740 and 1746, which probably exist somewhere still, but which, he found, contained nothing of any general interest. "They are almost all," he says, "upon mere family and personal matters, most of them indeed upon his linen

and other such necessaries, but all show his strong affection for his mother." The very brief extracts Brougham makes from them, however, inform us that Smith was then suffering from what he calls "an inveterate scurvy and shaking in the head," for which he was using the new remedy of tar-water which Bishop Berkeley had made the fashionable panacea for all manner of diseases. At the end of July 1744 Smith says to his mother: "I am quite inexcusable for not writing to you oftener. I think of you every day, but always defer writing till the post is just going, and then sometimes business or company, but oftener laziness, hinders me. Tar-water is a remedy very much in vogue here at present for almost all diseases. It has perfectly cured me of an inveterate scurvy and shaking in the head. I wish you'd try it. I fancy it might be of service to you." In another and apparently subsequent letter, however, he states that he had had the scurvy and shaking as long as he remembered anything, and that the tar-water had not removed them. On the 29th of November 1743 he makes the curious confession: "I am just recovered from a violent fit of laziness, which has confined me to my elbow-chair these three months." Brougham thinks these statements show symptoms of hypochondria; but they probably indicate no more than the ordinary lassitude and exhaustion ensuing from overwork. Hume, when about the same age, had by four or five years' hard reading thrown himself into a like condition, and makes the same complaints of "laziness of temper" and scurvy. The shaking in the head continued to attend Smith all his days.

But low health was only one of the miseries of his estate at Oxford. There is reason to believe that Balliol College was in his day a stepmother to her Scotch sons, and that their existence there was made very uncomfortable not merely at the hands of the mob of young gentlemen among whom they were obliged to live, but even more by the unfair and discriminating harshness of the College authorities themselves. Out of the hundred students then residing at Balliol, eight at least were Scotch, four on the Snell foundation and four on the Warner, and the Scotch eight seem to have been always treated as an alien and intrusive faction. The Snell exhibitioners were continually complaining to the Glasgow Senatus on the subject, and the Glasgow Senatus thought them perfectly justified in complaining. In a letter of 22nd May 1776, in which they go over the whole long story of grievances, the Glasgow Senatus tell the Master and Fellows of Balliol plainly that the Scotch students had never been "welcomely received" at Balliol, and had never been happy there. If an English undergraduate committed a fault, the authorities never thought of blaming any one but himself, but when one

of the eight Scotch undergraduates did so, his sin was remembered against all the other seven, and reflections were cast on the whole body; “a circumstance,” add the Senatus, “which has been much felt during their residence at Balliol.” Their common resentment against the injustice of this kind of tribal accountability that was imposed on them naturally provoked a common resistance; it developed “a spirit of association,” say the Senatus, which “has at all periods been a cause of much trouble both to Balliol and to Glasgow Colleges.” In 1744, when Smith himself was one of them, the Snell exhibitioners wrote an account of their grievances to the Glasgow Senatus, and stated “what they wanted to be done towards making their residence more easy and advantageous”; and in 1753, when some of Smith’s contemporaries would still be on the foundation, Dr. Leigh, the master of Balliol, tells the Glasgow Senatus that he had ascertained in an interview with one of the Snell exhibitioners that what they wanted was to be transferred to some other college, because they had “a total dislike to Balliol.”

This idea of a transference, I may be allowed to add, continued to be mooted, and in 1776 it was actually proposed by the heads of Balliol to the Senatus of Glasgow to transfer the Snell foundationers altogether to Hertford College; but the Glasgow authorities thought this would be merely a transference of the troubles, and not a remedy for them, that the exhibitioners would get no better welcome at Hertford than at Balliol if they came as “fixed property” instead of coming as volunteers, and that they could never lose their national peculiarities of dialect and their habits of combination if they came in a body. Accordingly, in the letter of 22nd May 1776, which I have already quoted, they recommended the arrangement of leaving each exhibitioner to choose his own college, — an arrangement, it may be remembered, which had just then been strongly advocated as a general principle by Smith in his newly-published *Wealth of the Nations*, on the broader ground that it would encourage a wholesome competition between the colleges, and so improve the character of the instruction given in them all.

Now if the daily relations between the Scotch exhibitioners at Balliol and the authorities and general members of the College were of the unhappy description partially revealed in this correspondence, that may possibly afford some explanation of what must otherwise seem the entirely unaccountable circumstance that Smith, so far as we are able to judge, made almost no permanent friends at Oxford. Few men were ever by nature more entirely formed for friendship than Smith. At every other stage of his history we invariably find him surrounded by troops of

friends, and deriving from their company his chief solace and delight. But here he is six or seven years at Oxford, at the season of manhood when the deepest and most lasting friendships of a man's life are usually made, and yet we never see him in all his subsequent career holding an hour's intercourse by word or letter with any single Oxford contemporary except Bishop Douglas of Salisbury, and Bishop Douglas had been a Snell exhibitioner himself. With Douglas, moreover, he had many other ties. Douglas was a Fifeshire man, and may possibly have been a kinsman more or less remote; he was a friend of Hume and Robertson, and all Smith's Edinburgh friends; and he was, like Smith again, a member of the famous Literary Club of London, and is celebrated in that character by Goldsmith in the poem "Retaliation," as "the scourge of impostors, the terror of quacks." I have gone over the names of those who might be Smith's contemporaries at Balliol as they appear in Mr. Foster's list of *Alumni Oxonienses*, and they were a singularly undistinguished body of people. Smith and Douglas themselves are indeed the only two of them who seem to have made any mark in the world at all.

An allusion has been made to the Scottish dialect of the Snell exhibitioners; it may be mentioned that Smith seems to have lost the broad Scotch at Oxford without, like Jeffrey, contracting the narrow English; at any rate Englishmen, who visited Smith after visiting Robertson or Blair, were struck with the pure and correct English he spoke in private conversation, and he appears to have done so without giving any impression of constraint.

Smith returned to Scotland in August 1746, but his name remained on the Oxford books for some months after his departure, showing apparently that he had not on leaving come to a final determination against going back. His friends at home are said to have been most anxious that he should continue at Oxford; that would naturally seem to open to him the best opportunities either in the ecclesiastical career for which they are believed to have destined him, or in the university career for which nature herself designed him. But both careers were practically barred against him by his objection to taking holy orders, the great majority of the Oxford Fellowships being at that time only granted upon condition of ordination, and Smith concluded that the best prospect for him was after all the road back to Scotland. And he never appears to have set foot in Oxford again. When he became Professor at Glasgow he was the medium of intercourse between the Glasgow Senate and the Balliol authorities, but beyond the occasional interchange of letters

which this business required, his relations with the Southern University appear to have continued completely suspended. Nor did Oxford, on her part, ever show any interest in him. Even after he had become perhaps her greatest living alumnus, she did not offer him the ordinary honour of a doctor’s degree.

CHAPTER IV. LECTURER AT EDINBURGH

1748-1750. *Aet.* 25-27

In returning to Scotland Smith's ideas were probably fixed from the first on a Scotch university chair as an eventual acquisition, but he thought in the meantime to obtain employment of the sort he afterwards gave up his chair to take with the Duke of Buccleugh, a travelling tutorship with a young man of rank and wealth, then a much-desired and, according to the standard of the times, a highly-remunerated occupation. While casting about for a place of that kind he stayed at home with his mother in Kirkcaldy, and he had to remain there without any regular employment for two full years, from the autumn of 1746 till the autumn of 1748. The appointment never came; because from his absent manner and bad address, we are told, he seemed to the ordinary parental mind a most unsuitable person to be entrusted with the care of spirited and perhaps thoughtless young gentlemen. But the visits he paid to Edinburgh in pursuit of this work bore fruit by giving him quite as good a start in life, and a much shorter cut to the professorial position for which he was best fitted. During the winter of 1748-49 he made a most successful beginning as a public lecturer by delivering a course on the then comparatively untried subject of English literature, and gave at the same time a first contribution to English literature himself by collecting and editing the poems of William Hamilton of Bangour. For both these undertakings he was indebted to the advice and good offices of Lord Kames, or, as he then was, Mr. Henry Home, one of the leaders of the Edinburgh bar, with whom he was made acquainted, we may safely assume, by his friend and neighbour, James Oswald of Dunnikier, whom we know to have been among Kames's most intimate friends and correspondents. Kames, though now fifty-two, had not yet written any of the works which raised him afterwards to eminence, but he had long enjoyed in the literary society of the North something of that position which Voltaire laughs at him for trying to take towards the world in general; he was a law on all questions of taste, from an epic poem to a garden plot. He had little Latin and no Greek, for he never was at college, and the classical quotations in his *Sketches* were translated for him by A.F. Tytler. But he had thrown himself with all the greater zeal on that account into English literature when English literature became the

rage in Scotland after the Union, and he was soon crossing steel with Bishop Butler in metaphysics, and the accepted guide of the new Scotch poets in literary criticism. Hamilton of Bangour confesses that he himself

From Hume learned verse to criticise,

the Hume meant being his early friend, Henry Home of Kames, and not his later friend, David Hume the historian. Home's place in the literature of Scotland corresponds with his place in its agriculture; he was the first of the improvers; and Smith, who always held him in the deepest veneration, was not wrong when, on being complimented on the group of great writers who were then reflecting glory on Scotland, he said, "Yes, but we must every one of us acknowledge Kames for our master."

When Home found Smith already as well versed in the English classics as himself, he suggested the delivery of this course of lectures on English literature and criticism. The subject was fresh, it was fashionable, and though Stevenson, the Professor of Logic, had already lectured on it, and lectured on it in English too to his class, nobody had yet given lectures on it open to the general public, whose interest it had at the moment so much engaged. The success of such a course seemed assured, and the event fully justified that prognostication. The class was attended among others by Kames himself; by students for the bar, like Alexander Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Chancellor of England, and William Johnstone, who long played an influential part in Parliament as Sir William Pulteney; by young ministers of the city like Dr. Blair, who subsequently gave a similar course himself; and by many others, both young and old. It brought Smith in, we are informed, a clear £100 sterling, and if we assume that the fee was a guinea, which was a customary fee at the period, the audience would be something better than a hundred. It was probably held in the College, for Blair's subsequent course was delivered there even before the establishment of any formal connection with the University by the creation of the professorship.

The lectures Smith then delivered on English literature were burnt at his own request shortly before his death. Blair, who not only heard them at the time, but got the use of them — or, at least, of part of them — afterwards for the preparation of his own lectures on rhetoric, speaks as if there was some hope at one time that Smith would publish them, but if he ever entertained such an intention, he was too entirely preoccupied with work of greater importance and interest to himself to obtain leisure to put them into shape for publication. It has been suggested that they are practically reproduced in the lectures of Blair. Blair acknowledges

having taken a few hints for his treatment of simplicity in style from the manuscript of Smith's lectures. His words are: "On this head, of the general characters of style, particularly the plain and the simple, and the characters of those English authors who are classed under them, in this and the following lecture, several ideas have been taken from a manuscript treatise on rhetoric, part of which was shown to me many years ago by the learned and ingenious author, Dr. Adam Smith; and which it is hoped will be given by him to the public." Now many of Smith's friends considered this acknowledgment far from adequate, and Hill, the biographer of Blair, says Smith himself joined in their complaint. It is very unlikely that Smith ever joined in any such complaint, for Henry Mackenzie told Samuel Rogers an anecdote which conveys an entirely contrary impression. Mackenzie was speaking of Smith's wealth of conversation, and telling how he often used to say to him, "Sir, you have said enough to make a book," and he then mentioned that Blair frequently introduced into his sermons some of Smith's thoughts on jurisprudence, which he had gathered from his conversation, and that he himself had told the circumstance to Smith. "He is very welcome," was the economist's answer; "there is enough left." And if Smith made Blair welcome to his thoughts on jurisprudence, a subject on which he intended to publish a work of his own, we may be certain he made him not less heartily welcome to his thoughts on literature and style, on which he probably entertained no similar intention. Besides, if we judge from the two chapters regarding which he owns his obligation to Smith, Blair does not seem to have borrowed anything but what was the commonest of property already. He took only what his superficial mind had the power of taking, and the pith of Smith's thinking must have been left behind. To borrow even a hat to any purpose, the two heads must be something of a size.

We cannot suppose, therefore, that we have any proper representation or reflection of Smith's literary lectures in the lectures of Blair, but it would be quite possible still, if it were desired, to collect a not inadequate view of his literary opinions from incidental remarks contained in his writings or preserved by friends from recollections of his conversation. Wordsworth, in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, calls him "the worst critic, David Hume excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced," and his judgments will certainly not be confirmed by the taste of the present time. He preferred the classical to the romantic school. He thought with Voltaire

that Shakespeare had written good scenes but not a good play, and that though he had more dramatic genius than Dryden, Dryden was the greater poet. He thought little of Milton's minor poems, and less of the old ballads collected by Percy, but he had great admiration for Pope, believed Gray, if he had only written a little more, would have been the greatest poet in the English language, and thought Racine's *Phædrus* the finest tragedy extant in any language in the world. His own great test of literary beauty was the principle he lays down in his Essay on the Imitative Arts, that the beauty is always in the proportion of the difficulty perceived to be overcome.

Smith seems at this early period of his life to have had dreams of some day figuring as a poet himself, and his extensive familiarity with the poets always struck Dugald Stewart as very remarkable in a man so conspicuous for the weight of his more solid attainments. "In the English language," says Stewart, "the variety of poetical passages which he was not only accustomed to refer to occasionally, but which he was able to repeat with correctness, appeared surprising even to those whose attention had never been attracted to more important acquisitions." The tradition of Smith's early ambition to be a poet is only preserved in an allusion in Caleb Colton's "Hypocrisy," but it receives a certain support from a remark of Smith's own in conversation with a young friend in his later years. Colton's allusion runs as follows: —

Unused am I the Muse's path to tread, And curs'd with Adam's unpoetic head, Who, though that pen he wielded in his hand Ordain'd the *Wealth of Nations* to command; Yet when on Helicon he dar'd to draw, His draft return'd and unaccepted saw. If thus like him we lay a rune in vain, Like him we'll strive some humbler prize to gain.

Smith's own confession is contained in a report of some conversations given in the *Bee* for 1791. He was speaking about blank verse, to which he always had a dislike, as we know from an interesting incident mentioned by Boswell. Boswell, who attended Smith's lectures on English literature at Glasgow College in 1759, told Johnson four years after that Smith had pronounced a strong opinion in these lectures against blank verse and in favour of rhyme — always, no doubt, on the same principle that the greater the difficulty the greater the beauty. This delighted the heart of Johnson, and he said, "Sir, I was once in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other, but had I known that he loved rhyme as much as you tell me he does, I should have hugged him." Twenty years later Smith was again expressing to the anonymous interviewer of the *Bee* his unabated contempt for all blank verse except

Milton's, and he said that though he could never find a single rhyme in his life, he could make blank verse as fast as he could speak. "Blank verse," he said; "they do well to call it blank, for blank it is. I myself even, who never could find a single rhyme in my life, could make blank verse as fast as I could speak." The critic would thus appear here again to have been the poet who has failed, though in this case he had the sense to discover the failure without tempting the judgment of the public.

Indeed he had already begun to discover his true vocation, for besides his lectures on English literature, which he delivered for three successive winters, he delivered at least one winter a course on economics; and in this course, written in the year 1749, and delivered in the year 1750-51, Smith advocated the doctrines of commercial liberty on which he was nurtured by Hutcheson, and which he was afterwards to do so much to advance. He states this fact himself in a paper read before a learned society in Glasgow in 1755, which afterwards fell into the hands of Dugald Stewart, and from which Stewart extracts a passage or two, which I shall quote in a subsequent chapter. They certainly contain a plain enough statement of the doctrine of natural liberty; and Smith says that a great part of the opinions contained in the paper were "treated of at length in some lectures which I have still by me, and which were written in the hand of a clerk who left my service six years ago" — that is, in 1749 — and adds that "they had all of them been the subjects of lectures which I read at Edinburgh the winter before I left it, and I can adduce innumerable witnesses both from that place and from this who will ascertain them sufficiently to be mine." These ideas of natural liberty in industrial affairs were actively at work, not only in Smith's own mind, but in the minds of others in his immediate circle in Scotland in those years 1749 and 1750. David Hume and James Oswald were then corresponding on the subject, and though it is doubtful whether Smith had seen much or anything of Hume personally at that time (for Hume had been abroad with General St. Clair part of it, and did not live in Edinburgh after his return), it was in those and the two previous years that Smith was first brought into real intellectual contact with his friend and townsman, James Oswald.

Oswald, it may be mentioned, though still a young man — only eight years older than Smith — had already made his mark in Parliament where he sat for their native burgh, and had been made a Commissioner of the Navy in 1745. He had made his mark largely by his mastery of economic subjects, for which Hume said, after paying him a visit at

Dunnikier for a week in 1744, that he had a “great genius,” and “would go far in that way if he persevered.” He became afterwards commissioner of trade and plantations, Lord of the Treasury, and Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and would have certainly gone further but for his premature death in 1768 at the age of fifty-two. Lord Shelburne once strongly advised Lord Bute to make him Chancellor of the Exchequer. Smith thought as highly of Oswald as Hume. He used to “dilate,” says Oswald’s grandson, who heard him, “with a generous and enthusiastic pleasure on the qualifications and merits of Mr. Oswald, candidly avowing at the same time how much information he had received on many points from the enlarged views and profound knowledge of that accomplished statesman.” Dugald Stewart saw a paper written by Smith which described Oswald not only as a man of extensive knowledge of economic subjects, but a man with a special taste and capacity for the discussion of their more general and philosophical aspects. That paper, we cannot help surmising, is the same document of 1755 I have just mentioned in which Smith was proving his early attachment to the doctrines of economic liberty, and would naturally treat of circumstances connected with the growth of his opinions. However that may be, it is certain that Smith and Oswald must have been in communication upon economic questions about that period, and Oswald’s views at that period are contained in the correspondence to which reference has been made.

Early in 1750 David Hume sent Oswald the manuscript of his well-known essay on the Balance of Trade, afterwards published in his *Political Essays* in 1752, asking for his views and criticisms; and Oswald replied on the 10th of October in a long letter, published in the *Caldwell Papers*, which shows him to have been already entirely above the prevailing mercantilist prejudices, and to have very clear conceptions of economic operations. He declares jealousies between nations of being drained of their produce and money to be quite irrational; that could never happen as long as the people and industry remained. The prohibition against exporting commodities and money, he held, had always produced effects directly contrary to what was intended by it. It had diminished cultivation at home instead of increasing it, and really forced the more money out of the country the more produce it prevented from going. Oswald’s letter seems to have been sent on by Hume, together with his own essay, to Baron Mure, who was also interested in such discussions. The new light was thus breaking in on groups of inquirers in Scotland as well as elsewhere, and Smith was from his earliest days within its play.

Amid the more serious labours of these literary and economic lectures, it would be an agreeable relaxation to collect and edit the scattered poems, published and unpublished, of Hamilton of Bangour, the author of what Wordsworth calls the “exquisite ballad” of “The Braes o’ Yarrow,” beginning —

Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride, Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow, Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride, And think no more on the Braes o’ Yarrow.

This ballad had appeared in Allan Ramsay’s *Tea-Table Miscellany* so long ago as 1724, and it was followed by Hamilton’s most ambitious effort, the poem “Contemplation,” in 1739, but the general public of Scotland only seem to have awakened to their merits after the poet espoused the Jacobite cause in 1745, and celebrated the victory of Prestonpans by his “Ode to the Battle of Gladsmuir” — the name the Jacobites preferred to give the battle. This ode, which had been set to music by M’Gibbon, became a great favourite in Jacobite households, and created so much popular interest in the author’s other works that imperfect versions of some of his unpublished poems, and even of those which were already in print, began to appear. The author was himself an outlaw, and could not intervene. The ode which had lifted him into popularity had at the same time driven him into exile, and he was then living with a little group of young Scotch refugees at Rouen, and completely shattered in bodily health by his three months’ hiding among the Grampians. Under those circumstances his friends thought it advisable to forestall the pirated and imperfect collections of his poems which were in contemplation by publishing as complete and correct an edition of them as could possibly be done in the absence of the author. And this edition was issued from the famous Foulis press in Glasgow in 1748. In doing so they acted, as they avow in the preface, “not only without the author’s consent, but without his knowledge,” but it is absurd to call an edition published under those circumstances, as the new *Dictionary of National Biography* calls it, a “surreptitious edition.” It was published by the poet’s closest personal friends as a protection for the poet’s reputation, and perhaps as a plea for his pardon.

The task of collecting and editing the poems was entrusted to Adam Smith. We are informed of this fact by the accurate and learned David Laing, and though Laing has not imparted his authority for the information, it receives a certain circumstantial corroboration from other quarters. We find Smith in the enjoyment of a very rapid intimacy with Hamilton during the two brief years the poet resided in Scotland between

receiving the royal pardon in 1750 and flying again in 1752 from a more relentless enemy than kings — the fatal malady of consumption, from which he died two years later at Lyons. Sir John Dalrymple, the historian, speaks in a letter to Robert Foulis, the printer, of “the many happy and flattering hours which he (Smith) had spent with Mr. Hamilton.” We find again that when Hamilton’s friends propose to print a second edition of the poems, they come to Smith for assistance. This edition was published in 1758, and is dedicated to the memory of William Craufurd, merchant, Glasgow, a friend of the poet mentioned in the preface to the first edition as having supplied many of the previously unpublished pieces which it contained. Craufurd appears to have been an uncle of Sir John Dalrymple, and Sir John asks Foulis to get Smith to write this dedication. “Sir,” says he, in December 1757, “I have changed my mind about the dedication of Mr. Hamilton’s poems. I would have it stand ‘the friend of William Hamilton,’ but I assent to your opinion to have something more to express Mr. Craufurd’s character. I know none so able to do this as my friend Mr. Smith. I beg it, therefore, earnestly that he will write the inscription, and with all the elegance and all the feelingness which he above the rest of mankind is able to express. This is a thing that touches me very nearly, and therefore I beg a particular answer as to what he says to it. The many happy and the many flattering hours which he has spent with Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Craufurd makes me think that he will account his usual indolence a crime upon this occasion. I beg you will make my excuse for not wryting him this night, but then I consider wryting to you upon this head to be wryting to him.” It is unlikely that Smith would resist an appeal like this, and the dedication bears some internal marks of his authorship. It describes Mr. Craufurd as “the friend of Mr. Hamilton, who to that exact frugality, that downright probity and pliancy of manners so suitable to his profession, joined a love of learning and of all the ingenious arts, an openness of hand and a generosity of heart that was far both from vanity and from weakness, and a magnanimity that would support, under the prospect of approaching and inevitable death, a most torturing pain of body with an unalterable cheerfulness of temper, and without once interrupting even to his last hour the most manly and the most vigorous activity of business.” This William Craufurd is confounded by Lord Woodhouselee, and through him by others, with Robert Crauford, the author of “The Bush aboon Traquair,” “Tweedside,” and other poems, who was also an intimate friend of Hamilton of Bangour, but died in 1732.

Another link in the circumstantial evidence corroborating David Laing's statement is the fact that Smith was certainly at the moment in communication with Hamilton's personal friends, at whose instance the volume of poems was published. Kames, who was then interesting himself so actively in Smith's advancement, was the closest surviving friend Hamilton possessed. They had been constant companions in youth, leading spirits of that new school of dandies called "the beaux" — young men at once of fashion and of letters — who adorned Scotch society between the Rebellions, and continued to adorn many an after-dinner table in Edinburgh down till the present century. Hamilton owns that it was Kames who first taught him "verse to criticise," and wrote to him the poem "To H.H. at the Assembly"; while Kames for his part used in his old age, as his neighbour Ramsay of Ochtertyre informs us, to have no greater enjoyment than recounting the scenes and doings he and Hamilton had transacted together in those early days, of which the poet himself writes, when they "kept friendship's holy vigil" in the subterranean taverns of old Edinburgh "full many a fathom deep."

CHAPTER V. PROFESSOR AT GLASGOW

1751-1764. *Aet.* 27-40

The Edinburgh lectures soon bore fruit. On the death of Mr. Loudon, Professor of Logic in Glasgow College, in 1750, Smith was appointed to the vacant chair, and so began that period of thirteen years of active academic work which he always looked back upon, he tells us, “as by far the most useful and therefore by far the happiest and most honourable period” of his life. The appointment lay with the Senatus — or, more strictly, with a section of the Senatus known as the Faculty Professors — some of whom, of course, had been his own teachers ten years before, and knew him well; and the minutes state that the choice was unanimous. He was elected on the 9th of January 1751, and was admitted to the office on the 16th, after reading a dissertation *De origine idearum*, signing the Westminster Confession of Faith before the Presbytery of Glasgow, and taking the usual oath *De fideli* to the University authorities; but he did not begin work till the opening of the next session in October. His engagements in Edinburgh did not permit of his undertaking his duties in Glasgow earlier, and his classes were accordingly conducted, with the sanction of the Senatus, by Dr. Hercules Lindsay, the Professor of Jurisprudence, as his substitute, from the beginning of January till the end of June. During this interval Smith went through to Glasgow repeatedly to attend meetings of the Senatus, but he does not appear to have given any lectures to the students. If he was relieved of his duties in the summer, however, he worked double tides during the winter, for besides the work of his own class, he undertook to carry on at the same time the work of Professor Craigie of the Moral Philosophy chair, who was laid aside by ill health, and indeed died a few weeks after the commencement of the session. This double burden was no doubt alleviated by the circumstance that he was able in both the class-rooms to make very considerable use of the courses of lectures he had already delivered in Edinburgh. By the traditional distribution of academic subjects in the Scotch universities, the province of the chair of Logic included rhetoric and belles-lettres, and the province of the chair of Moral Philosophy included jurisprudence and politics, and as Smith had lectured in Edinburgh both on rhetoric and belles-lettres and on jurisprudence and politics, he naturally took those branches for the

subjects of his lectures this first session at Glasgow. Professor John Millar, the author of the *Historical View of the English Government* and other works of great merit, was a member of Smith's logic class that year, having been induced, by the high reputation the new professor brought with him from Edinburgh, to take out the class a second time, although he had already completed his university curriculum; and Millar states that most of the session was occupied with "the delivery of a system of rhetoric and belles-lettres." In respect to the other class, jurisprudence and politics were specially suggested to him as the subjects for the year when he was asked to take Professor Craigie's place. The proposal came through Professor Cullen, who was probably Craigie's medical attendant, and Cullen suggested those particular subjects as being the most likely to suit Smith's convenience and save him labour, inasmuch as he had lectured on them already. Smith replied that these were the subjects which it would be most agreeable to him to take up.

Edinburgh, *3rd Sept. 1751*.

Dear Sir — I received yours this moment. I am very glad that Mr. Craigie has at last resolved to go to Lisbon. I make no doubt but he will soon receive all the benefit he expects or can wish from the warmer climate. I shall, with great pleasure, do what I can to relieve him of the burden of his class. You mention natural jurisprudence and politics as the parts of his lectures which it would be most agreeable for me to take upon me to teach. I shall very willingly undertake both. I shall be glad to know when he sets out for Lisbon, because if it is not before the first of October I would endeavour to see him before he goes, that I might receive his advice about the plan I ought to follow. I would pay great deference to it in everything, and would follow it implicitly in this, as I shall consider myself as standing in his place and representing him. If he goes before that time I wish he would leave some directions for me, either with you or with Mr. Leechman, were it only by word of mouth. — I am, dear doctor, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

Smith would begin work at Glasgow on the 10th of October, and before the middle of November he and Cullen were already deeply immersed in quite a number of little schemes for the equipment of the College. There was first of all the affair of the vacancy in the Moral Philosophy chair, which was anticipated to occur immediately through the death of Mr. Craigie — referred to in the following letter as "the event we are afraid of." This vacancy Cullen and Smith were desirous of

seeing filled up by the translation of Smith from the Logic to the Moral Philosophy chair, and the Principal (Dr. Neil Campbell) seems to have concurred in that proposal, and to have mentioned Smith's name with approbation to the Duke of Argyle, who, though without any power over the appointment to any except the Crown chairs, took much interest in, and was believed to exercise much influence over, the appointment to all. This was the Duke Archibald — better known by his earlier title of the Earl of Islay — who was often called the King of Scotland, because he practically ruled the affairs of Scotland in the first half of last century, very much as Dundas did in the second. Smith seems to have gone through to Edinburgh to push his views with the Duke, and to have waited on him and been introduced to him at his levee.

Then there was the affair of Hume's candidature for the Logic chair, contingent on Smith's appointment to the other. There was the affair of the Principal's possible retirement, with, no doubt, some plan in reserve for the reversion, probably in favour of Professor Leechman, mentioned in the previous letter, who did in the event succeed to it. Then there was Cullen's "own affair," which Smith was promoting in Edinburgh through Lord Kames (then Mr. Home), and which probably concerned a method of purifying salt Cullen had then invented, and wanted to secure a premium for. At any rate, Lord Kames did speak to the Duke of Argyle on this subject in Cullen's behalf a few months later.

While immersed in this multiplicity of affairs Smith wrote Cullen the following letter: —

Edin., *Tuesday, November 1751*.

Dear Sir — I did not write to you on Saturday as I promised, because I was every moment expecting Mr. Home to town. He is not, however, yet come.

I should prefer David Hume to any man for the College, but I am afraid the public would not be of my opinion, and the interest of the society will oblige us to have some regard to the opinion of the public. If the event, however, we are afraid of should happen we can see how the public receives it. From the particular knowledge I have of Mr. Elliot's sentiments, I am pretty certain Mr. Lindsay must have proposed it to him, not he to Mr. Lindsay. I am ever obliged to you for your concern for my interest in that affair.

When I saw you at Edinburgh you talked to me of the Principal's proposing to retire. I gave little attention to it at that time, but upon further consideration should be glad to listen to any proposal of that kind. The reasons of my changing my opinion I shall tell you at meeting.

I need not recommend secrecy to you upon this head. Be so good as to thank the Principal in my name for his kindness in mentioning me to the Duke. I waited on him at his levee at Edinburgh, when I was introduced to him by Mr. Lind, but it seems he had forgot.

I can tell you nothing particular about your own affair more than what I wrote you last till I see Mr. Home, whom I expect every moment. — I am, most dear sir, ever yours,

A. Smith.

The event they were afraid of happened on the 27th of November, and Smith was, without any opposition, appointed Craigie's successor on the 29th of April 1752. It would appear from this letter as if Cullen had heard from his colleague, Professor Lindsay, of a possible rival to Smith for that chair in the person of Mr. Elliot — no doubt Mr. Gilbert Elliot, a man of brilliant parts and accomplishments, who afterwards attained high political eminence as Sir Gilbert Elliot, but who was at this time a young advocate at the Edinburgh bar, with no liking for law and a great liking for letters and philosophy. Smith, however, who was a personal friend of Elliot's, knew that the latter had no such designs, and eventually his own candidature was unopposed. But in anticipation of this result, the keenest contest was carried on all winter over the election to the Logic chair, which he was to leave. David Hume came forward as a candidate, and there is an erroneous, though curiously well-supported tradition that Edmund Burke was a candidate also. One of Burke's biographers, Bisset, states that Burke actually applied for the post, but applied too late. Another of his biographers, Prior, says that Burke being in Scotland at the time, took some steps for the place, but finding his chances hopeless, withdrew; while Professor Jardine, a subsequent occupier of the chair himself, asserts that Burke was thought of by some of the electors, but never really came forward. But Smith, who was not only the previous occupant of the office, but, as Professor of Moral Philosophy, was one of the electors of his successor, stated explicitly to Dugald Stewart (as Stewart wrote to Prior) "that the story was extremely current, but he knew of no evidence on which it rested, and he suspected it took its rise entirely from an opinion which he had himself expressed at Glasgow upon the publication of Burke's book on the *Sublime and Beautiful*, that the author of that book would be a great acquisition to the College if he would accept of a chair." Had anything been known in Glasgow of Burke's candidature for a chair there five years before, it would unquestionably be recollected on the occasion of the publication of so notable a work, but Burke's very name was so unfamiliar to the

circle interested in the election that when Hume first met him in London in 1759, he mentions him in a letter to Smith as “a Mr. Burke, an Irish gentleman who has written a very pretty book on the *Sublime and Beautiful*.”

The interest of the contest is sufficiently great from the candidature of one philosopher of the first rank, and to Smith himself — already that philosopher’s very close friend — it must have been engrossing. It will be observed that in his letter to Cullen he expresses himself with great caution on the subject. He is quite alive to the fact that the appointment of a notorious sceptic like Hume might be so unpopular with the Scottish public as to injure the interests of the University. But when Hume came forward Cullen threw himself heart and soul into his cause, as we know from Hume’s own acknowledgments; and if Cullen and Smith are found acting in concert at the initiation of the candidature, it is not likely that Smith lagged behind Cullen in the prosecution of the canvass, though nothing remains to give us any decisive information on the point. Their exertions failed, however, in consequence, Hume himself always believed, of the interference of the Duke of Argyle, and the chair was given to a young licentiate of the Church named Clow, who was at the time entirely unknown, and indeed never afterwards established any manner of public reputation.

Smith’s preference for the Moral Philosophy chair came mainly no doubt from preference for the subjects he would be called upon to teach in it, but the emoluments also seem to have been somewhat better, for Smith was expressly required, as a condition of acceptance of the office, to content himself until the 10th of October of that year (the opening day of the new session) “with the salary and emoluments of his present profession of Logic,” even though he might be actually admitted to the other professorship before that date. It must not be supposed, however, that the emoluments of his new office were by any means very lordly. They accrued partly from a moderate endowment and partly from the fees paid by the students who attended the lectures — a principle of academic payment which Smith always considered the best, because it made the lecturer’s income largely dependent on his diligence and success in his work. The endowment was probably no more than that of the Mathematical chair, and the endowment of the Mathematical chair was £72 a year. The fees probably never exceeded £100, or even came up to that figure, for Dr. Thomas Reid, Smith’s successor in the Moral Philosophy chair, writes an Aberdeen friend, after two years’ experience of Glasgow, that he had more students than Smith ever had, and had

already touched £70 of fees, but expected, when all the students arrived, to make £100 that session. The income from fees in the Scotch chairs in last century seems to have been subject to considerable variations from session to session. A bad harvest would sometimes tell seriously on the attendance, and a great crisis like that of 1772, when the effects of a succession of bad harvests were aggravated by ruinous mercantile speculations, deprived Adam Ferguson in the Edinburgh Moral Philosophy chair of half his usual income from fees. It may also be mentioned as a curious circumstance that in those days a professor used to lose regularly many pounds a year by light money. When Lord Brougham, as a young student of chemistry in Edinburgh, paid his fee to Black, the great chemist weighed the guineas carefully on a weighing machine he had on the table before him, and observed in explanation, "I am obliged to weigh when strange students come, there being a very large number who bring light guineas, so that I should be defrauded of many pounds every year if I did not act in self-defence against this class of students."

Smith kept an occasional boarder in his house, and would of course make a trifle by that, but his regular income from his class work would not exceed £170 a year. £170 a year, however, was a very respectable income at a period when, as was the case in 1750, only twenty-nine ministers in all broad Scotland had as much as £100 a year, and the highest stipend in the Church was only £138.

Besides his salary Smith had a house in the College — one of those new manses in the Professors' Court which Glasgow people at the time considered very grand; and though the circumstance is trifling, it is a little curious that he changed his house three times in the course of his thirteen years' professorship. It was the custom when a house fell vacant for the professors to get their choice of it in the order of their academical seniority. There seems to have been no compulsion about the step, so that it is not beneath noticing that Smith should in so short a term have elected to make the three removes which proverbial wisdom deprecates. When his friend Cullen was translated to Edinburgh in 1756, Smith, who was next in seniority, having been made professor in Glasgow a few months after the eminent physician, removed to Cullen's house; then he quitted this house in 1757 for the house of Dr. Dick, Professor of Natural Philosophy, who died in that year; and he left Dick's house in turn for Dr. Leechman's, on the promotion of that divine to the Principalship in 1762. These houses are now demolished with the rest of the old College of Glasgow, so that we cannot mark the gradation of comfort that may have

determined these successive changes; and besides they may have been determined by no positive preference of the economist himself, but by the desires of his mother and his aunt, Miss Jane Douglas, who both lived with him in Glasgow, and whose smallest wishes it was the highest ambition of his affectionate nature to gratify.

In Smith's day there were only some 300 students at Glasgow College in all, and the Moral Philosophy chair alone had never more than 80 or 90 in the public class and 20 in the private. The public class did not mean a free class, as it does on the Continent; it really was the dearer of the two, the fee in the private class being only a guinea, while the fee of the public class was a guinea and a half. The public class was the ordinary class taken for graduation and other purposes, and obligatory by academic authority; the private was a special class, undertaken, with the permission of the Senatus, for those who wished to push the subject further; and to harmonise this account of them with what has been previously said of the income Smith drew from fees, it is necessary to explain that many of the students who attended these classes paid no fees, according to a custom which still prevails in Scotch universities, and by which one was considered a *civis* of a class he had attended for two years, and might thereafter attend it whenever he chose without charge. Many in this way attended the Moral Philosophy class four or five years, and among them, as Dr. Reid informs us, quite a number of preachers and advanced students of divinity and law, before whom, the worthy doctor confesses, he used to stand in awe to speak without the most careful preparation.

The College session was then longer than it is now, extending from the 10th of October to the 10th of June, and the classes began at once earlier in the morning and continued later at night. Smith commenced his labours before daybreak by his public class from 7.30 to 8.30 A.M.; he then held at 11 A.M. an hour's examination on the lecture he delivered in the morning, though to this examination only a third of the students of the morning class were in the habit of coming; and he met with his private class twice a week on a different subject at 12. Besides these engagements Smith seems to have occasionally read for an hour like a tutor with special pupils; at least one is led to infer so much from the remarks of a former pupil, who, under the *nom de plume* of Ascanius, writes his reminiscences of his old master to the editor of the *Bee* in June 1791. This writer says that he went to Glasgow College after he had gone through the classes at St. Andrews, Edinburgh, and even Oxford, in order that he might, "after the manner of the ancients, walk in the porticoes of

Glasgow with Smith and with Millar, and be imbued with the principles of jurisprudence and law and philosophy"; and then he adds: "I passed most of my time at Glasgow with those two first-rate men, and Smith read private lectures to me on jurisprudence, and accompanied them with his commentaries in conversation, exercises which I hope will give a colour and a substance to my sentiments and to my reason that will be eternal."

There is no difficulty in identifying this enthusiastic disciple with the eccentric and bustling Earl of Buchan, the elder brother of Lord Chancellor Erskine, and of the witty and greatly beloved Harry Erskine of the Scotch bar, and the subject of the Duchess of Gordon's well-known *mot*: "The wit of your lordship's family has come by the mother, and been all settled on the younger branches." We know that this Earl of Buchan was a contributor to the *Bee* under various fictitious signatures, because he has himself republished some of his contributions, and we know that he attended Smith's class at Glasgow, because he says so in a letter to Pinkerton, the historian, mentioning having seen in Smith's library at that time a book of which Pinkerton could not find a single copy remaining anywhere — the memoirs of Lockhart of Lee, Cromwell's ambassador to France, which had been suppressed (as the Earl had been told by his maternal uncle, Sir James Steuart, the economist) at the instance of Lockhart, the famous advocate, afterwards Lord Covington, because the family had turned Jacobite, and disliked the association with the Commonwealth. The Earl gives the year of his attendance at Glasgow as 1760, but he must have continued there more than one session, for he attended Millar's lectures as well as Smith's, and Millar was not there till the session 1761-62; and it is on the whole most likely that this is the very young nobleman whom Dr. Alexander Carlyle met in company with Smith at a large supper party in April 1763, and concerning whom he mentions that he himself whispered after a little to Smith that he wondered how he could set this young man so high who appeared to be so foolish, and Smith answered, "We know that perfectly, but he is the only lord in our College."

It will be observed that Lord Buchan says Smith *read* private lectures to him. Smith's public lectures he was not accustomed to read in any of his classes, but he seems to have found it more convenient in teaching a single pupil to read them, and interpose oral comments and illustrations as he went along. Others of Smith's old students besides Lord Buchan express their obligations to the conversations they were privileged to have with him. Dugald Stewart, Brougham informs us, used to decline to

see his students, because he found them too disputatious, and he disliked disputing with them about the correctness of the doctrines he taught. But Smith, by all accounts, was extremely accessible, and was even in the habit of seeking out the abler men among them, inviting them to his house, discussing with them the subjects of his lectures or any other subject, and entering sympathetically into their views and plans of life. John Millar, having occasion to mention Smith's name in his *Historical View of the English Government*, takes the opportunity to say: "I am happy to acknowledge the obligations I feel myself under to this illustrious philosopher by having at an early period of life had the benefit of his lectures on the history of civil society, and enjoying his unreserved conversation on the same subject."

Millar, it may be added, was one of Smith's favourite pupils, and after obtaining the chair of Jurisprudence in his old College, one of his chief associates, and Smith held so high an opinion of Millar's unique powers as a stimulating teacher that he sent his cousin, David Douglas, to Glasgow College for no other purpose but to have the advantage of the lectures and conversation of Millar. Jeffrey used to say that the most bracing exercises a student in Glasgow underwent in those days were the supper disputations at Professor Millar's house, and that, able and learned as his works are, "they revealed nothing of that magical vivacity which made his conversation and his lectures still more full of delight than of instruction." Though he always refused to accept Smith's doctrine of free trade, Millar was the most effective and influential apostle of Liberalism in Scotland in that age, and Jeffrey's father could never forgive himself for having put his son to Glasgow, where, though he was strictly forbidden to enter Millar's class-room, "the mere vicinity of Millar's influence" had sent him back a Liberal.

Now it is this interesting and famous lecturer from whom we obtain the fullest account of Smith's qualities as a lecturer and of the substance of his lectures.

"In the professorship of logic," he says, "to which Mr. Smith was appointed on his first introduction into this University, he soon saw the necessity of departing widely from the plan that had been followed by his predecessors, and of directing the attention of his pupils to studies of a more interesting and useful nature than the logic and metaphysics of the schools. Accordingly, after exhibiting a general view of the powers of the mind, and explaining as much of the ancient logic as was requisite to gratify curiosity with respect to an artificial method of reasoning which had once occupied the universal attention of the learned, he dedicated all

the rest of his time to the delivering of a system of rhetoric and belles-lettres."

In moral philosophy "his course of lectures," says Millar, "was divided into four parts. The first contained natural theology, in which he considered the proofs of the being and attributes of God, and those principles of the human mind upon which religion is founded. The second comprehended ethics, strictly so called, and consisted chiefly of the doctrines which he afterwards published in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. In the third part he treated at more length of that branch of morality which relates to *justice*, and which, being susceptible of precise and accurate rules, is for that reason capable of a full and particular explanation.

"Upon this subject he followed the plan that seems to be suggested by Montesquieu, endeavouring to trace the gradual progress of jurisprudence, both public and private, from the rudest to the most refined ages, and to point out the effects of those arts which contribute to subsistence and to the accumulation of property, in producing correspondent improvements or alterations in law and government. This important branch of his labours he also intended to give to the public; but this intention, which is mentioned in the conclusion of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, he did not live to fulfil.

"In the last of his lectures he examined those political regulations which are founded, not upon the principle of *justice* but that of *expediency*, and which are calculated to increase the riches, the power, and the prosperity of a state. Under this view he considered the political institutions relating to commerce, to finances, to ecclesiastical and military establishments. What he delivered on those subjects contained the substance of the work he afterwards published under the title of *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*."

Under the third part were no doubt included those lectures on the history of civil society to which Millar expresses such deep obligation, and of which another pupil of Smith's, Professor Richardson of the Humanity chair in Glasgow — a minor poet of considerable acceptance in his day — also speaks with lively gratitude, particularly of those "on the nature of those political institutions that succeeded the downfall of the Roman Empire, and which included an historical account of the rise and progress of the most conspicuous among the modern European governments."

Richardson tells us, too, that Smith gave courses of lectures on taste, on the history of philosophy, and on belles-lettres, apparently continuing

to utilise his old lectures on this last subject occasionally even after his translation from the chair to which they properly appertained, and that he was very fond of digressing into literary criticism from his lectures on any subject. “Those who received instruction from Dr. Smith,” says Richardson, “will recollect with much satisfaction many of those incidental and digressive illustrations and discussions, not only in morality but in criticism, which were delivered by him with animated and extemporaneous eloquence as they were suggested in the course of question and answer. They occurred likewise, with much display of learning and knowledge, in his occasional explanations of those philosophical works, which were also a very useful and important subject of examination in the class of moral philosophy.”

His characteristics as a lecturer are thus described by Millar: —

“There was no situation in which the abilities of Mr. Smith appeared to greater advantage than as a professor. In delivering his lectures he trusted almost entirely to extemporary elocution. His manner, though not graceful, was plain and unaffected, and as he seemed to be always interested in the subject, he never failed to interest his hearers. Each discourse consisted commonly of several distinct propositions, which he successively endeavoured to prove and illustrate. These propositions when announced in general terms had, from their extent, not unfrequently something of the air of a paradox. In his attempts to explain them, he often appeared at first not to be sufficiently possessed of the subject, and spoke with some hesitation. As he advanced, however, his manner became warm and animated, and his expression easy and fluent. On points susceptible of controversy you could easily discern that he secretly conceived an opposition to his opinions, and that he was led upon this account to support them with greater energy and vehemence. By the fulness and variety of his illustrations the subject gradually swelled in his hands and acquired a dimension which, without a tedious repetition of the same views, was calculated to seize the attention of his audience, and to afford them pleasure as well as instruction in following the same subject through all the diversity of shades and aspects in which it was presented, and afterwards in tracing it backwards to that original proposition or general truth from which this beautiful train of speculation had proceeded.”

One little peculiarity in his manner of lecturing was mentioned to the late Archdeacon Sinclair by Archibald Alison the elder, apparently as Alison heard it from Smith’s own lips. He used to acknowledge that in lecturing he was more dependent than most professors on the sympathy

of his hearers, and he would sometimes select one of his students, who had more mobile and expressive features than the rest, as an unsuspecting gauge of the extent to which he carried with him the intelligence and interest of the class. “During one whole session,” he said, “a certain student with a plain but expressive countenance was of great use to me in judging of my success. He sat conspicuously in front of a pillar: I had him constantly under my eye. If he leant forward to listen all was right, and I knew that I had the ear of my class; but if he leant back in an attitude of listlessness I felt at once that all was wrong, and that I must change either the subject or the style of my address.”

The great majority of his students were young men preparing for the Presbyterian ministry, a large contingent of them — quite a third of the whole — being Irish dissenters who were unfairly excluded from the university of their own country, but appear to have been no very worthy accession to the University of Glasgow. We know of no word of complaint against them from Smith, but they were a sore trial both to Hutcheson and to Reid. Reid says he always felt in lecturing to those “stupid Irish teagues” as St. Anthony must have felt when he preached to the fishes, and Hutcheson writes a friend in the north of Ireland that his Irish students were far above taking any interest in their work, and that although he had “five or six young gentlemen from Edinburgh, men of fortune and fine genius, studying law, these Irishmen thought them poor bookworms.” Smith had probably even more of this stamp of law students than Hutcheson. Henry Erskine attended his class on jurisprudence as well as his elder brother. Boswell was there in 1759, and was made very proud by the certificate he received from his professor at the close of the session, stating that he, Mr. James Boswell, was “happily possessed of a facility of manners.” After the publication of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, students came even from a greater distance. Lord Shelburne, who was an enthusiastic admirer of that work, sent his younger brother, the Honourable Thomas Fitzmaurice, for a year or two to study under Smith, before sending him to Oxford in 1761 to read law with Sir William Blackstone. Mr. Fitzmaurice, who married the Countess of Orkney, and is the progenitor of the present Orkney family, rose to a considerable political position, and would have risen higher but for falling into ill health in the prime of life and remaining a complete invalid till his death in 1793, but he never forgot the years he spent as a student in Smith’s class and a boarder in Smith’s house. Dr. Currie, the well-known author of the *Life of Burns*, was his medical attendant in his latter years, and Dr. Currie says his conversation always turned back to

his early life, and particularly to the pleasant period he had spent under Smith's roof in Glasgow. Currie has not, however, recorded any reminiscences of those conversations. Two Russian students came in 1762, and Smith had twice to give them an advance of £20 apiece from the College funds, because their remittances had got stopped by the war. Tronchin, the eminent physician of Geneva, the friend of Voltaire, the enemy of Rousseau, sent his son to Glasgow in 1761 purposely "to study under Mr. Smith," as we learn from a letter of introduction to Baron Mure which the young man received before starting from Colonel Edmonston of Newton, who was at the time resident in Geneva. It was of Tronchin Voltaire said, "He is a great physician, he knows the mind," and he must have formed a high idea of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* to send his son so far to attend the lectures of its author. It was this young man who, on his way back from Glasgow, played a certain undesigned part in originating the famous quarrel between Rousseau and Hume, of which we shall have more to hear anon. He was living with Professor Rouet of Glasgow, at Miss Elliot's lodging-house in London, when Hume brought Rousseau there in January 1866, and the moment Rousseau saw the son of his old enemy established in the house to which he was conducted, he flew to the conclusion that young Tronchin was there as a spy, and that the good and benevolent Hume was weaving some infernal web about him.

Smith's popularity as a lecturer grew year by year. It was felt that another and perhaps greater Hutcheson had risen in the College. Reid, when he came to Glasgow to succeed him in 1764, wrote his friend Dr. Skene in Aberdeen that there was a great spirit of inquiry abroad among the young people in Glasgow — the best testimony that could be rendered of the effect of Smith's teaching. It had taught the young people to think. His opinions became the subjects of general discussion, the branches he lectured on became fashionable in the town, the sons of the wealthier citizens used to go to College to take his class though they had no intention of completing a university course, stucco busts of him appeared in the booksellers' windows, and the very peculiarities of his voice and pronunciation received the homage of imitation. One point alone caused a little — in certain quarters not a little — shaking of heads, we are told by John Ramsay of Ochtertyre. The distinguished professor was a friend of "Hume the atheist"; he was himself ominously reticent on religious subjects; he did not conduct a Sunday class on Christian evidences like Hutcheson; he would often too be seen openly smiling during divine service in his place in the College chapel (as in his absent

way he might no doubt be prone to do); and it is even stated by Ramsay that he petitioned the Senatus on his first appointment in Glasgow to be relieved of the duty of opening his class with prayer, and the petition was rejected; that his opening prayers were always thought to "savour strongly of natural religion"; that his lectures on natural theology were too flattering to human pride, and induced "presumptuous striplings to draw an unwarranted conclusion, viz. that the great truths of theology, together with the duties which man owes to God and his neighbours, may be discovered by the light of nature without any special revelation," as if it were a fault to show religious truth to be natural, for fear young men should believe it too easily. No record of the alleged petition about the opening prayers and its refusal remains in the College minutes, and the story is probably nothing but a morsel of idle gossip unworthy of attention, except as an indication of the atmosphere of jealous and censorious theological vigilance in which Smith and his brother professors were then obliged to do their work.

In his lectures on jurisprudence and politics he had taught the doctrine of free trade from the first, and not the least remarkable result of his thirteen years' work in Glasgow was that before he left he had practically converted that city to his views. Dugald Stewart was explicitly informed by Mr. James Ritchie, one of the most eminent Clyde merchants of that time, that Smith had, during his professorship in Glasgow, made many of the leading men of the place convinced proselytes of free trade principles. Sir James Steuart of Coltness, the well-known economist, used, after his return from his long political exile in 1763, to take a great practical interest in trying to enlighten his Glasgow neighbours on the economical problems that were rising about them, and having embraced the dying cause in economics as well as in politics, he sought hard to enlist them in favour of protection, but he frankly confesses that he grew sick of repeating arguments for protection to these "Glasgow theorists," as he calls them, because he found that Smith had already succeeded in persuading them completely in favour of a free importation of corn. Sir James Steuart was a most persuasive talker; Smith himself said he understood Sir James's system better from his talk than from his books, and those Glasgow merchants must have obtained from Smith's expositions a very clear and complete hold indeed of the doctrines of commercial freedom, when Steuart failed to shake it, and was fain to leave such theorists to their theories. Long before the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*, therefore, the new light was shining clearly from Smith's chair in Glasgow College, and winning its first converts in the

practical world. One can accordingly well understand the emotion with which J.B. Say sat in this chair when he visited Glasgow in 1815, and after a short prayer said with great fervour, “Lord, let now thy servant depart in peace.”

Dugald Stewart further states, on the authority of gentlemen who were students in the moral philosophy class at Glasgow in 1752 or 1753, that Smith delivered so early as that lectures containing the fundamental principles of the *Wealth of Nations*; and in 1755 — the year Cantillon’s *Essai* first saw the light, and the year before Quesnay published his first economic writing — Smith was not only expounding his system of natural liberty to his students, but publicly asserting his claim to the authorship of that system in a Glasgow Economic Society — perhaps the first economic club established anywhere. The paper in which Smith vindicates this claim came somehow into the possession of Dugald Stewart, and so escaped the fire to which Smith committed all his other papers before his death, but it is believed to have been destroyed by Stewart’s son, very possibly after his father’s directions. For Stewart thought it would be improper to publish the complete manuscript, because it would revive personal differences which had better remain in oblivion, and consequently our knowledge of its contents is confined to the few sentences which he has thought right to quote as a valuable evidence of the progress of Smith’s political ideas at that very early period. It will be observed that, as far as we can collect from so small a fragment of his discourse, he presents the doctrine of natural liberty in a more extreme form than it came to wear after twenty years more of thought in the *Wealth of Nations*. Stewart says that many of the most important opinions in the *Wealth of Nations* are detailed in this document, but he cites only the following: —

“Man is generally considered by statesmen and projectors as the materials of a sort of political mechanics. Projectors disturb nature in the course of her operations on human affairs, and it requires no more than to leave her alone and give her fair play in the pursuit of her ends that she may establish her own designs.... Little else is required to carry a state to the highest degree of affluence from the lowest barbarism but peace, easy taxes, and a tolerable administration of justice; all the rest being brought about by the natural course of things. All governments which thwart this natural course, which force things into another channel, or which endeavour to arrest the progress of society at a particular point, are unnatural, and, to support themselves, are obliged to be oppressive and tyrannical.... A great part of the opinions enumerated

in this paper is treated of at length in some lectures which I have still by me, and which were written in the hand of a clerk who left my service six years ago. They have all of them been the constant subjects of my lectures since I first taught Mr. Craigie's class the first winter I spent in Glasgow down to this day without any considerable variations. They had all of them been the subjects of lectures which I read at Edinburgh the winter before I left it, and I can adduce innumerable witnesses both from that place and from this who will ascertain them sufficiently to be mine."

The distinction drawn in the last sentence between *that* place, Edinburgh, and *this* place, shows that the paper was read to a society in Glasgow. Smith was a member of two societies there, of which I shall presently have something more to say, the Literary Society and a society which we may call the Economic, because it met for the discussion of economic subjects, though we do not know its precise name, if it had any. Now this paper of Smith's was not read to the Literary Society — at least, it is not included in the published list of papers read by it — and we may therefore conclude that it was read to the Economic Society.

Nothing is now known of the precise circumstances in which the paper originated, except what Stewart tells us, that Smith "was anxious to establish his exclusive right" to "certain leading principles both political and literary," "in order to prevent the possibility of some rival claims which he thought he had reason to apprehend, and to which his situation as a professor, added to his unreserved communications in private companies, rendered him peculiarly liable"; and that he expressed himself "with a good deal of that honest and indignant warmth which is perhaps unavoidable by a man who is conscious of the purity of his intentions when he suspects that advantages have been taken of the frankness of his temper." It would appear that some one, who had got hold of Smith's ideas through attending his class or frequenting his company, either had published them, or was believed to be going to publish them as his own.

The writer of the obituary notice of Smith in the *Monthly Review* for 1790 alleges that in this Glasgow period Smith lived in such constant apprehension of being robbed of his ideas that, if he saw any of his students take notes of his lectures, he would instantly stop him and say, "I hate scribblers." But this is directly contradicted by the account of Professor John Millar, who, as we have seen, was a student in Smith's classes himself, and who expressly states both that the permission to take notes was freely given by Smith to his students, and that the privilege was the occasion of frequent abuse. "From the permission given to

students of taking notes," says Millar, "many observations and opinions contained in these lectures (the lectures on rhetoric and belles-lettres) have either been detailed in separate dissertations or engrossed in general collections which have since been given to the public." In those days manuscript copies of a popular professor's lectures, transcribed from his students' notebooks, were often kept for sale in the booksellers' shops. Blair's lectures on rhetoric, for example, were for years in general circulation in this intermediate state, and it was the publication of his criticism on Addison, taken from one of the unauthorised transcripts, in Kippis's *Biographia Britannica*, that at length instigated Blair to give his lectures to the press himself. A professor was thus always liable to have his unpublished thought appropriated by another author without any acknowledgment at all, or published in such an imperfect form that he would hardly care to acknowledge it himself. If Smith, therefore, exhibited a jealousy over his rights to his own thought, as has been suggested, Millar's observation shows him to have had at any rate frequent cause; but neither at that time of his life nor any other was he animated by an undue or unreasonable jealousy of this sort such as he has sometimes been accused of; and if in 1755 he took occasion to resent with "honest and indignant warmth" a violation of his rights, there must have been some special provocation.

Mr. James Bonar suggests that this manifesto of 1755 was directed against Adam Ferguson, but that is not probable. Ferguson's name, it is true, will readily occur in such a connection, because Dr. Carlyle tells us that when he published his *History of Civil Society* in 1767 Smith accused him of having borrowed some of his ideas without owning them, and that Ferguson replied that he had borrowed nothing from Smith, but much from some French source unnamed where Smith had been before him. But, however this may have been in 1767, it is unlikely that Ferguson was the occasion of offence in 1755. Up till that year he was generally living abroad with the regiment of which he was chaplain, and it is not probable that he had begun his *History* before his return to Scotland, or that he had time between his return and the composition of Smith's manifesto to do or project anything to occasion such a remonstrance. Then he is found on the friendliest footing with Smith in the years immediately following the manifesto, and Stewart's allusion to the circumstances implies a graver breach than could be healed so summarily. Besides, had Ferguson been the cause of offence, Stewart would have probably avoided the subject altogether in a paper to the Royal Society, of which Ferguson was still an active member.

CHAPTER VI. THE COLLEGE ADMINISTRATOR

A common misconception regarding Smith is that he was as helpless as a child in matters of business. One of his Edinburgh neighbours remarked of him to Robert Chambers that it was strange a man who wrote so well on exchange and barter was obliged to get a friend to buy his horse corn for him. This idea of his helplessness in the petty transactions of life arose from observing his occasional fits of absence and his habitual simplicity of character, but his simplicity, nobody denies, was accompanied by exceptional acuteness and practical sagacity, and his fits of absence seem to have been neither so frequent nor so prolonged as they are commonly represented. Samuel Rogers spent most of a week with him in Edinburgh the year before his death, and did not remark his absence of mind all the time. Anyhow, during his thirteen years' residence at Glasgow College, Smith seems to have had more to do with the business of the College, petty or important, than any other professor, and his brethren in the Senate of that University cannot have seen in him any marked failing or incapacity for ordinary business. They threw on his shoulders an ample share of the committee and general routine work of the place, and set him to audit accounts, or inspect the drains in the College court, or see the holly hedge in the College garden uprooted, or to examine the encroachments on the College lands on the Molendinar Burn, without any fear of his forgetting his business on the way. They entrusted him for years with the post of College Quæstor or Treasurer, in which inattention or the want of sound business habits might inflict injury even on their pecuniary interests. They made him one of the two curators of the College chambers, the forty lodgings provided for students inside the College gates. And when there was any matter of business that was a little troublesome or delicate to negotiate, they seem generally to have chosen Smith for their chief spokesman or representative. It was then very common for Scotch students to bring with them from home at the beginning of the session as much oatmeal as would keep them till the end of it, and by an ancient privilege of the University they were entitled to bring this meal with them into the city without requiring to pay custom on it; but in 1757 those students were obliged by the tacksman of the meal-market to pay custom on their meal, though it was meant for their own use alone. Smith was appointed along

with Professor Muirhead to go and represent to the Provost that the exaction was a violation of the privileges of the University, and to demand repayment within eight days, under pain of legal proceedings. And at the next meeting of Senate "Mr. Smith reported that he had spoken to the Provost of Glasgow about the ladles exacted by the town from students for meal brought into the town for their own use, and that the Provost promised to cause what had been exacted to be returned, and that accordingly the money was offered by the town's ladler to the students."

Smith was often entrusted with College business to transact in Edinburgh — to arrange with Andrew Stuart, W.S., about promoting a bill in Parliament, or to wait on the Barons of Exchequer and get the College accounts passed; and he was generally the medium of communication between the Senatus and the authorities of Balliol College during their long and troublesome contentions about the Snell property and the Snell exhibitioners.

He was Quæstor from 1758 till he left in 1764, and in that capacity had the management of the library funds and some other funds, his duties being subsequently divided between the factor and the librarian. The professors, we are told by Professor Dickson, used to take this office in turn for a term of two or three years, but Smith held the office longer than the customary term, and on the 19th of May 1763 the Senate agreed that "as Dr. Smith has long executed the office of Quæstor, he is allowed to take the assistance of an amanuensis." He was Dean of Faculty from 1760 to 1762, and as such not only exercised a general supervision over the studies of the College and the granting of degrees, but was one of the three visitors charged with seeing that the whole business of the College was administered according to the statutes of 1727. While still filling these two offices, he was in 1762 appointed to the additional and important business office of Vice-Rector, by his personal friend Sir Thomas Miller, the Lord-Advocate of Scotland (afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session), who was Rector of the University that year. As Sir Thomas Miller was generally absent in consequence of his public engagements in London or his professional engagements in Edinburgh, Smith as Vice-Rector had to preside over all University meetings — meetings of the Senatus, of the Comitia, of the Rector's Court — at a time when this duty was rendered delicate by the contentions which prevailed among the professors. The Rector's Court, it may be added — which consisted of the Rector and professors — was a judiciary as well as administrative body, which at one time possessed the

power of life and death, and according to the Parliamentary Report of 1829, actually inflicted imprisonment in the College steeple on several delinquents within the preceding fifty years. It may be mentioned that some time elapsed after Sir Thomas Miller's election to the Rectorship before he was able to appoint a Vice-Rector, because he could not appoint a Vice-Rector till he was himself admitted, and he could not attend personally to be admitted on account of engagements elsewhere. During this interval Smith was elected præses of the University meetings by the choice of his colleagues, and as the position was at the time one of considerable difficulty, they would not be likely to select for it a man of decided business incapacity.

Some idea of the difficulty of the place, on account of the dissensions prevailing in the College during Smith's residence there, may be got from a remark of his successor, Dr. Reid. In the course of the first year after his arrival in Glasgow, Reid writes one of his Aberdeen friends complaining bitterly of being obliged to attend five or six College meetings every week, and meetings, moreover, of a very disagreeable character, in consequence of "an evil spirit of party that seems to put us in a ferment, and, I am afraid, will produce bad consequences." A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in noticing Smith's death in 1790, says that these divisions turned on questions of academic policy, and that Smith always took the side which was popular with people of condition in the city. The writer offers no further particulars, but as far as we can now ascertain anything about the questions which then kept the Glasgow Senate in such perpetual perturbation, they were not questions of general policy or public interest such as his words might suggest, and on the petty issues they raised it makes no odds to know whether Smith sided with the kites or with the crows. The troubles were generated, without any public differences, out of the constitution of the University itself, which seemed to be framed, as if on purpose, to create the greatest possible amount of friction in its working. By its constitution; as that is described in the Parliamentary Report of 1830, Glasgow University was at that time under one name really two distinct corporations, with two distinct governing bodies: (1) the University governed by the Senate, which was composed of the Rector, the Dean of Faculty, the Principal, the thirteen College or Faculty professors, and the five regius professors; and (2) the College governed by the Faculty, as it was called, which consisted of the thirteen College professors alone, who claimed to be the sole owners and administrators of the older endowments of the College, and to have the right of electing the occupants of their own thirteen

chairs by co-optation. Within the Faculty again there was still another division of the professors into gown professors and other professors. The gown professors, who seem to have been the representatives of the five regents of earlier times, were the professors of those classes the students of which wore academical gowns, while the students of the other classes did not; the gown classes being Humanity, Greek, Logic, Natural Philosophy, and Moral Philosophy. These several bodies held separate meetings and kept separate minutes, which remain to this day. The meetings of the Senate were called University meetings or Rector's meetings, because they were presided over by the Rector; and the meetings of the Faculty were called Faculty meetings or Principal's meetings, because they were presided over by the Principal. Even the five gown professors with the Principal held separate meetings which the other professors had no right to attend — meetings with the students every Saturday in the Common Hall for the administration of ordinary academic discipline for petty offences committed by the students of the five gown classes. Smith belonged to all three bodies; he was University professor, Faculty or College professor, and gown professor too. It is obvious how easily this complicated and unnatural system of government might breed incessant and irritating discussions without any grave division of opinion on matters of serious educational policy. Practical difficulties could scarce help arising as to the respective functions of the University and the College, or the respective claims of the regius professors and the Faculty professors, or the respective powers of the Rector and the Principal; and Smith himself was one of a small committee which presented a very lengthy report on this last subject to the Senate of the University on the 13th of August 1762. The report was adopted, but two of the professors dissented on the ground that it was too favourable to the powers of the Principal.

But, wrangle as they might over petty points of constitutional right or property administration, the heads of Glasgow College were guided in their general policy at this period by the wisest and most enlightened spirit of academic enlargement. Only a few years before Smith's arrival they had recognised the new claims of science by establishing a chemical laboratory, in which during Smith's residence the celebrated Dr. Black was working out his discovery of latent heat. They gave a workshop in the College to James Watt in 1756, and made him mathematical instrument maker to the University, when the trade corporations of Glasgow refused to allow him to open a workshop in the city; and it was in that very workshop and at this very period that a Newcomen's engine

he repaired set his thoughts revolving till the memorable morning in 1764 when the idea of the separate condenser leapt to his mind as he was strolling past the washhouse on Glasgow Green. They had at the same time in another corner of the College opened a printing office for the better advancement of that art, and were encouraging the University printer, the famous Robert Foulis, to print those Homers and Horaces by which he more than rivalled the Elzevirs and Etiennes of the past. To help Foulis the better, they had with their own money assisted the establishment of the type-foundry of Wilson at Camlachie, where Foulis procured the types for his *Iliad*; they appointed Wilson type-founder to the University, and in 1762 they erected for him a founding-house, as they called it, in their own grounds. They had just before endowed a new chair of astronomy, of which they had made their versatile type-founder the first professor, and built for him an astronomical observatory, from which he brought reputation to the College and himself by his observation of the solar spots. They further gave Foulis in 1753 several more rooms in the College, including the large room afterwards used as the Faculty Hall, to carry out his ill-fated scheme of an Academy of Design; so that the arts of painting, sculpture, and engraving were taught in the College as well as the classics and mathematics, and Tassie and David Allan were then receiving their training under the same roof with the students for the so-called learned professions. The Earl of Buchan, while walking, as he said, “after the manner of the ancients in the porticoes of Glasgow with Smith and with Millar,” unbent from the high tasks of philosophy by learning to etch in the studio of Foulis. This was the first school of design in Great Britain. There was as yet no Royal Academy, no National Gallery, no South Kensington Museum, no technical colleges, and the dream of the ardent printer, which was so actively seconded by the heads of the University, was to found an institution which should combine the functions of all those several institutions, and pay its own way by honest work into the bargain. In all these different ways the College of Glasgow was doing its best, as far as its slender means allowed, to widen the scope of university education in accordance with the requirements of modern times, and there was still another direction in which they anticipated a movement of our own day. They had already done something for that popularisation of academic instruction which we call university extension. Professor John Anderson, an active and reforming spirit who deserves to be held in honour in spite of his troublesome pugnacity, used then to deliver within the College walls, with the complete concurrence and encouragement of his

colleagues, a series of evening lectures on natural philosophy to classes of working-men in their working clothes, and the lectures are generally acknowledged to have done great service to the arts and manufactures of the West of Scotland, by improving the technical education of the higher grades of artisans.

Now in all these new developments Smith took a warm interest; some of them he actively promoted. There is nothing in the University minutes to connect Smith in any more special way than the other professors with the University's timely hospitality to James Watt; but as that act was a direct protest on behalf of industrial liberty against the tyrannical spirit of the trade guilds so strongly condemned in the *Wealth of Nations*, it is at least interesting to remember that Smith had a part in it. Watt, it may be recollected, was then a lad of twenty, who had come back from London to Glasgow to set up as mathematical instrument maker, but though there was no other mathematical instrument maker in the city, the corporation of hammermen refused to permit his settlement because he was not the son or son-in-law of a burgess, and had not served his apprenticeship to the craft within the burgh. But in those days of privilege the universities also had their privileges. The professors of Glasgow enjoyed an absolute and independent authority over the area within college bounds, and they defeated the oppression of Watt by making him mathematical instrument maker to the University, and giving him a room in the College buildings for his workshop and another at the College gates for the sale of his instruments. In these proceedings Smith joined, and joined, we may be sure, with the warmest approval. For we know the strong light in which he regarded the oppressions of the corporation laws. "The property which every man has in his labour," he says, "as it is the original foundation of all other property, so it is the most sacred and inviolable. The patrimony of the poor man lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands, and to hinder him from employing this strength and dexterity in what manner he thinks proper without injury to his neighbour is a plain violation of this most sacred property. It is a manifest encroachment upon the just liberty both of the workman and of those who might be disposed to employ him." Watt's workshop was a favourite resort of Smith's during his residence at Glasgow College, for Watt's conversation, young though he was, was fresh and original, and had great attractions for the stronger spirits about him. Watt on his side retained always the deepest respect for Smith, and when he was amusing the leisure of his old age in 1809 with his new invention of the sculpture machine, and presenting his works to his friends as "the productions of a

young artist just entering his eighty-third year," one of the first works he executed with the machine was a small head of Adam Smith in ivory.

In the Foulis press and the Academy of Design Smith took a particular interest. He was himself a book-fancier, fond of fine editions and bindings, and he once said to Smellie the printer, whom he observed admiring some of the books in his library, "I am a beau in nothing but my books." And he was a man, as Dugald Stewart informs us, with a carefully-cultivated taste for the fine arts, who was considered by his contemporaries an excellent judge of a picture or a sculpture, though in Stewart's opinion he appeared interested in works of art less as instruments of direct enjoyment than as materials for speculative discussions about the principles of human nature involved in their production. Smith seems to have been one of Foulis's chief practical advisers in the work of the Academy of Design, in settling such details, for example, as the pictures which ought to be selected to be copied by the pupils, or the subjects which ought to be chosen for original work from Plutarch or other classical sources, and which would be most likely to suit modern taste.

Sir John Dalrymple, who appears to have been one of Foulis's associates in the enterprise, and to have taken an active concern in the sale of the productions of the Academy in its Edinburgh agency shop, writes Foulis on the 1st of December 1757 regarding the kind of work that ought to be sent for sale there. "In the History pictures that you send in, I beg you will take the advice of Mr. Smith and Dr. Black. Your present scheme should be to execute not what you think the best, but what will sell the best. In the first you may be the better judge, since you are the master of a great Academa, but in the last I think their advice will be of use to you." The letter concludes: "Whether it is an idea or not, I am going to give you a piece of trouble. Be so good as make out a catalogue of your pictures, and as far as you can of your busts, books of drawings, and prints. Secondly, your boys, and how employed. Thirdly, the people who have studied under you with a view to the mechanical art. And lastly, give some account of the prospects which you think you have of being of use either to the mechanical or to the fine arts of your country. Frame this into a memorial and send it to me. I shall have it tryed here by some who wish well to you, and as I go to London in the spring, I shall, together with Mr. Wedderburn and Mr. Elliot, consider what are the most prudent measures to take for your sake, or whether to take any. Mr. Smith is too busy or too indolent, but I flatter myself Dr. Black will be happy to make out this memorial for you. Let me know if I

have any chance of seeing you this winter. I have none of being at Glasgow, and therefore wish you and Mr. Smith would come here, or you by yourself would come here in the Christmas vacance."

The memorial alluded to in this letter was no doubt a memorial to Government in behalf of a project then promoted by the Earl of Selkirk and other friends of Foulis, of settling a salary on him for directing an institution so useful to the nation as the Academy of Design. Whether Smith overcame his alleged indolence and drew up the memorial I cannot say, but this whole letter shows that Smith and Black were the two friends in Glasgow whom Foulis was in the habit of principally consulting, and the last sentence seems to indicate that Smith's hand in the business was hardly less intimate than Dalrymple's own. It may be noticed too how completely Sir John Dalrymple's ideas of Smith, as implied in this letter, differ from those which are current now, and how he sends a tradesman to the philosopher for advice on practical points in his trade. As to pure questions of art, whether this work or that is finest, he thinks Foulis himself may possibly be the best judge, but when it comes to a question as to which will sell the best — and that was the question for the success of the project — then he is urged to take the practical mind of Smith to his counsels. Though Smith's leanings were not to practical life, his judgment, as any page of the *Wealth of Nations* shows, was of the most eminently practical kind. He had little of the impulse to meddle in affairs or the itch to manage them that belongs to more bustling people, but had unquestionably a practical mind and capacity.

If Smith was consulted by Foulis in this way about the management of the Academy of Design, we may safely infer that he had also more to do with the Foulis press than merely visiting the office to see the famous *Iliad* while it was on the case. Smith's connection with Foulis began before he went to Glasgow, by the publication of Hamilton of Bangour's poems by the University press, and I think it not unreasonable to see traces of Smith's suggestion in the number of early economic books which Foulis reissued after the year 1750, works of writers like Child, Gee, Mun, Law, and Petty.

In the University type-foundry Smith took an active interest, because he was a warm friend and associate of the accomplished type-founder. Wilson had been bred a physician, but gave up his practice to become type-founder, and devoted himself besides, as I have just mentioned, to astronomy, to which Smith also at this period of his life gave some

attention. Smith indeed was possibly then writing his fragment on the history of astronomy, which, though not published till after his death, was, we are informed by Dugald Stewart, the earliest of all his compositions, being the first part of an extensive work on the history of all the sciences which he had at this time projected. Wilson, having gone to large expense both of time and money to cast the Greek type for the University Homer, and having never found another customer for the fount except the University printer, went up to London in 1759 to push around, if possible, for orders, and was furnished by Smith with a letter of recommendation to Hume, who was then residing there. Hume writes to Smith on the 29th of July: "Your friend Mr. Wilson called on me two or three days ago when I was abroad, and he left your letter. I did not see him till to-day. He seems a very modest, sensible, ingenious man. Before I saw him I spoke to Mr. A. Millar about him, and found him much disposed to serve him. I proposed particularly to Mr. Millar that it was worthy of so eminent a bookseller as he to make a complete elegant set of the classics, which might set up his name equal to the Alduses, Stevenses, or Elzevirs, and that Mr. Wilson was the properest person in the world to assist him in such a project. He confessed to me that he had sometimes thought of it, but that his great difficulty was to find a man of letters that could correct the press. I mentioned the matter to Wilson, who said he had a man of letters in his eye one Lyon, a nonjuring clergyman of Glasgow. I would desire your opinion of him."

When Wilson came to reside in the College in 1762, after his appointment to the chair of Astronomy, he found it inconvenient to go to and fro between the College and Camlachie to attend to the type-foundry, and petitioned the Senate to build him a founding-house in the College grounds, basing his claim on their custom of giving accommodation to the arts subservient to learning, on his own services to the University in the matter of the Greek types before mentioned, and on his having undertaken, in spite of the discouraging results of that speculation, to cast a large and elegant Hebrew type for the University press. He estimated that the building would cost no more than the very modest sum of £40 sterling, and he offered to pay a fair rent. This memorial came up for consideration on the 5th of April, and it was Smith who proposed the motion which was ultimately carried, to the effect that the University should build a new foundry for Mr. Wilson on the site most convenient within the College grounds, at an expense not exceeding the sum of £40 sterling, on condition (1) that Mr. Wilson pay a reasonable rent, and (2)

that if the house should become useless to the College before the Senate were sufficiently recouped for their expenditure, Mr. Wilson or his heirs should be obliged to make adequate compensation. The foundry was erected in the little College garden next the Physic Garden; it cost £19 more than the estimate, and was let for £3:15s. a year, from which it would appear that 6½ per cent on the actual expenditure (irrespective of any allowance for the site) was considered a fair rent by the University authorities in those days.

The Senate of this little college, which was thus actively encouraging every liberal art, which had in a few years added to the lecture-room of Hutcheson and Smith the laboratory of Black, the workshop of Watt, the press of Foulis, the academy of painting, sculpture, and engraving, and the foundry and observatory of Wilson, entertained in 1761 the idea of doing something for the promotion of athletics among the students, and had under consideration a proposal for the establishment of a new academy of dancing, fencing, and riding in the University. One of the active promoters of this scheme appears again to have been Adam Smith, for it is he who is chosen by the Senate on the 22nd December 1761 to go in their name and explain their design to the Rector, Lord Erroll, and request his assistance. This idea seems, however, to have borne no fruit. Dancing was an exercise they required to be observed with considerable moderation, for they passed a rule in 1752 that no student should be present at balls or assemblies or the like more than thrice in one session, but they treated it with no austere proscription.

One art alone did they seek to proscribe, the art dramatic, and in 1762 the Senate was profoundly disturbed by a project then on foot for the erection of the first permanent theatre in Glasgow. The affair originated with five respectable and wealthy merchants, who were prepared to build the house at their own expense, the leading spirit of the five being Robert Bogle of Shettleston, who had himself, we are told by Dr. Carlyle, played "Sempronius" in a students' performance of *Cato* within the walls of Glasgow College in 1745. Carlyle played the title *rôle*, and another divinity student, already mentioned as a college friend of Smith's, Dr. Maclaine of the Hague, played a minor part. But an amateur representation of an unexceptionable play under the eye of the professors was one thing, the erection of a public playhouse, catering like other public playhouses for the too licentious taste of the period, was another, and the project of Mr. Bogle and his friends in 1762 excited equal alarm in the populace of the city, in the Town Council, and in the University. The Council refused to sanction a site for the theatre within the city

bounds, so that the promoters were obliged to build it a mile outside; but the anger of the multitude pursued them thither, and on the very eve of its opening in 1764 by a performance in which Mrs. Bellamy was to play the leading part, it was set on fire by a mob, at the instigation of a wild preacher, who said he had on the previous night been present in a vision at an entertainment in hell, and the toast of the evening, proposed in most flattering terms from the chair, was the health of Mr. Millar, the maltster who had sold the site for this new temple of the devil.

During the two years between the projection of this building and its destruction it caused the Senate of the College no common anxiety, and Smith went along with them in all they did. On the 25th of November 1762 he was appointed, with the Principal and two other professors, as a committee, to confer with the magistrates concerning the most proper methods of preventing the establishment of a playhouse in Glasgow, and at the same time to procure all the information in their power concerning the privileges of the University of Oxford with respect to their ability to prevent anything of that kind being established within their bounds, and concerning the manner in which those privileges, if they existed, were made effectual. On the recommendation of this committee the University agreed to memorialise the Lord Advocate on the subject, and to ask the magistrates of the city to join them in sending the memorial. The Lord Advocate having apparently suggested doubts as to the extent of their ancient powers or privileges in the direction contemplated, Smith was appointed, along with the Principal and one or two other professors, as a special committee of inquiry into the ancient privileges and constitution of the University, and the Principal was instructed meanwhile to express to his lordship the earnest desire of the University to prevent the establishment of a playhouse. While this inquiry was proceeding, the magistrates of the city, on their part, had determined, with the concurrence of a large body of the inhabitants, to raise an action at law against the players if they should attempt to act plays in the new theatre, and at a meeting over which Smith presided, and in whose action he concurred, the University agreed to join the magistrates in this prosecution. The agitation against the playhouse was still proceeding when Smith resigned his chair in 1764, but shortly afterwards, finding itself without any legal support, it gradually died away. The part Smith took in this agitation may seem to require a word of explanation, for he not only entertained no objection to theatrical representations, but was so deeply impressed with their beneficial character that in the *Wealth of Nations* he specially recommends them for positive encouragement by

the State, and expressly dissociates himself from those “fanatical promoters of popular frenzies” who make dramatic representations “more than all other diversions the objects of their peculiar abhorrence.” The State encouragement he wants is nothing in the nature of the endowment of a national theatre, which is sometimes demanded nowadays. All the encouragement he asks for is liberty— “entire liberty to all those who from their own interest would attempt, without scandal or indecency, to amuse and divert the people by painting, poetry, music, dancing, by all sorts of dramatic representations and exhibitions.” But in pressing for this liberty, he expresses the strongest conviction that “the frequency and gaiety of public diversions” is absolutely essential for the good of the commonwealth, in order to “correct whatever is unsocial or disagreeably rigorous in the morals of all the little sects into which the country is divided,” and to “dissipate that melancholy and gloomy humour which is almost always the source of popular superstition and enthusiasm.” Yet here we seem to find him in alliance with the little sects himself, and trying to crush that liberty of dramatic representations which he declares to be so vital to the health of the community.

The reason is not, moreover, that he had changed his opinions in the interval between the attempts to suppress the Glasgow playhouse in 1762 and the publication of his general plea for playhouses in the Wealth of Nations in 1776. He had not changed his opinions. He travelled with a pupil to France, still warm from this agitation in Glasgow, and, as we learn from Stewart, was a great frequenter and admirer of the theatre in that country, and a few years before the agitation began he was as deeply interested as any other of John Home’s friends in the representations of the tragedy of Douglas, and as much a partisan of Home’s cause. He does not appear indeed, as is sometimes stated, to have been present either at the public performance of Home’s tragedy in Edinburgh in 1756, or at the previous private performance, which is alleged to have taken place at Mrs. Ward the actress’s rooms, and in which the author himself, and Hume, Carlyle, Ferguson, and Blair are all said to have acted parts. But that he was in complete sympathy with them on the subject is manifest from an undated letter of Hume to Smith, which must have been written in that year. In this letter, knowing Smith’s sentiments, he writes: “I can now give you the satisfaction of hearing that the play, though not near so well acted in Covent Garden as in this place, is likely to be very successful. Its great intrinsic merit breaks through all obstacles. When it shall be printed (which shall be soon) I am persuaded it will be esteemed

the best, and by French critics the only tragedy of our language." After finishing his letter he adds: "I have just now received a copy of *Douglas* from London. It will instantly be put on the press. I hope to be able to send you a copy in the same parcel with the dedication." These sentences certainly imply that Smith's ideas of theatrical representations were in harmony with those of Hume and his other Edinburgh friends, but shortly afterwards he is seeking to revive obsolete academic privileges to prevent the erection of a theatre.

The explanation must be looked for in the line of the conditional clause with which he limits his claim for entire liberty to dramatic entertainments — they must be "without scandal or indecency." There is never any question that if free trade and public morals clash, it is free trade that must give way, and his opposition to the project of the Glasgow playhouse must have originated in his persuasion that it was not attended, as things then went, with sufficient practical safeguards against scandal and indecency. In considering that point due weight must be given not only to the general improprieties permissible on the English stage at that time, but to the fact that locally great offence had quite recently been given in Scotland by the profane or immoral character of some of the pieces presented on the Scottish boards, and that Glasgow itself had had experience of a disorderly theatre already — the old wooden shed where hardy playgoers braved opinion and listened to indifferent performances under the protection of troops, and where, it will be remembered, Boswell, then a student at the College, made the acquaintance of Francis Gentleman, the actor. That house was not a licensed house, but the new house was not to be a licensed house either, and it is quite possible for one who thought a theatre generally, with due safeguards, a public benefit, to think that a particular theatre without those safeguards might constitute a public danger, especially in a university town.

On two delicate questions of professorial duty Smith made a decided stand in behalf of the stricter interpretation. In 1757 Professor John Anderson, the founder of the Andersonian University, who was then Professor of Oriental Languages in Glasgow, became a candidate for the chair which he afterwards filled for so many years with great credit and success — the chair of Natural Philosophy; and, as the appointment lay with the professors, Professor Anderson was one of the electors, and was quite within his legal right in voting for himself. But Smith, impressed with the importance of keeping such appointments free from any leaven of personal interest, tabled a formal protest on three successive occasions

against the intervention of that distinguished but headstrong professor in the business of that particular election. He protested first against Anderson voting on a preliminary resolution respecting the election; he protested the second time against him taking part in the election itself; and he protested a third time after the election, desiring it to be recorded expressly "that he did not vote in the election of Mr. Anderson as Professor of Natural Philosophy, not from objection to Mr. Anderson, in whose election he would willingly have concurred, but because he regarded the method of proceeding as irregular and possibly establishing a bad precedent." As patrons of University chairs, the professors were trustees for the community, and ought each to be bound by a tacit self-denying ordinance, at least to the extent of refraining from actively using this public position to serve his private interest. Smith himself, it will be remembered, was one of his own electors to the Moral Philosophy chair, but then that election was uncontested, and Smith was not present at the meeting which appointed him.

The other personal question arose also out of circumstances which have their counterpart in Smith's own history. Professor William Rouet, Professor of Ecclesiastical and Civil History, made an engagement in 1759 to travel abroad as tutor with Lord Hope, the eldest son of Lord Hopetoun; but when Lord Hopetoun wrote requesting leave of absence for Professor Rouet, the Senate by a majority refused to grant the request. Smith was one of that majority, and took an active part in the subsequent transactions arising out of their decision. Rouet persists in going abroad in the teeth of the refusal, and the University by a majority deprive him of office for his negligence of duty. The Crown, however, at first refuse to appoint a successor, on the ground of informality in the act of deprivation, and Lord Bute tells the Rector, Lord Erroll, that "the king's orders" are that the business must be done over again *de novo*, or "else it may be of the worst consequences to the University." The University take the opinion of eminent counsel, Ferguson of Pitfour and Burnet of Mountbodie (Monboddo), and are prepared to face the consequences threatened, but are eventually saved the trouble by the resignation of Rouet in 1761. Now in these transactions Smith seems to bear a leading part. He was one of the small committee appointed to draw up answers to the protest tabled by the minority of the Senatus; it was to him Lord Erroll communicated the intimation of Lord Bute, though he was not then either Vice-Rector or Dean of Faculty; and it was he and Professor Millar who were sent through to Edinburgh to consult the two advocates.

Smith was probably on the best terms with Rouet himself, who was an intimate friend of David Hume and a cousin of their common friend Baron Mure, and it was not an uncommon practice for the Scotch universities at that period to sanction the absence of a professor on a tutorial engagement. Adam Ferguson left England as tutor to Lord Chesterfield while he was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, and Dalzel resided at Oxford as tutor to Lord Maitland after he was Professor of Greek in the same University. The Senate of Glasgow had itself already permitted Professor John Anderson to remain another winter in France with a son of the Primate of Ireland, when he was chosen Professor of Oriental Languages in 1756, and Smith had concurred in giving the permission. But Anderson's absence was absence to fulfil an already-existing engagement, like the absence granted to Smith himself in the first year of his own appointment, while Rouet's was absence to fulfil a new one; and Smith, as his own subsequent conduct shows, held pluralities and absenteeism of that sort to be a wrong and mischievous subordination of the interest of the University to the purely private interest or convenience of the professors. They had too many temptations to accommodate one another by such arrangements at the expense of the efficiency of the College; and his action both in Rouet's case and his own is entirely in the spirit of his criticism of the English universities in the *Wealth of Nations*.

CHAPTER VII. AMONG GLASGOW FOLK

Smith was not only teacher in Glasgow, he was also learner, and the conditions of time and place were most favourable, in many important ways, for his instruction. Had he remained at Oxford, he would probably never have been an economist; had he not spent so many of his best years in Glasgow, he would never have been such an eminent one. It was amid the thickening problems of the rising trade of the Clyde, and the daily discussions they occasioned among the enterprising and intelligent merchants of the town, that he grew into a great economist.

It need scarce be said that the Glasgow of the middle of last century was a very different city from the Glasgow of to-day. It was in size and appearance a mere provincial town of 23,000 inhabitants. Broom still grew on the Broomielaw; a few cobles were the only craft on the river; and the rude wharf was the resort of idlers, watching the fishermen on the opposite side cast for salmon, and draw up netfuls on the green bank. The Clyde was not deepened till 1768. Before that the whole tonnage dues at Glasgow were only eight pounds a year, and for weeks together not a single vessel with a mast would be seen on the water. St. Enoch Square was a private garden; Argyle Street an ill-kept country road; and the town herd still went his rounds every morning with his horn, calling the cattle from the Trongate and the Saltmarket to their pasture on the common meadows in the now densely-populated district of the Cowcaddens.

Glasgow in these its younger days struck every traveller chiefly for its beauty. Mrs. Montagu thought it the most beautiful city in Great Britain, and Defoe, a few years before, said it was “the cleanest and beautifullest and best built city in Britain, London excepted.” As Mrs. Bellamy approached it on the occasion I have mentioned in order to open the new theatre in 1764, she says “the magnificence of the buildings and the beauty of the river ...elated her heart”; and Smith himself, we know, once suffered for praising its charms. It was at a London table, and Johnson was present, who, liking neither Smith nor his Scotch city, cut him short by asking, “Pray, sir, have you seen Brentford?” Boswell, who took a pride in Glasgow himself, calling it “a beautiful city,” afterwards expostulated with the doctor for this rough interruption: “Now, sir,” said he, “was not that rude?” The full rudeness is only apparent when we remember that Brentford was in that day a byword for dreariness and dirt

— Thomson in the *Castle of Indolence* calls it “a town of mud.” When Johnson visited Glasgow, however, he joined the troop of its admirers himself, and Boswell took the opportunity to put him then in mind of his question to Smith, and whisper to him, “Don’t you feel some remorse?”

But Glasgow had already begun its transition from the small provincial to the great commercial capital, and was therefore at a stage of development of special value to the philosophical observer. Though still only a quiet but picturesque old place, nestling about the Cathedral and the College and two fine but sleepy streets, in which carriers built their haystacks out before their door, it was carrying on a trade which was even then cosmopolitan. The ships of Glasgow were in all the waters of the world, and its merchants had won the lead in at least one important branch of commerce, the West India tobacco trade, and were founding fresh industries every year with the greatest possible enterprise. The prosperity of Glasgow is a fruit of the Union which first opened the colonial markets to Scotch merchandise, and enabled the merchants of the Clyde to profit by the advantages of their natural situation for trading with the American plantations. Before the middle of the century the Clyde had become the chief European emporium for American tobacco, which foreign countries were not then allowed to import directly, and three-fourths of the tobacco was immediately on arrival transhipped by the Glasgow merchants for the seaports of the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and the North Sea.

As they widened their connections abroad, they naturally developed their industries at home. They founded the Smithfield ironworks, and imported iron from Russia and Sweden to make hoes and spades for the negroes of Maryland. They founded the Glasgow tannery in 1742, which Pennant thought an amazing sight, and where they employed 300 men making saddles and shoes for the plantations. They opened the Pollokshaws linen print-field in 1742, copper and tin works in 1747, the Delffield pottery in 1748. They began to manufacture carpets and crape in 1759, silk in 1759, and leather gloves in 1763. They opened the first Glasgow bank — the Ship — in 1750, and the second — the Arms — in 1752. They first began to improve the navigation of the Clyde by the Act of 1759; they built a dry dock at their harbour of Port Glasgow in 1762; while in 1768 they deepened the Clyde up to the city, and began (for this also was mainly their work) the canal to the Forth for their trade with the Baltic. It was obvious, therefore, that this was a period of unique commercial enterprise and expansion. We can easily believe Gibson, the historian of Glasgow, when he states that after 1750 “not a beggar was to

be seen in the streets," and "the very children were busy"; and we can as easily understand Smith when, contrasting Glasgow and Edinburgh among other places, he says the residence of a few spirited merchants is a much better thing for the common people of a place than the residence of a court.

Now it was those spirited merchants who had then so much to do with the making of Glasgow that had also something to do with the making of Adam Smith. Plain business men of to-day sometimes smile at the "Virginian Dons" and "tobacco lords" of last century as they picture them gathering to the Glasgow Plainstanes at the hour of Change in the glory of scarlet cloaks, cocked hats, and gold-headed canes, and the plain citizens of that time all making way for their honours as they passed. But there was much enlightenment and sagacity concealed under that finery. Mrs. Montagu, who visited Glasgow in 1767, wrote Sir A. Mitchell, the Ambassador, that she was more delighted with it than with any other commercial town she had seen, because gain did not usurp people's whole attention, but "the sciences, the arts, and the love of agriculture had their share." Their fortunes were small compared with the present standard. Sir John Dalrymple, speaking of three of the foremost merchants of Glasgow (one of them, John Glassford, the richest man in the city), computes that they had a quarter of a million between the three, and Dr. Reid, explaining the anxiety caused in Glasgow by the American troubles in 1765, says Glasgow owners possessed property in the American plantations amounting to £400,000. But these figures meant large handling and large dealings in those times, and perhaps more energy, mind, and character than the bigger figures of the present day; and we are told that commercial men in Glasgow still look back to John Glassford and Andrew Cochrane as perhaps the greatest merchants the Clyde has seen.

Andrew Cochrane was Smith's particular friend among them, and Dr. Carlyle tells that "Dr. Smith acknowledged his obligations to this gentleman's information when he was collecting materials for his *Wealth of Nations*; and the junior merchants who have flourished since his time and extended their commerce far beyond what was then dreamt of, confess with respectful remembrance that it was Andrew Cochrane who first opened and enlarged their views." Dr. Carlyle informs us, moreover, that Cochrane founded a weekly club in the "forties" — political economy club — of which "the express design was to inquire into the nature and principles of trade in all its branches, and to communicate knowledge and ideas on that subject to each other," and that Smith

became a member of this club after coming to reside in Glasgow. This was probably the first political economy club in the world, for Carlyle was in Glasgow in 1743, and it is of that period he speaks when he says, “I was not acquainted with Provost Cochrane at this time, but I observed that the members of this society had the highest admiration of his knowledge and talents.”

Cochrane was indeed one of the remarkable men of that time. Smollett describes him in *Humphrey Clinker* as “one of the first sages of the Scottish kingdom,” and “a patriot of a truly Roman spirit.” He was Provost of Glasgow during the Rebellion, and while the Government and the Horse Guards slumbered and dawdled, and let Prince Charlie march from the Highlands to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh up into the heart of England, Cochrane had already raised two regiments in Glasgow to resist the invader, which, however, this same dawdling Government, from mistaken suspicions of Scottish loyalty, refused to permit him to arm. The Prince, on his return from England, actually occupied Glasgow, and taxed it severely, but Cochrane’s sagacious management piloted the city through the crisis, so that it neither yielded to the popular Prince’s arts nor provoked him to hostilities; and, looking back at these difficulties when he laid down the Provostship a few years later, he said, “I thank my God that my magistracy has ended without reproach.” His correspondence, published by the Maitland Club, contains some terse descriptions of the “prodigious slavery” he underwent, “going through the great folks” in London day after day for two months trying to recover from the Government some compensation for the Prince’s exactions. And it may be added that it was his banking firm — Cochrane, Murdoch and Co., generally known, however, as the Glasgow Arms Bank, because they printed the Glasgow arms on their notes — that fell on the happy expedient of paying in sixpences when the Bank of Scotland made the infamous attempt to “break” it in 1759 by first collecting its notes for some time, and then suddenly presenting the whole number collected for immediate payment. The agent of the Bank of Scotland presented £2893 of notes on the 14th of December, and after thirty-four successive days’ attendance he wrote his employers that he had only received £1232, because “the partners vied with each other in gaining time by miscounting and other low arts, and when the partners became wearied or ashamed of the task, their porter, a menial servant, would act the part of teller.”

Of the Political Economy Club, founded by this able man, we know nothing except what Dr. Carlyle tells us, and the only other member of it

besides Smith and Cochrane whose name Carlyle mentions is Dr. Wight, Professor of Ecclesiastical and Civil History. But it met once a week all the thirteen years Smith resided in Glasgow, and must have discussed many commercial problems during that time. We know, indeed, some of the principal practical questions which were then agitating the minds of Glasgow merchants, and may be sure those, at least, would be among the questions discussed at the club. Some of them concerned the removal of trade restrictions, but the restrictions which those Glasgow merchants were anxious to remove were restrictions on the import of raw materials for their manufactures, such as iron and linen yarn, and manufacturers, of course, are not necessarily free-traders because they want free import of raw materials. That was advocated as strongly from the old mercantilist standpoint as it is now from the free-trade one; it was merely sanctioning a little addition to our imports in order to produce a much greater addition to our exports.

In 1750 we find Provost Cochrane in correspondence with Smith's friend, James Oswald, M.P., concerting parliamentary action for the entire removal of the import duty on American iron. The Glasgow ironworks — the nailery, as it was called — with which Mr. Cochrane was connected used at that time 400 tons of iron in the year, and the iron had to be all imported at a high price from Russia and Sweden, because the native ores of Scotland were not then discovered, and American iron, by an iniquitous piece of preferential legislation in favour of the English manufacturer, was allowed to come duty free into English but not into Scotch seaports. Cochrane wants Oswald to get the law amended so as to "allow bar iron from our colonies to be imported to Scotland duty free." "It would," he says, "save our country very great sums, and no way hurt the landed interest. It would lower the price of iron, and consequently of all our manufactures, which would increase the consumpt and sale; it would serve for ballast to our ships from North America, and when tobacco is scarce, fill up part of the tonnage; would increase our exports, and no way interfere with our neighbours in the South." That language might be held indifferently by the mercantilist and the free-trader.

In advocating the abolition of the duty on foreign linen yarns, which they succeeded in obtaining in 1756, the Glasgow merchants seem certainly to have had no thought of free trade, or probably anything else but their own obvious interest as manufacturers, for they never dreamt of abolishing either the export bounty on home-made linen cloth or of repealing the law of 1748, which gave their own Glasgow linen factory a considerable lift, and which forbade the import of foreign linen, and

fined husbands for letting their wives wear it. Still the discussion of these subjects would open up various points of view, and it may be remembered that this duty on foreign linen yarns is one which Smith himself, free-trader though he was, was against abolishing, not out of any favour for the flax-growers, but for the protection of the poor women scattered in the cottages of the kingdom who made their livelihood by spinning yarn.

On the question of paper money we find Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Glassford — both of whom were bankers as well as merchants — in communication with Baron Mure and Sir James Steuart, the economist, soon after Smith left Glasgow. Sir James would almost certainly be a member of the club, because he resided in the neighbourhood, but as he was only pardoned a few months before Smith resigned his chair, it is improbable that the two economists ever met together at the club meetings. But the questions the two leading merchants were then discussing with Sir James would, no doubt, have been occasionally subjects of conversation at the club during the time of Smith's attendance. What, we find them asking, are the effects of paper money on prices? on the currency? on the exchanges with other countries? What was the effect of small notes? what of notes not payable on demand? They differed on various points. For example, Glassford would let the banks issue notes for any sums they liked, and had no objection to the small ten-shilling and five-shilling notes which were then common. Cochrane would abolish all notes for less than a pound, and Smith — at least in 1776 — would abolish all notes less than five pounds. But all alike had a firm grasp of the true nature and operation of money.

Another society of which Smith was a member, and indeed a founder, was the Literary Society of Glasgow. It was a general debating society composed mainly of professors in the University — Cullen, Black, Wilson the astronomer; Robert Simson, Leechman the divinity professor and principal; Millar, and indeed nearly the whole Senatus; with a few merchants or country gentlemen of literary tastes such as William Craufurd, the friend of Hamilton of Bangour; William Mure of Caldwell, M.P. for Renfrewshire; Sir John Dalrymple, the historian, who was a proprietor in the West country; John Callander of Craigforth, the antiquary; Thomas Miller, Town Clerk of Glasgow, and afterwards Lord Justice-Clerk of Scotland; Robert Foulis, the printer; James Watt, who said he derived much benefit from it; Robert Bogle of Shettleston, the promoter of the theatre already mentioned; David Hume, and the Earl of Buchan, elected while residing as a student in 1762.

The Literary Society was founded in 1752, and met every Thursday evening from November to May at half-past six. Its minutes are probably still in existence somewhere, but a few extracts from them have been published by the Maitland Club, and from them we learn that Smith was one of the first contributors to its proceedings. Early in its first session — on the 23rd of January 1753 — Professor Adam Smith is stated to have read an account of some of Mr. David Hume's Essays on Commerce. These essays had then just appeared; and they had probably been seen by Smith before their publication, for in September 1752 Hume writes Smith asking him for any corrections he had to suggest on the old edition of the Political Essays with which the Commercial Essays were incorporated. We have seen Hume submitting one of these Commercial Essays in 1750 to Oswald and Mure, and when we find him in 1752 asking for suggestions from Smith on the essays already printed, we may safely infer that he had also asked and received suggestions on the new essays which had never been published.

The Maitland Club volume gives us no information about the papers read in this society after the first six months, except those read by Foulis, but no doubt Smith read other papers in the remaining ten years of his connection with the society. Its debates were often very keen; the metaphysical and theological combats between Professor Millar — a most brilliant debater — and Dr. Reid, the father of the common-sense philosophy, were famous in their day; and on one occasion tradition informs us that Smith engaged in a strenuous discussion on some subject for a whole evening against the entire assembly, and, having lost his point by an overwhelming majority, was overheard muttering to himself, "Convicted but not convinced."

After their high controversies in the Literary Society and their keener but less noble contentions in the Senate Hall, the Glasgow professors used to unbend their bows again in the simple convivialities of "Mr. Robin Simson's Club." Mr. Robin Simson was the venerable Professor of Mathematics, equally celebrated and beloved, known through all the world for his rediscovery of the porisms of Euclid, but in Glasgow College — whose bounds he rarely quitted — the delight of all hearts for the warmth, breadth, and uprightness of his character, for the charming simplicity of his manner, and the richness of his weighty and sparkling conversation. It was his impressions of Simson that first gave Smith the idea that mathematicians possessed a specific amiability and happiness of disposition which placed them above the jealousies and vanities and intrigues of the lower world. For fifty years Simson's life was spent

almost entirely within the two quadrangles of Glasgow College; between the rooms he worked and slept in, the tavern at the gate, where he ate his meals, and the College gardens, where he took his daily walk of a fixed number of hundred paces, of which, according to some well-known anecdotes, he always kept count as he went, even under the difficulties of interruption. Mr. Robin, who was unmarried, never went into general society, but after his geometrical labours were over finished the day with a rubber of whist in the tavern at the College gate. Here one or another of the professors used to join him, and the little circle eventually ripened into a regular club, which met for supper at this tavern every Friday evening, and went out to Anderston for dinner on Saturday. It was then known as the Anderston Club, as well as by its former designation from the name of its founder. Anderston was at that time quite a country village. It was very soon afterwards made busy enough with the cotton factory of James Monteith, but at this time Tames Monteith's father was using the spot as a market garden. It contained, however, a cosy little "change-house," capable of providing the simple dinner then in vogue. The dinner consisted of only one course. Mr. M'George says the first dinner of two courses ever given in Glasgow was given in 1786; and Principal M'Cormick of St. Andrews, writing Dr. Carlyle about that date, praises the dinner-parties of St. Andrews to the skies, but says nobody gave two courses except Mrs. Prebendary Berkeley, and Mrs. Prebendary Berkeley was the daughter-in-law of a bishop. The course at the Anderston dinner, moreover, consisted every week of the same dish; it was invariably chicken-broth, which Smollett classes with haggis, singed sheepshead, fish and sauce, and minced collops, as one of the five national dishes of Scotland. He describes it as "a very simple preparation enriched with eggs in such a manner as to give the air of a spoiled fricassee"; but adds that "notwithstanding its appearance, it is very delicate and nourishing." The chicken-broth was accompanied with a tankard of sound claret, and then the cloth was removed for whist and a bowl of punch. At whist Smith was not considered an eligible partner, for, says Ramsay of Ochtertyre, if an idea struck him in the middle of the game he "either renounced or neglected to call," and he must have in this way given much provocation to the amiability of Simson, who, though as absent-minded as Smith ever was at common seasons, was always keenly on the alert at cards, and could never quite forgive a slip of his partner in the game. After cards the rest of the evening was spent in cheerful talk or song, in which again Simson was ever the leading spirit. He used to sing Greek odes set to modern airs, which the members never

tired of hearing again, for he had a fine voice and threw his soul into the rendering. Professor Robison of Edinburgh, who was one of his students, twice heard him — no doubt at this club, for Simson never went anywhere else — sing a Latin hymn to the Divine Geometer, apparently of his own making, and the tears stood in the worthy old gentleman's eyes with the emotion he put into the singing of it. His conversation is said to have been remarkably animated and various, for he knew most other subjects nearly as well as he did mathematics. He was always full of hard problems suggested by his studies of them, and he threw into the discussion much whimsical humour and many well-told anecdotes. The only subject debarred was religion. Professor Traill says any attempt to introduce that peace-breaking subject in the club was checked with gravity and decision. Simson was invariably chairman, and so much of the life of the club came from his presence that when he died in 1768 the club died too.

Three at least of the younger men who shared the simple pleasures of this homely Anderston board — Adam Smith, Joseph Black, and James Watt — were to exert as important effects on the progress of mankind as any men of their generation. Watt specially mentions Smith as one of the principal figures of the club, and says their conversation, "besides the usual subjects with young men, turned principally on literary topics, religion, morality, belles-lettres, etc., and to this conversation my mind owed its first bias towards such subjects in which they were all my superiors, I never having attended a college, and being then but a mechanic." According to this account religion was not proscribed, but Professor Traill's assertion is so explicit that probably Watt's recollection errs. It is, however, another sign of the liberal spirit that then animated these Glasgow professors to find them welcoming on a footing of perfect equality one who, as he says, was then only a mechanic, but whose mental worth they had the sense to recognise. Dr. Carlyle, who was invited by Simson to join the club in 1743, says the two chief spirits in it then were Hercules Lindsay, the Professor of Law, and James Moor, the Professor of Greek, both of whom were still members in Smith's time. Lindsay, who, it will be remembered, acted as Smith's substitute in the logic class, was a man of force and independence, who had suffered much abuse from the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh for giving up the old practice of delivering his lectures in Latin, and refusing to return to it. Moor was the general editor of the famous editions of the classics printed by his brother-in-law, Robert Foulis, a man, says Dugald Stewart, of "a gaiety and levity foreign to this climate," much addicted to

punning, and noted for his gift of ready repartee. He was always smartly dressed and powdered, and one day as he was passing on the Plainstanes he overheard two young military officers observe one to the other, “He smells strongly of powder.” “Don’t be alarmed, my young soldier,” said Moor, turning round on the speaker, “it is not gunpowder.” A great promoter of the merriment of the club was Dr. Thomas Hamilton, Professor of Anatomy, the grandfather of Sir William, the metaphysician, who is thus described in some verses by Dr. John Moore, the author of *Zelucco* —

He who leads up the van is stout Thomas the tall, Who can make us all laugh, though he laughs at us all; But *entre nous*, Tom, you and I, if you please, Must take care not to laugh ourselves out of our fees.

Then we remember what Jeffrey says of “the magical vivacity” of the conversation of Professor John Millar.

CHAPTER VIII. EDINBURGH ACTIVITIES

During his residence in Glasgow Smith continued to maintain intimate relations with his old friends in Edinburgh. He often ran through by coach to visit them, though before the road was improved it took thirteen hours to make the journey; he spent among them most part of many of his successive vacations; and he took an active share, along with them, in promoting some of those projects of literary, scientific, and social improvement with which Scotland was then rife. His patron, Henry Home, had in 1752 been raised to the bench as Lord Kames, and was devoting his new-found leisure to those works of criticism and speculation which soon gave him European fame. David Hume, after his defeat at Glasgow, had settled for a time into the modest post of librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, and was writing his *History of England* in his dim apartments in the Canongate. Adam Ferguson, who threw up his clerical calling in 1754, and wrote Smith from Groningen to give him "clerical titles" no more, for he was "a downright layman," came to Edinburgh, and was made Hume's successor in the Advocates' Library in 1757 and professor in the University in 1759. Robertson did not live in Edinburgh till 1758, but he used to come to town every week with his neighbour John Home before the latter left Scotland in 1757, and they held late sittings with Hume and the other men of letters in the evening. Gilbert Elliot entered Parliament in 1754, but was always back during the recess with news of men and things in the capital. The two Dalrymples — Sir David of Hailes, and Sir John of Cousland — were toiling at their respective histories, and both were personal friends of Smith's; while another, of whom Smith was particularly fond — Wilkie, the eccentric author of the *Epigoniad* — was living a few miles out as minister of the parish of Ratho. Wilkie always said that Smith had far more originality and invention than Hume, and that while Hume had only industry and judgment, Smith had industry and genius. His mind was at least the more constructive of the two. A remark of Smith's about Wilkie has also been preserved, and though it is of no importance, it may be repeated. Quoting Lord Elibank, he said that whether it was in learned company or unlearned, wherever Wilkie's name was mentioned it was never dropped soon, for everybody had much to say about him. But that was probably due to his oddities as much as anything else. Wilkie used to plough his own glebe with his own hands in the ordinary ploughman's

dress, and it was he who was the occasion of the joke played on Dr. Roebuck, the chemist, by a Scotch friend, who said to him as they were passing Ratho glebe that the parish schools of Scotland had given almost every peasant a knowledge of the classics, and added, “Here, for example, is a man working in the field who is a good illustration of that training; let us speak with him.” Roebuck made some observation about agriculture. “Yes, sir,” said the ploughman, “but in Sicily they had a different method,” and he quoted Theocritus, to Roebuck’s great astonishment.

Among Smith’s chief Edinburgh friends at this period was one of his former pupils, William Johnstone — son of Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, and nephew of Lord Elibank — who was then practising as an advocate at the Scotch bar, but ultimately went into Parliament, married the greatest heiress of the time, Miss Pulteney, niece of the Earl of Bath, and long filled an honoured and influential place in public life as Sir William Pulteney. He was, as even Wraxall admits, a man of “masculine sense” and “independent as well as upright” character, and he devoted special attention to all economic and financial questions. It was Pulteney who in his speech on the suspension of cash payments by the Bank of England in 1797 — in which he proposed the establishment of another bank — quoted from some unknown source the memorable saying which is generally repeated as if it were his own, that Smith “would persuade the present generation and govern the next.” He quoted the words as something that had been “well said.” Between him and Smith there prevailed a warm and affectionate friendship for more than forty years, and we shall have occasion again to mention his name. But I allude to him at present because a letter still exists which was given him by Smith at this period to introduce him, during a short stay he made in London, to James Oswald, then newly appointed to office at the Board of Trade. This is the only letter that happens to be preserved of all the correspondence carried on by Smith with Oswald, and while both the occasion of it and its substance reveal the footing of personal intimacy on which they stood, its ceremonious opening and ending indicate something of the reverence and gratitude of the client to the patron: —

Sir — This will be delivered to you by Mr. William Johnstone, son of Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, a young gentleman whom I have known intimately these four years, and of whose discretion, good temper, sincerity, and honour I have had during all that time frequent proofs. You will find in him too, if you come to know him better, some qualities which from real and unaffected modesty he does not at first discover; a

refinement and depth of observation and an accuracy of judgment, joined to a natural delicacy of sentiment, as much improved as study and the narrow sphere of acquaintance this country affords can improve it. He had, first when I knew him, a good deal of vivacity and humour, but he has studied them away. He is an advocate; and though I am sensible of the folly of prophesying with regard to the future fortune of so young a man, yet I could almost venture to foretell that if he lives he will be eminent in that profession. He has, I think, every quality that ought to forward, and not one that should obstruct his progress, modesty and sincerity excepted, and these, it is to be hoped, experience and a better sense of things may in part cure him of. I do not, I assure you, exaggerate knowingly, but could pawn my honour upon the truth of every article. You will find him, I imagine, a young gentleman of solid, substantial (not flashy) abilities and worth. Private business obliges him to spend some time in London. He would beg to be allowed the privilege of waiting on you sometimes, to receive your advice how he may employ his time there in the manner that will tend most to his real and lasting improvement.

I am sensible how much I presume upon your indulgence in giving you this trouble; but as it is to serve and comply with a person for whom I have the most entire friendship, I know you will excuse me though guilty of an indiscretion; at least if you do not, you will not judge others as you would desire to be judged yourself; for I am very sure a like motive would carry you to be guilty of a greater.

I would have waited on you when you was last in Scotland had the College allowed me three days' vacation; and it gave me real uneasiness that I should be in the same country with you, and not have the pleasure of seeing you. Believe it, no man can more rejoice at your late success, or at whatever else tends to your honour and prosperity, than does, Sir, your ever obliged and very humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Glasgow, *19th January 1752*, N.S.

Pulteney abandoned the law in which Smith prophesied eminence for him, but he was happily not cured entirely of his sincerity by his subsequent experience, for it was greatly from that quality that he derived the weight he enjoyed in the House of Commons. His contemporary in Parliament, Sir John Sinclair, says Pulteney's influence arose from the fact that he was known to be a man who never gave a vote he did not in his heart believe to be right. Having no taste for display, he lived when he had £20,000 a year about as simply as he did when he had

only £200, and on that account he is sometimes accused of avarice, though he was constantly doing acts of signal liberality.

Smith's chief friend in Edinburgh was David Hume. Though their first relations were begun apparently in 1739, they could not have met much personally before Smith's settlement in Glasgow. For when Smith came to Edinburgh in 1748 Hume was abroad as secretary to General St. Clair in the Embassy at Vienna and Turin, and though he left this post in 1749, he remained for the next two years at Ninewells, his father's place in Berwickshire, and only settled in Edinburgh again just as Smith was removing to Glasgow. He would no doubt visit town occasionally, however, and before Smith was a year in Glasgow he had already entered on that correspondence with the elder philosopher which, beginning with the respectful "dear sir," grew shortly into the warmer style of "my dearest friend" as their memorable and Roman friendship ripened. Hume never paid Smith a visit in Glasgow, though he had often promised to do so, but Smith in his runs to Edinburgh spent always more and more of his time with Hume, and latterly at any rate made Hume's house his regular Edinburgh home.

In 1752 Hume had already taken Smith as one of his literary counsellors, and consulted him about the new edition of his *Essays, Moral and Political*, and his historical projects, and I may be permitted here and afterwards to quote parts of Hume's letters which throw any light on Smith's opinions or movements.

On the 24th of September 1752 he writes —

Dear Sir — I confess I was once of the same opinion with you, and thought that the best period to begin an English History was about Henry the Seventh, but you will please to observe that the change which then happened in public affairs was very insensible, and did not display its influence for many years afterwards.... I am just now diverted for the moment by correcting my *Essays, Moral and Political* for a new edition. If anything occur to you to be inserted or retrenched, I shall be obliged if you offer the hint. In case you should not have the last edition by you I shall send you a copy of it.... I had almost lost your letter by its being wrong directed. I received it late, which was the reason you got not sooner a copy of *Joannes Magnus*.

On the 17th of December 1754 Hume gives Smith an account of his quarrel with the Faculty of Advocates, and his resolution to stay as librarian after all, for the sake of the use of the books, which he cannot do without, but to give Blacklock, the blind poet, a bond of annuity for

the salary. Three weeks later he writes again, and as the letter mentions Smith's views on some historical subjects, it may be quoted: —

Edinburgh, *9th January 1755*.

Dear Sir — I beg you to make my compliments to the Society, and to take the fault on yourself if I have not executed my duty, and sent them this time my anniversary paper. Had I got a week's warning I should have been able to have supplied them. I should willingly have sent some sheets of the History of the Commonwealth or Protectorship, but they are all of them out of my hand at present, and I have not been able to recall them. I think you are extremely in the right that the Parliament's bigotry has nothing in common with Hiero's generosity. They were themselves violent persecutors at home to the utmost of their power. Besides, the Huguenots in France were not persecuted; they were really seditious, turbulent people, whom their king was not able to reduce to obedience. The French persecutions did not begin till sixty years after.

Your objection to the Irish massacre is just, but falls not on the execution but the subject. Had I been to describe the massacre of Paris I should not have fallen into that fault, but in the Irish massacre no single eminent man fell, or by a remarkable death. If the elocution of the whole chapter be blamable, it is because my conceptions laboured most to start an idea of my subject, which is there the most important, but that misfortune is not unusual. — I am, etc.

In 1752 Smith was chosen a member of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh, which, after an interregnum caused by the rebellion, was revived in that year, with David Hume for Secretary, and which was eventually merged in the Royal Society in 1784. But we know of no part he took, if he took any, in its proceedings. Of the Rankenian Society, again — the famous old club in Ranken's Coffee-house, to which Colin Maclaurin and other eminent men belonged, and some of whose members carried on a philosophical controversy with Berkeley, and, if we can believe Ramsay of Ochtertyre, were pressed by the good bishop to accompany him in his Utopian mission to Bermuda — Smith was never even a member, though it survived till 1774. But he took a principal part in founding a third society in 1754, which far eclipsed either of these — at least for a time — in *éclat*, and has left a more celebrated name, the Select Society.

The Select Society was established in imitation of the academies which were then common in the larger towns of France, and was partly a debating society for the discussion of topics of the day, and partly a patriotic society for the promotion of the arts, sciences, and manufactures

of Scotland. The idea was first mooted by Allan Ramsay, the painter, who had travelled in France as long ago as 1739, with James Oswald, M.P., and was struck with some of the French institutions. Smith was one of the first of Ramsay's friends to be consulted about the suggestion, and threw himself so heartily into it that when the painter announced his first formal meeting for the purpose on the 23rd of May 1754, Smith was not only one of the fifteen persons present, but was entrusted with the duty of explaining the object of the meeting and the nature of the proposed institution. Dr. A. Carlyle, who was present, says this was the only occasion he ever heard Smith make anything in the nature of a speech, and he was but little impressed with Smith's powers as a public speaker. His voice was harsh, and his enunciation thick, approaching even to stammering. Of course many excellent speakers often stutter much in making a simple business explanation which they are composing as they go along, and Smith always stuttered and hesitated a deal for the first quarter of an hour, even in his class lectures, though his elocution grew free and animated, and often powerful, as he warmed to his task.

The Society was established and met with the most rapid and remarkable success. The fifteen original members soon grew to a hundred and thirty, and men of the highest rank as well as literary name flocked to join it. Kames and Monboddo, Robertson and Ferguson and Hume, Carlyle and John Home, Blair and Wilkie and Wallace, the statistician; Islay Campbell and Thomas Miller, the future heads of the Court of Session; the Earls of Sutherland, Hopetoun, Marchmont, Morton, Rosebery, Erroll, Aboyne, Cassilis, Selkirk, Glasgow, and Lauderdale; Lords Elibank, Garlies, Gray, Auchinleck, and Hailes; John Adam, the architect; Dr. Cullen, John Coutts, the banker and member for the city; Charles Townshend, the witty statesman; and a throng of all that was distinguished in the country, were enrolled as members, and, what is more, frequented its meetings. It met every Friday evening from six to nine, at first in a room in the Advocates' Library, but when that became too small for the numbers that began to attend its meetings, in a room hired from the Mason Lodge above the Laigh Council House; and its debates, in which the younger advocates and ministers — men like Wedderburn and Robertson — took the chief part, became speedily famous over all Scotland as intellectual displays to which neither the General Assembly of the Kirk nor the Imperial Parliament could show anything to rival. Hume wrote in 1755 to Allan Ramsay, who had by that time gone to settle in Rome, that the Select Society "has grown to be a national concern. Young and old, noble and ignoble, witty and dull, laity

and clergy, all the world are ambitious of a place amongst us, and on each occasion we are as much solicited by candidates as if we were to choose a member of Parliament." He goes on to say that "our young friend Wedderburn has acquired a great character by the appearance he has made," and that Wilkie, the minister, "has turned up from obscurity and become a very fashionable man, as he is indeed a very singular one. Monboddo's oddities divert, Sir David's (Lord Hailes) zeal entertains, Jack Dalrymple's (Sir John of the *Memoirs*) rhetoric interests. The long drawling speakers have found out their want of talents and rise seldomer. In short, the House of Commons is less the object of general curiosity to London than the Select Society is to Edinburgh. The 'Robin Hood,' the 'Devil,' and all other speaking societies are ignoble in comparison."

At the second regular meeting, which was held on the 19th of June 1754, Mr. Adam Smith was Præses, and gave out the subjects for debate on the following meeting night: (1) Whether a general naturalisation of foreign Protestantism would be advantageous to Britain; and (2) whether bounties on the exportation of corn be advantageous to trade and manufactures as well as to agriculture. Lord Campbell in mentioning this circumstance makes it appear as if Smith chose the latter subject of his own motion, in accordance with a rule of the society whereby the chairman of one meeting selected the subject for debate at the next meeting; and it would have been a not uninteresting circumstance if it were true, for it would show the line his ideas were taking at that early period of his career; but as a matter of fact the rule in question was not adopted for some time after the second meeting, and it is distinctly mentioned in the minutes that on this particular occasion the Præses "declared before he left the chair the questions that were agreed upon by the majority of the meeting to be the subject of next night's debate." It is quite possible, of course, that the subjects may have been of Smith's suggestion, but that can now only be matter of conjecture. Indeed, whether it be due to his influence or whether it arose merely from a general current of interest moving in that direction at the time, the subjects, discussed by this society were very largely economic; so much so that in a selection of them published by the *Scots Magazine* in 1757 every one partakes of that character. "What are the advantages to the public and the State from grazing? what from corn lands? and what ought to be most encouraged in this country? Whether great or small farms are most advantageous to the country? What are the most proper measures for a gentleman to promote industry on his own estate? What are the advantages and disadvantages of gentlemen of estate being

farmers? What is the best and most proper duration of leases of land in Scotland? What prestations beside the proper tack-duty tenants ought to be obliged to pay with respect to carriages and other services, planting and preserving trees, maintaining enclosures and houses, working freestone, limestone, coal, or minerals, making enclosures, straightening marches, carrying off superfluous water to other grounds, and forming drains? and what restrictions they should be put under with respect to cottars, live stock on the farm, winter herding, ploughing the ground, selling manure, straw, hay, or corn, thirlage to mills, smiths or tradesmen employed on business extrinsic to the farm, subsetting land, granting assignations of leases, and removals at the expiration of leases? What proportion of the produce of lands should be paid as rent to the master? In what circumstances the rents of lands should be paid in money? in what in kind? and in what time they should be paid? Whether corn should be sold by measure or by weight? What is the best method of getting public highways made and repaired, whether by a turnpike law, as in many places in Great Britain, by county or parish work, by a tax, or by what other method? What is the best and most equal way of hiring and contracting servants? and what is the most proper method to abolish the practice of giving of vails?" The society had what may be termed a special agricultural branch, to which I shall presently refer, and which met once a month and discussed chiefly questions of husbandry and land management; and the above list of subjects looks, from its almost exclusively agrarian character, as if it had been rather the business of this branch of the society merely than of the society as a whole. Still the same causes that made rural economy predominate in the monthly work of the branch would give it a large place in the weekly discussions of the parent association. The members were largely connected with the landed interest, and agricultural improvement was then on the order of the day.

In this society accordingly, which Smith attended very frequently, though he does not appear to have spoken in the debates, he had with respect to agrarian problems precisely what he had in the economic club of Glasgow with respect to commercial problems, the best opportunities of hearing them discussed at first hand by those who were practically most conversant with the subjects in all their details. Of course the society sometimes discussed questions of literature or art, or familiar old historical controversies, such as whether Brutus did well in killing Cæsar? Indeed, no subject was expressly tabooed except such as might stir up the Deistic or Jacobite strife — in the words of the rules, "such as regard revealed religion, or which may give occasion to vent any

principles of Jacobitism.” But the great majority of the questions debated were of an economic or political character, — questions about outdoor relief, entail, banking, linen export bounties, whisky duties, foundling hospitals, whether the institution of slavery be advantageous to the free? and whether a union with Ireland would be advantageous to Great Britain? Sometimes more than one subject would be got through in a night, sometimes the debate on a single subject would be adjourned from week to week till it was thought to be thrashed out; and every member might speak three times in the course of a debate if he chose, once for fifteen minutes, and the other twice for ten.

The Select Society was, however, as I have said, more than a debating club; it aimed besides at doing something practical for the promotion of the arts, sciences, manufactures, and agriculture, in the land of its birth, and accordingly, when it was about ten months in existence, it established a well-devised and extensive scheme of prizes for meritorious work in every department of human labour, to be supported by voluntary subscriptions. In the prospectus the society issued it says that, after the example of foreign academies, it had resolved to propose two subjects for competition every year, chosen one from polite letters and the other from the sciences, and to confer on the winner some public mark of distinction in respect to his taste and learning. The reward, however, was not in this case to be of a pecuniary nature, for the principle of the society was that rewards of merit were in the finer arts to be honorary, but in the more useful arts, where the merit was of a less elevated character, they were to be lucrative. On the same principle, in the arts the highest place was allowed to be due to genius, and therefore a reward for a discovery or invention was set at the very top of the tree, but still it was of a purely honorary character, a pecuniary recognition being thought apparently unsuitable to the dignity of that kind of service. “The art of printing,” the prospectus goes on to say — with a glance of satisfaction cast doubtless at the Foulis Press— “the art of printing in this country needs no encouragement, yet as to pass it by unnoticed were slighting the merit of those by whose means alone it has attained that eminence, it was resolved that the best printed and most correct book which shall be produced within a limited time be distinguished by an honorary reward.” On the other hand, the manufacture of paper was a thing that required encouragement in Scotland, because the Scotch at that time imported their paper from abroad, “from countries,” says the prospectus, “which use not half the linen that is here consumed”; and “to remove this defect, to render people more attentive to their own interest

as well as to the interest of their country, to show them the consequence of attention to matters which may seem trivial, it was resolved that for the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth parcels of linen rags gathered within a limited time a reward be assigned in proportion to the quantity and goodness of each parcel." In other cases manufactures were already well established in the country, and the thing that still needed to be encouraged by prizes was improvement in the workmanship. For example, "manufactures of cotton and linen prints are already established in different places of this country; in order to promote an attention to the elegance of the pattern and to the goodness of the colouring, as well as to the strength of the cloth, it was resolved that for the best piece of printed linen or cotton cloth made within a certain period a premium should be allotted." The art of drawing, again, "being closely connected with this art and serviceable to most others, it was resolved that for the best drawings by boys or girls under sixteen years of age certain premiums be assigned." Then there was a considerable annual importation into Scotland of worked ruffles and of bone lace and edging which the Select Society thought might, under proper encouragement, be quite as well produced at home; and it was therefore resolved to give both honorary and lucrative rewards for superior merit in such work, the honorary for "women of fashion" who might compete, and the lucrative for those "whose laudable industry contributes to their own support." Scotch stockings had then a great reputation for the excellence of their workmanship, but Scotch worsted, to make them with, was not so good, and consequently a premium was to be offered for the best woollen yarn. There was a great demand at the time for English blankets, and no reason why the Scotch should not make quite as good blankets themselves out of their own wool, so a premium was proposed for the best imitation of English blankets. Carpet-making was begun in several places in the country, and a prize for the best-wrought and best-patterned carpet would encourage the manufacturers to vie with each other. Whisky-distilling, too, was established at different places, and Scotch strong ale had even acquired a great and just reputation both at home and abroad; but the whisky was "still capable of great improvement in the quality and taste," and the ale trade "might be carried to a much greater height," and these ends might be severally promoted by prizes for the best tun of whisky and the best hogshead of strong ale.

The practical execution of this scheme was committed to nine members of the society, who were to be chosen annually, and were to meet with the society once a month to report progress or receive

instructions; but to keep this new task quite distinct from the old, the society resolved, like certain mercantile firms when they adopt a new branch of business, to carry it on under a new firm name, and for this purpose the Select Society of Edinburgh became “The Edinburgh Society for encouraging arts, sciences, manufactures, and agriculture in Scotland”; and the executive committee of nine were termed the “ordinary managers of the Edinburgh Society,” who were assisted by other nine “extraordinary managers.” The Edinburgh Society was not, however, a separate institution; it was really only a special committee of the Select Society. It met once a month at a separate time from the usual weekly meeting of the parent society, and the business of this monthly meeting came, from the predominant interest of the members, who were so largely composed of the nobility and gentry, to be engrossed almost wholly with agricultural discussions. To render these discussions more effective and profitable, a resolution was passed in 1756 to admit a certain number of practical farmers to the membership.

This extension of the scope of the society’s work was not approved by its founder, Allan Ramsay, who thought it beneath the dignity of such an institution to take an interest in the making of ruffles or the brewing of strong ale, and feared besides that it would introduce a new set of very unintellectual members, to the serious prejudice of the society’s debates. An essay on taste was very well, and when it came out he would ask Millar, the bookseller, to send it out to him in Rome, but a prize for the biggest bundle of linen rags! “I could have wished,” he writes Hume, “that some other way had been fallen upon by which porter might have been made thick and the nation rich without our understanding being at all the poorer for it. Is not truth more than meat, and wisdom than raiment?” But however Ramsay might look down on the project, his coadjutor in the founding of the society, Adam Smith, entertained a very different idea of its importance. A stimulus to the development of her industries was the very thing Scotland most needed at the moment, and he entered heartily into the new scheme, and took a prominent part in carrying it out. He was not one of the nine managers to whom the practical execution of the idea was at first entrusted, but when a few months afterwards the work was divided among four separate committees or sections of five members each, all chosen by another committee of five, nominated expressly for that purpose, Smith is one of this nominating committee, and is by it appointed likewise a member of one of the four executive committees. The other four members of the nominating committee were Alexander Monro *Primus*, the anatomist;

Gilbert Elliot, M.P. for Selkirkshire; the Rev. William Wilkie, author of the *Epigoniad*; and the Rev. Robert Wallace, the predecessor and at least in part the stimulator of Malthus in his speculations on the population question. The five members of this committee were directed by the society to put their own names on one or other of the four executive committees, and they placed the name of Smith, together with that of Hume, on the committee for Belles-Lettres and Criticism. As yet he was evidently best known as literary critic, though the questions propounded by him in this society, and the subjects treated by him in the Literary Society of Glasgow, show that his tastes were already leading him into other directions.

Sufficient contributions soon flowed in; Hume in his letter to Ramsay speaks of £100 being already in hand, and of several large subscriptions besides being promised from various noblemen, whom he names; and accordingly an advertisement was published in the newspapers on the 10th of April 1755, offering the following prizes: —

I. Honorary premiums, being gold medals with suitable devices and inscriptions: —

1. For the best discovery in science.

2. For the best essay on taste.

3. For the best dissertation on vegetation and the principles of agriculture.

II. Honorary premiums, being silver medals with proper devices and inscriptions: —

4. For the best printed and most correct book of at least 10 sheets.

5. For the best printed cotton or linen cloth, not under 28 yards.

6. For the best imitation of English blankets, not under six.

7. For the next best ditto, not under six.

8. For the best hogshead of strong ale.

9. For the best hogshead of porter.

III. Lucrative premiums: —

10. For the most useful invention in arts, £21.

11. For the best carpet as to work, pattern, and colours, of at least 48 yards,.£5:5s.

12. For the next best ditto, also 48 yards, £4:4s.

13. For the best drawings of fruits, flowers, and foliages by boys or girls under sixteen years of age, £5:5s.

14. For the second best, £3:3s.

15. For the third best, £2:2s.

16. For the best imitation of Dresden work in a pair of man’s ruffles, £5:5s.

17. For the best bone lace, not under 20 yards, £5:5s.

18. For the greatest quantity of white linen rags, £1:10s.

19. For the second ditto, £1:5s.

20. For the third ditto, £1.

21. For the fourth ditto, 15s.

22. For the fifth ditto, 10s.

The articles were asked to be delivered to Mr. Walter Goodall (David Hume’s assistant in the work of librarian), at the Advocates’ Library, before the first Monday of December. On the 19th of August the following additional prizes were offered: —

23. To the farmer who plants the greatest number (not under 1000) of timber trees, oak, beech, ash, or elm, in hedgerows before December 1756, £10.

24. Second ditto (not under 500), £5.

25. To the farmer who shall raise the greatest number (not under 2000) of young thorn plants before December 1758, £6.

26. Second ditto (not under 1000), £4.

In the following year the society increased the number of its prizes to 92; in 1757 to 120, in 1758 to 138, and in 1759 to 142; and they were devoted to the encouragement of every variety of likely industry — kid gloves, straw hats, felt hats, soap, cheese, cradles to be made of willow grown in Scotland. One premium was offered to the person who would “cure the greatest number of smoky chimneys to the satisfaction of the society.”

The prize for the best essay on taste was won by Professor Gerard of Aberdeen, and the essay was published, and is still well known to students of metaphysics; and the prize for the best dissertation on vegetation and agriculture fell to Dr. Francis Home. The best invention was a piece of linen made like Marseille work but on a loom, and for this £20 were awarded to Peter Brotherton, weaver in Dirleton, East Lothian. Foulis won in 1757 the prize for the best printed book in Roman characters by his *Horace*, and for the best printed book in Greek characters by his *Iliad*; and in 1759 Professor Gerard again won a prize by his dissertation on style.

This society, while it lasted, undoubtedly exercised a most beneficial influence in developing and improving the industrial resources of Scotland. The carpet manufacture alone rose £1000 in the year after the

establishment of the prizes, and the rise was believed to be due to the stimulus they imparted. But, useful and active and celebrated as it was, the Select Society died within ten years of its origin. The usual explanation is that it owed its death to the effects of a sarcasm of Charles Townshend's. Townshend was brought to hear one of the wonderful debates, which were thought to reflect a new glory on Edinburgh, and was even elected a member of the society, but he observed when he came out that, while he admitted the eloquence of the orators, he was unable to understand a word they said, inasmuch as they spoke in what was to him a foreign tongue. "Why," he asked, "can you not learn to speak the English language, as you have already learnt to write it?"

This was to touch Scotchmen of that period who made any pretensions to education at one of their most sensitive parts. Scotch — the broad dialect of Burns and Fergusson — was still the common medium of intercourse in polite society, and might be heard even from the pulpit or the bench, though English was flowing rapidly into fashion, and the younger and more ambitious sort of people were trying their best to lose the native dialect. We know the pains taken by great writers like Hume and Robertson to clear their English composition of Scotch idioms, and the greater but less successful pains taken by Wedderburn to cure himself of his Scotch pronunciation, to which he reverted after all in his old age. Under these circumstances Townshend's sarcasm occasioned almost a little movement of lingual reform. Thomas Sheridan, who was about this time full of a method he had invented of imparting to foreigners a proper pronunciation of the English language by means of sounds borrowed from their own, and who had just been giving lessons to Wedderburn, and probably practising the new method on him, was brought north in 1761 and delivered a course of sixteen lectures in St. Paul's Chapel, Carrubber's Close, to about 300 gentlemen— "the most eminent," it is reported, "in the country for rank and abilities." Immediately thereafter the Select Society organised a special association for promoting the writing and speaking of the English language in Scotland, and engaged a teacher of correct English pronunciation from London. Smith was not one of the directors of this new association, but Robertson, Ferguson, and Blair were, together with a number of peers, baronets, lords of Session, and leaders of the bar. But spite of the imposing auspices under which this simple project of an English elocution master was launched, it proved a signal failure, for it touched the national vanity. It seemed to involve a humiliating confession of inferiority to a rival nation at the very moment when that nation was

raging with abuse of the Scotch, when Wilkes was publishing the *North Briton*, and Churchill was writing his lampoons; and when it was advertised in the Edinburgh newspapers, it provoked such a storm of antipathy and ridicule that even the honourable society which furthered the scheme began to lose favour, its subscriptions and membership declined, and presently the whole organisation fell to pieces. That is the account commonly given of the fall of the Select Society, and the society certainly reached its culminating point in 1762. After that subscribers withdrew their names, or refused to pay their subscriptions, and in 1765 the society had no funds to offer more than six prizes and ceased to exist, its own explanation being that it died of the loss of novelty. “The arrears of subscriptions seem,” it says, “to confirm an observation that has sometimes been made, that in Scotland every disinterested plan of public utility is slighted as soon as it loses the charm of novelty.”

Another interesting but even more abortive project which Smith took a leading part in promoting at this same period was the publication of a new literary magazine, entitled the *Edinburgh Review*, of which the first number appeared in July 1755, and the second and last in January 1756. This project also originated, like the Select Society, in a sentiment of Scotch patriotism. It was felt that though Scotland was at the time stirring with an important literary and scientific movement, the productions of the Scotch press were too much ignored by the English literary periodicals, and received inadequate appreciation even in Scotland itself for want of a good critical journal on the spot. “If countries may be said to have their ages with respect to improvement,” says the preface to the first number of the new *Review*, “then North Britain may be considered as in a state of early youth, guided and supported by the more mature strength of her kindred country. If in anything her advances have been such as to make a more forward state, it is in science.” After remarking that the two obstacles to the literary advancement of Scotland had hitherto been her deficiency in the art of printing and her imperfect command of good English, and that the first of these obstacles had been removed entirely, and the second shown by recent writers to be capable of being surmounted, it proceeds: “The idea therefore was that to show men at this particular stage of the country’s progress the gradual advance of science would be a means of inciting them to a more eager pursuit of learning, to distinguish themselves and to do honour to their country.” The editor was Alexander Wedderburn, who afterwards became Lord High Chancellor of England and Earl of Rosslyn, but had in 1755 only just passed as an advocate at the Scotch

bar; and the contributors were Robertson, who wrote eight review articles on new historical publications; Blair, who gave one or two indifferent notices of works in philosophy; Jardine, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who discussed Ebenezer Erskine's sermons, a few theological pamphlets, and Mrs. Cleland's Cookery Book; and Adam Smith, who contributed to the first number a review of Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary*, and to the second a remarkable letter to the editor proposing to widen the scope of the *Review*, and giving a striking survey of the state of contemporary literature in all the countries of Europe. Smith's two contributions are out of sight the ablest and most important articles the *Review* published.

He gives a warm and most appreciative welcome to Johnson's *Dictionary*, but thinks it would have been improved if the author had in the first place more often censured words not of approved use, and if in the second he had, instead of simply enumerating the several meanings of a word, arranged them into classes and distinguished principal from subsidiary meanings. Then to illustrate what he wants, Smith himself writes two model articles, one on *Wit* and the other on *Humour*, both acute and interesting. He counts humour to be always something accidental and fitful, the disease of a disposition, and he considers it much inferior to wit, though it may often be more amusing. "Wit expresses something that is more designed, concerted, regular, and artificial; humour something that is more wild, loose, extravagant, and fantastical; something which comes upon a man by fits which he can neither command nor restrain, and which is not perfectly consistent with true politeness. Humour, it has been said, is often more diverting than wit; yet a man of wit is as much above a man of humour as a gentleman is above a buffoon; a buffoon, however, will often divert more than a gentleman."

In his second contribution — a long letter to the editor published in the appendix to the second number — Smith advocates the enlargement of the scope of the *Review* so as to give some account of works of importance published abroad, even though space had to be provided for the purpose by neglecting unimportant publications issued from the Scotch press, and, in fact, he considers this substitution as a necessity for the continued life of the *Review*. For, says he, "you will oblige the public much more by giving them an account of such books as are worthy of their regard than by filling your paper with all the insignificant literary news of the time, of which not an article in a hundred is likely to be thought of a fortnight after the publication of the work that gave occasion

to it.” He then proceeds to a review of contemporary continental literature, which he says meant at that time the literature of France. Italy had ceased to produce literature, and Germany produced only science. A sentence or two may be quoted from his comparison between French and English literature, because they show that he was not, as he is sometimes accused of being, an unfair depreciator of the great writers of England and a blind admirer of those of France. He will be owned to have had a very just opinion of the specific merits of each.

“Imagination, genius, and invention,” he says, “seem to be the talents of the English; taste, judgment, propriety, and order, of the French. In the old English poets, in Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton, there often appears, amidst some irregularities and extravagancies, a strength of imagination so vast, so gigantic and supernatural, as astonishes and confounds the reader into that admiration of their genius which makes him despise as mean and insignificant all criticism upon the inequalities of their writings. In the eminent French writers such sallies of genius are more rarely to be met with, but instead of them a just arrangement, an exact propriety and decorum, joined to an equal and studied elegance of sentiment and diction, which, as it never strikes the heart like those violent and momentary flashes of imagination, so it never revolts the judgment by anything that is absurd or unnatural, nor ever wearies the attention by any gross inequality in the style or want of connection in the method, but entertains the mind with a regular succession of agreeable, interesting, and connected objects.”

From poetry he passes to philosophy, and finds that the French encyclopedists had left their native Cartesian system for the English system of Bacon and Newton, and were proving more effective expositors of that system than the English themselves. After reviewing the *Encyclopédie* at considerable length, he gives an account of the recent scientific works of Buffon and Reaumur, and, among books in metaphysics, of Rousseau’s famous *Discourse on the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind*, which was then only a few months out, and in which, Smith says, Rousseau, “by the help of his style, together with a little philosophical chemistry,” has made “the principles and ideas of the profligate Mandeville seem to have all the purity and simplicity of the morals of Plato, and to be only the true spirit of a republican carried a little too far.” He gives a summary of the book, translates a few specimen passages, and concludes by saying, “I shall only add that the dedication to the Republic of Geneva, of which M.

Rousseau has the honour of being a citizen, is an agreeable, animated, and I believe, too, a just panegyric."

Sir James Mackintosh, who republished these two numbers of the first *Edinburgh Review* in 1818 after the second *Edinburgh Review* had made the name famous, considers it noteworthy, as showing the contributors to have taken up a very decided political position for so early a period, that the preface to the first number speaks boldly in praise of George Buchanan's "undaunted spirit of liberty." But Smith's warm expression of admiration for the Republic of Geneva, to which he reckons it an honour to belong, is equally notable. He seems to have been always theoretically a republican, and he certainly had the true spirit of a republican in his love of all rational liberty. His pupil and lifelong friend, the Earl of Buchan, says: "He approached to republicanism in his political principles, and considered a commonwealth as the platform for the monarchy, hereditary succession in the chief magistrate being necessary only to prevent the commonwealth from being shaken by ambition, or absolute dominion introduced by the consequences of contending factions."

Smith's scheme for the improvement of the *Review* was never carried out, for with that number the *Review* itself came to a sudden and premature end. The reason for giving it up is explained by Lord Woodhouselee to have been that the strictures passed by it on some fanatical publications of the day had excited such a clamour "that a regard to the public tranquillity and their own determined the reviewers to discontinue their labours." Doubt has been expressed of the probability of this explanation, but Lord Woodhouselee, who was personally acquainted with several of the contributors, is likely to have known of the circumstances, and his statement is borne out besides by certain corroborative facts. It is true the theological articles of the two numbers appear to us to be singularly inoffensive. They were entrusted to the only contributor who was not a young man, Dr. Jardine, the wily leader of the Moderate party in the Church, the Dean of the Thistle mentioned in Lord Dreghorn's verses as governing the affairs of the city as well as the Church through his power over his father-in-law —

The old Provost, who danced to the whistle Of that arch politician, the Dean of the Thistle.

The arch politician contrived to make his theological criticism colourless even to the point of vapidity, but that did not save him or his *Review*; it perhaps only exposed them the more to the attacks of zealots. His notice of the sermons of Ebenezer Erskine, the Secession leader,

provoked a sharp pamphlet from Erskine's son, in which the reviewers were accused of teaching unsound theological views, of putting the creature before the Creator by allowing the lawfulness of a lie in certain situations, of throwing ridicule on the Bible and the Westminster *Confession of Faith*, and of having David Hume, an atheist, among their number.

This last thrust was a mere controversial guess, and, strangely enough, it guessed wrong. A new literary review is started in Edinburgh by a few of Hume's younger friends, and Hume himself — the only one of them who had yet made any name in literature, and the most distinguished man of letters then in Scotland — is neither asked to contribute to the periodical, nor even admitted to the secret of its origination. When the first number appeared he went about among his acquaintances expressing the greatest surprise that so promising a literary adventure should be started by Edinburgh men of letters without a whisper of it ever reaching his ears. More than that, his very name and writings were strangely and studiously ignored in its pages. His *History of the Stewarts* was one of the last new books, having been published in the end of 1754, and was unquestionably much the most important work that had recently come from any Scotch pen, yet in a periodical instituted for the very purpose of devoting attention to the productions of Scotch authors, this work of his remained absolutely unnoticed.

Why this complete boycott of Hume by his own household? Henry Mackenzie "thinks he has heard" two reasons given for it: first, that Hume was considered too good-natured for a critic, and certain to have insisted on softening remarks his colleagues believed to be called for; and second, that they determined to keep him out of the secret entirely, because he could not keep a secret. But this explanation does not hold together. If Hume was so good-natured, he would be less difficult rather than more difficult to manage; and as for not being able to keep a secret, that, as Mr. Burton observes, is a very singular judgment to pass on one who had been Secretary of Legation already and was soon to be Secretary of Legation again, and Under Secretary of State, without having been once under the shadow of such an accusation. Besides, neither of these reasons will explain the ignoring of his writings.

A more credible explanation must be looked for, and it can only be discovered in the intense *odium theologicum* which the name of Hume excited at the moment, and which made it imperative, if the new *Review* was to get justice, that it should be severed from all association with his detested name. Scotland happened to be at that very hour in an

exceptional ferment about his theological heresies, and one of the strangest of proposals had come before the previous General Assembly of the Kirk, backed by a number of the most respected country clergy. It was no other than to summon the great sceptic to their bar, to visit his *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* with censure, and to pronounce against the author the major ban of excommunication.

The wise heads who rule the Scotch Church courts of course threw out this inconvenient proposal by the favourite ecclesiastical device of passing an abstract resolution expressive of concern at the growing evils of the day, without committing the Church to any embarrassing practical action; and Hume himself was, as Wedderburn told them he likely would be, hardened enough to laugh at the very idea of their anathema. But the originators of the agitation only returned to the battle, and prepared for a victory in the next Assembly in May 1756. Between the two Assemblies Hume wrote his friend Allan Ramsay, the painter, who was in Rome: "You may tell that reverend gentleman the Pope that there are men here who rail at him, and yet would be much greater persecutors had they equal power. The last Assembly sat on me. They did not propose to burn me, because they cannot, but they intended to give me over to Satan, which they think they have the power of doing. My friends, however, prevailed, and my damnation is postponed for a twelvemonth, but next Assembly will surely be upon me." And so in truth it was. An overture came up calling for action regarding "one person calling himself David Hume, Esq., who hath arrived at such a degree of boldness as publicly to avow himself the author of books containing the most rude and open attacks upon the glorious Gospel of Christ," and a motion was made for the appointment of a committee "to inquire into the writings of this author, to call him before them, and prepare the matter for the next General Assembly." This motion was again defeated, and the heresy-hunters passed on to turn their attention to Lord Kames, and to summon the printers and publishers of his *Essays* before the Edinburgh Presbytery to give up the author's name (the book having been published anonymously), "that he and they may be censured according to the law of the Gospel and the practice of this and all other well-governed churches."

It is open to us to believe that Hume's friends contemplated no more than a temporary exclusion of him from their counsels until this storm should pass by; but at any rate, as they launched their frail bark in the very thick of the storm, it would have meant instant swamping at that juncture to have taken the Jonah who caused all the commotion and

made him one of their crew. For the same reason, when they found that, for all their precautions, the clamour overtook them notwithstanding, they simply put back into port and never risked so unreasoning and raging an element again.

It may indeed be thought that they declined Hume's co-operation, because they expressly hoisted the flag of religion in their preface, and professed one of their objects to be to resist the current attacks of infidelity. But there would have been no inconsistency in engaging the co-operation of an unbeliever on secular subjects, so long as they retained the rudder in their own hands, and men who were already Hume's intimate personal friends were not likely to be troubled with such unnecessary scruples about their consistency. The true reason both of Hume's exclusion from their secret and of their own abandonment of their undertaking is undoubtedly the reason given by Lord Woodhouselee, that they wanted to live and work in peace. They did not like, to use a phrase of Hamilton of Bangour, to have "zeal clanking her iron bands" about their ears. Hume, on the other hand, rather took pleasure in the din he provoked, and had he been a contributor the rest would have had difficulty — and may have felt so — in restraining him from gratifying that taste when any favourable opportunities offered.

While these things were going on in Edinburgh a book had made its appearance from the London press, which is often stated to have been written for the express purpose of converting Adam Smith to a belief in the miraculous evidences of Christianity. That book is the *Criterion of Miracles Examined*, by Smith's Oxford friend Bishop Douglas, then a country rector in Shropshire. It is written in the form of a letter to an anonymous correspondent, who had, in spite of his "good sense, candour, and learning," and on grounds "many of them peculiar to himself and not borrowed from books," "reasoned himself into an unfavourable opinion of the evidences of Christianity"; and this anonymous correspondent is said in Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary* to have been "since known to be Adam Smith." From Chalmers's *Dictionary* the same statement has been repeated in the same words in subsequent biographical dictionaries and elsewhere, but neither Chalmers nor his successors reveal who it was to whom this was known, or how he came to know it; and on the other hand, Macdonald, the son-in-law and biographer of Douglas, makes no mention of Smith's name in connection with this work at all, and explicitly states that the book was written for the satisfaction of more than one of the author's friends, who had been influenced by the

objections of Hume and others to the reality of the Gospel miracles. This leaves the point somewhat undetermined.

Smith was certainly a Theist, his writings leave no doubt of that, but he most probably discarded the Christian miracles; and if Douglas's book is addressed to his particular position, discarded them on the ground that there is no possible criterion for distinguishing true miracles from false, and enabling you to accept those of Christianity if you reject those of profane history. The Earl of Buchan, apostrophising Smith, asks, "Oh, venerable and worthy man, why was you not a Christian?" and tries to let his old professor down as gently as possible by suggesting that the reason lay in the warmth of his heart, which always made him express strongly the opinions of his friends, and carried him in this instance into sympathy with those of David Hume. That is obviously a lame conclusion, because Smith's friendship for Hume never made him a Tory, nor even on the point of religion were his opinions identical with those of Hume; but Lord Buchan's words may be quoted as an observation by an acute man of a feature in Smith's character not without biographical interest. "Had he (Smith) been a friend of the worthy ingenious Horrox," says his lordship, "he would have believed that the moon sometimes disappeared in a clear sky without the interposition of a cloud, or of another truly honest and respectable man, that a professor of mathematics at Upsala had a tail of six inches long to his rump."

In 1756 the literary circle in Edinburgh was much excited by the performance of John Home's tragedy of *Douglas*. Smith was not present at that performance; but he is stated by Henry Mackenzie, in his *Life of John Home*, to have been present at some of the previous rehearsals of the play, and at any rate he was deeply interested in it; and Hume, as soon as he hears of the continued success of the play in London, hastens to communicate the welcome news to his friend in Glasgow, with whom he was in correspondence about his own historical plans. Smith seems to have been advising him, instead of following up his *History of the Stewarts* by the history of succeeding periods, to go back and write the history of the period before the Stewarts.

After mentioning John Home, Hume proceeds: "I can now give you the satisfaction of hearing that the play, though not near so well acted in Covent Garden as in this place, is likely to be very successful. Its great intrinsic merit breaks through all obstacles. When it shall be printed (which shall be soon) I am persuaded it will be esteemed the best, and by French critics the only tragedy of our language!...

“Did you ever hear of such madness and folly as our clergy have lately fallen into? For my part, I expect that the next Assembly will very solemnly pronounce the sentence of excommunication against me, but I do not apprehend it to be a matter of any consequence; what do you think?

“I am somewhat idle at present and somewhat indifferent as to my next undertaking. Shall I go backwards or forwards in my History? I think you used to tell me that you approved more of my going backwards. The other would be the more popular subject, but I am afraid I shall not find materials sufficient to ascertain the truth, at least without settling in London, which I own I have some reluctance to. I am settled here very much to my mind, and would not wish at my years to change the place of my abode.

“I have just now received a copy of *Douglas* from London. It will instantly be put in the press. I hope to be able to send you a copy in the same parcel with the dedication.”

Hume was now very anxious to have his friend nearer him, and thought in 1758 an opportunity could be contrived of translating Smith to a chair in the University of Edinburgh. There was at that time some probability of Professor Abercromby resigning the chair of Public Law (then styled the chair of the Law of Nature and Nations), and as Smith, though not a lawyer, was yet a distinguished professor of jurisprudence, his friends in Edinburgh immediately suggested his candidature, especially as they believed such a change would not be unacceptable to himself. The chair of the Law of Nature and Nations was one of the best endowed in the College, having a revenue of £150 a year independently of fees, but it had been founded as a job, and continued ever since to be treated as a sinecure. Not a single lecture had ever been delivered by any of its incumbents, in spite of repeated remonstrances on the part of the Faculty of Advocates, and Hume believed that if the Town Council, as administrators of the College, could be got to press for the delivery of the statutory lectures, the present professor would prefer the alternative of resignation. In that event the vacant office might easily, in Hume’s opinion, be obtained by Smith, inasmuch as the patronage was in the hands of the Crown, and Crown patronage in Scotland at the time was virtually exercised through Lord Justice-Clerk Milton (a nephew of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, the patriot), who had been, ever since the death of Lord President Forbes, the chief confidential adviser of the Duke of Argyle, the Minister for Scotland, and was personally

acquainted with Smith through his daughter Mrs. Wedderburn of Gosford, the friend of Robertson and John Home.

Others of Smith's Edinburgh friends zealously joined Hume in his representations, especially the faithful Johnstone (afterwards Sir W. Pulteney), who actually wrote Smith a letter on the subject along with Hume's. Hume's letter is as follows: —

Dear Smith — I sit down to write to you along with Johnstone, and as we have been talking over the matter, it is probable we shall employ the same arguments. As he is the younger lawyer, I leave him to open the case, and suppose that you have read his letter first. We are certain that the settlement of you here and of Ferguson at Glasgow would be perfectly easy by Lord Milton's Interest. The Prospect of prevailing with Abercrombie is also very good. For the same statesman by his influence over the Town Council could oblige him either to attend, which he never would do, or dispose of the office for the money which he gave for it. The only real difficulty is then with you. Pray then consider that this is perhaps the only opportunity we shall ever have of getting you to town. I dare swear that you think the difference of Place is worth paying something for, and yet it will really cost you nothing. You made above a hundred pound a year by your class when in this Place, though you had not the character of Professor. We cannot suppose that it will be less than a hundred and thirty after you are settled. John Stevenson — and it is John Stevenson — makes near a hundred and fifty, as we were informed upon Enquiry. Here is a hundred pounds a year for eight years' Purchase, which is a cheap purchase, even considered in the way of a Bargain. We flatter ourselves that you rate our company at something, and the Prospect of settling Ferguson will be an additional inducement. For though we think of making him take up the Project if you refuse it, yet it is uncertain whether he will consent; and it is attended in his case with many very obvious objections. I beseech you therefore to weigh all these motives over again. The alteration of these circumstances merit that you should put the matter again in deliberation. I had a letter from Miss Hepburn, where she regrets very much that you are settled at Glasgow, and that we had the chance of seeing you so seldom. — I am, dear Smith, yours sincerely,

David Hume.

8th June 1758.

P.S. — Lord Milton can with his finger stop the foul mouths of all the Roarers against heresy.

The postscript shows what we have already indicated, that Smith had not escaped the general hue and cry against heresy which was now for some years abroad in the country.

The Miss Hepburn who regrets so much the remoteness of Smith's residence is doubtless Miss Hepburn of Monkrig, near Haddington, one of those gifted literary ladies who were then not infrequently to be found in the country houses of Scotland. It was to Miss Hepburn and her sisters that John Home is said to have been indebted for the first idea of Douglas, and Robertson submitted to her the manuscript of his *History of Scotland* piece by piece as he wrote it. When it was finished the historian sent her a presentation copy with a letter, in which he said: "Queen Mary has grown up to her present form under your eye; you have seen her in many different shapes, and you have now a right to her. Were I a *galante* writer now, what a fine contrast might I make between you and Queen Mary? What a pretty string of antitheses between your virtues and her vices. I am glad, however, she did not resemble you. If she had, Rizzio would have only played first fiddle at her consort (*sic*), with a pension of a thousand merks and two benefits in a winter; Darnley would have been a colonel in the Guards; Bothwell would, on account of his valour, have been Warden of the Middle Marches, but would have been forbid to appear at court because of his profligacy. But if all that had been done, what would have become of my History?"

Smith seems to have declined, for whatever reason, to take up the suggestion of Hume about this chair of Law, for we find Hume presently trying hard to secure the place for Ferguson. The difficulty may have been about the price, for though Hume speaks of £800, it seems Abercromby wanted more than £1000, and Ferguson too had no mind to begin life with such a debt on his shoulders. But the world is probably no loser by the difficulty, whatever it was, which kept Smith five years longer among the merchants and commercial problems of Glasgow.

Smith was one of the founders, or at least the original members, of the Edinburgh Poker Club in 1762. Every one has heard of that famous club, but most persons probably think of it as if it were merely a social or convivial society; and Mr. Burton lends some countenance to that mistake by declaring that he has never been able to discover any other object it existed for except the drinking of claret. But the Poker Club was really a committee for political agitation, like the Anti-Corn-Law League or the Home Rule Union; only, after the more genial manners of those times, the first thing the committee thought requisite for the proper performance of their work was to lay in a stock of sound Burgundy that

could be drawn from the wood at eighteenpence or two shillings a quart, to engage a room in a tavern for the exclusive use of the members, and establish a weekly or bi-weekly dinner at a moderate figure, to keep the *poker* of agitation in active exercise. The club got its name from the practical purpose it was instituted to serve; it was to be an instrument for *stirring* opinion, especially in high quarters, on a public question which was exciting the people of Scotland greatly at the moment, the question of the establishment of a national Scotch militia. Some of the members thought that when that question was settled, the club should go on and take up others. George Dempster of Dunnichen, for example, an old and respected parliamentary hand of that time, wrote Dr. Carlyle in 1762 that when they got their militia, they ought to agitate for parliamentary reform, "so as to let the industrious farmer and manufacturer share at last in a privilege now engrossed by the great lord, the drunken laird, and the drunkener baillie." But they never got the length of considering other reforms, for the militia question was not settled in that generation. It outlived the Poker Club, and it outlived the Younger Poker Club which was enrolled to take up the cause in 1786, and it was not finally settled till 1793.

The Scotch had been roused to the defenceless condition of their country by the alarming appearance of Thurot in Scotch waters in 1759, and had instantly with one voice raised a cry for the establishment of a national militia. The whole country seemed to have set its mind on this measure with a singular unanimity, and a bill for its enactment was accordingly introduced into the House of Commons in 1760 by two of the principal Scotch members, both former ministers of the Crown — James Oswald and Gilbert Elliot; but it was rejected by a large majority, because within only fifteen years of the Rebellion the English members were unwilling to entrust the Scotch people with arms. The rejection of the bill provoked a deep feeling of national indignation, the slur it cast on the loyalty of Scotland being resented even more than the indifference it showed to her perils. It was under the influence of this wave of national sentiment that the Poker Club was founded in 1762, to procure for the Scotch at once equality of rights with the English and adequate defences for their country.

The membership of the club included many of the foremost men in the land — great noblemen, advocates, men of letters, together with a number of spirited county gentlemen on both sides of politics, who cried that they had a militia of their own before the Union, and must have a militia of their own again. Dr. Carlyle says most of the members of the

Select Society belonged to it, the exceptions consisting of a few who disapproved of the militia scheme, and of others, like the judges, who scrupled, on account of their official position, to take any part in a political movement. Carlyle gives a list of the members in 1774, containing among other names those of the Duke of Buccleugh, Lords Haddington, Glasgow, Glencairn, Elibank, and Mountstuart; Henry Dundas, Lord Advocate; Baron Mure, Hume, Adam Smith, Robertson, Black, Adam Ferguson, John Home, Dr. Blair, Sir James Steuart the economist, Dempster, Islay Campbell, afterwards Lord President; and John Clerk of Eldin. The first secretary of the club was William Johnstone (Sir William Pulteney), and, as has been frequently told, David Hume was jocularly appointed to a sinecure office created for him, the office of assassin, and lest Hume's good-nature should unfit him for the duties, Andrew Crosbie, advocate (the original of Scott's "Pleydell"), was made his assistant. The club met at first in Tom Nicholson's tavern, the Diversorium, at the Cross, and subsequently removed to more fashionable quarters at the famous Fortune's in the Stamp Office Close, where the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly held his levees, and the members dined every Friday at two and sat till six. However the club may have pulled wires in private, their public activity seems to have been very little; so far at least as literary advocacy of their cause went, nothing proceeded from it except a pamphlet by Dr. Carlyle, and a much-overlauded squib by Adam Ferguson, entitled "A History of the Proceedings in the Case of Margaret, commonly called Sister Peg."

Smith was, as I have said, one of the original members of the club, and from Carlyle's list would appear to have continued a member till 1774; but he was not a member of the Younger Poker Club, established in 1786. In the interval he had expressed in the *Wealth of Nations* a strong preference for a standing army over a national militia, after instituting a very careful examination of the whole subject. Whether his views had changed since 1762, or whether he had joined in the agitation for a militia merely as a measure of justice to Scotland or as an expedient of temporary necessity, without committing himself to any abstract admiration for the institution in general, I have no means of deciding; but we can hardly think he ever shared that kind of belief in the principle of a militia which animated men like Ferguson and Carlyle, and which, according to them, animated the other members of the club also at its birth. Ferguson says the club was founded "upon the principle of zeal for a militia and a conviction that there could be no lasting security for the

freedom and independence of these islands but in the valour and patriotism of an armed people"; and when, during his travels in Switzerland in 1775, he saw for the first time in his life a real militia — the object of his dreams — actually moving before him in the flesh, and going through their drill, his heart came to his mouth, and he wrote his friend Carlyle: "As they were the only body of men I ever saw under arms on the true principle for which arms should be carried, I felt much secret emotion, and could have shed tears." He was deeply disappointed a year later with Smith's apostasy on this question, or at least opposition, for Ferguson makes no accusation of apostasy. After reading the *Wealth of Nations*, he wrote Smith on the 18th of April 1776: "You have provoked, too, so far the Church, the universities, and the merchants, against all of whom I am willing to take your part; but you have likewise provoked the militia, and there I must be against you. The gentlemen and peasants of this country do not need the authority of philosophers to make them supine and negligent of every resource they might have in themselves in the case of certain extremities, of which the pressure, God knows, may be at no great distance. But of this more at Philippi."

But many others besides Smith had in this interval either found their zeal for a militia grown cool or their opinion of its value modified, and when Lord Mountstuart introduced his new Scotch Militia Bill in 1776, it received little support from Scotch members, and its rejection excited nothing like the feeling roused by the rejection of its predecessor in 1760, although it was attended this time with the galling aggravation that what was refused to the Scotch was in the same hour granted to the Irish, then the less disliked and distrusted nation of the two. Opinions had grown divided. Old Fletcher of Saltoun's idea of a citizen army with universal compulsory service was still much discussed, but many now objected to the compulsion, and others, among whom was Lord Kames, to the universality of the compulsion, rallying to the idea of Fencibles — *i.e.* regiments to be raised compulsorily by the landed proprietors, each furnishing a number of men proportioned to their valued rent. Smith said a militia formed in this way, like the old Highland militia, was the best of all militias, but he held that the day was past for militias of men with one hand on the sword and the other on the plough, and that nothing could now answer for what he calls "the noblest of all arts," the art of war, but the division of labour, which answered best for the arts of peace, and a standing army of soldiers by exclusive occupation.

Divided counsels and diminished zeal supply, no doubt, the main reason for the decay of the Poker Club, but other causes combined. Dr.

Carlyle, who was an active member of the club, says it began to decline when it transferred itself to more elegant quarters at Fortune's, because its dinners became too expensive for the members; and Lord Campbell attributes its dissolution definitely to the new taxes imposed on French wines to pay the cost of the American War. His statement is very explicit: "To punish the Government they agreed to dissolve the 'Poker,' and to form another society which should exist without consumption of any excisable commodity." But he gives no authority for the statement, and they are at least not likely to have been such fools as to think of punishing the Government by what was after all only an excellent way of punishing themselves. The wine duty was no doubt a real enough grievance; it was raised five or six times during the club's existence, and many a man who enjoyed his quart of Burgundy when the duty was less than half-a-crown a gallon, was obliged to do without it when the duty rose to seven shillings. It may be worth adding, however, that the Poker Club was revived as the Younger Poker Club in the very year, 1786, when the duty on Burgundy was reduced again by the new Commercial Treaty with France.

CHAPTER IX. THE “THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS”

1759. *Aet.* 36

Smith enjoyed a very high Scotch reputation long before his name was known to the great public by any contribution to literature. But in 1759 he gave his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* to the press, and took his place, by almost immediate and universal recognition, in the first rank of contemporary writers. The book is an essay supporting and illustrating the doctrine that moral approbation and disapprobation are in the last analysis expressions of sympathy with the feelings of an imaginary and impartial spectator, and its substance had already been given from year to year in his ordinary lectures to his students, though after the publication he thought it no longer necessary to dwell at the same length on this branch of his course, giving more time, no doubt, to jurisprudence and political economy. The book was published in London by Andrew Millar in two vols. 8vo. It was from the first well received, its ingenuity, eloquence, and great copiousness of effective illustration being universally acknowledged and admired. Smith sent a copy to Hume in London, and received the following reply, which contains some interesting particulars of the reception of the book there: —

London, *12th April 1759*.

Dear Sir — I give you thanks for the agreeable present of your *Theory*. Wedderburn and I made presents of our copies to such of our acquaintances as we thought good judges and proper to spread the reputation of the book. I sent one to the Duke of Argyle, to Lord Lyttelton, Horace Walpole, Soame Jenyns, and Burke, an Irish gentleman who wrote lately a very pretty treatise on the Sublime. Millar desired my permission to send one in your name to Dr. Warburton.

I have delayed writing you till I could tell you something of the success of the book, and could prognosticate with some probability whether it should be finally damned to oblivion or should be registered in the temple of immortality. Though it has been published only a few weeks, I think there appear already such strong symptoms that I can almost venture to foretell its fate. It is, in short, this —

But I have been interrupted in my letter by a foolish impertinent visit of one who has lately come from Scotland. He tells me that the

University of Glasgow intend to declare Rouet's office vacant upon his going abroad with Lord Hope. I question not but you will have our friend Ferguson in your eye, in case another project for procuring him a place in the University of Edinburgh should fail. Ferguson has very much polished and improved his *Treatise on Refinement*, and with some amendments it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and singular genius. The *Epigoniad*, I hope, will do, but it is somewhat uphill work. As I doubt not but you consult the Reviews sometimes at present, you will see in *The Critical Review* a letter upon that poem; and I desire you to employ your conjectures in finding out the author. Let me see a sample of your skill in knowing hints by guessing at the person.

I am afraid of Kames's *Law Tracts*. The man might as well think of making a fine sauce by a mixture of wormwood and aloes as an agreeable combination by joining metaphysics and Scottish law. However, the book, I believe, has merit, though few people ever take the pains of inquiring into it. But to return to your book and its success in this town. I must tell you —

A plague to interruptions! I ordered myself to be denied, and yet here is one that has broke in upon me again. He is a man of letters, and we have had a good deal of literary conversation. You told me that you was curious of literary anecdotes, and therefore I shall inform you of a few that have come to my knowledge. I believe I have mentioned to you already Helvetius's book *De l'Esprit*. It is worth your reading, not for its philosophy, which I do not highly value, but for its agreeable composition. I had a letter from him a few days ago, wherein he tells me that my name was much oftener in the manuscript, but that the censor of books at Paris obliged him to strike it out.

Voltaire has lately published a small work called *Candide, ou l'Optimisme*. I shall give you a detail of it. But what is all this to my book, say you? My dear Mr. Smith, have patience; compose yourself to tranquillity. Show yourself a philosopher in practice as well as profession. Think on the impotence and rashness and futility of the common judgments of men, how little they are regulated by reason on any subject, much more on philosophical subjects, which so far exceed the comprehension of the vulgar —

Non, si quid turbida Roma Elevet, accedas: examenve improbum in iliâ Castiges trutinâ: nec te quaesiveris extra.

A wise man's kingdom is his own heart; or, if he ever looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few, who are free from prejudices and capable of examining; his work. Nothing, indeed, can be a stronger

presumption of falsehood than the approbation of the multitude; and Phocion, you know, always suspected himself of some blunder when he was attended with the applause of the populace.

Supposing, therefore, that you have duly prepared yourself for the worst by all these reflections, I proceed to tell you the melancholy news that your book has been very unfortunate, for the public seem disposed to applaud it extremely. It was looked for by the foolish people with some impatience; and the mob of literati are beginning already to be very loud in its praises. Three bishops called yesterday at Millar's shop in order to buy copies, and to ask questions about the author. The Bishop of Peterborough said he had passed the evening in a company where he heard it extolled above all books in the world. The Duke of Argyle is more decisive than he used to be in its favour. I suppose he either considers it as an exotic, or thinks the author will be very serviceable to him in the Glasgow elections. Lord Lyttelton says that Robertson and Smith and Bower are the glories of English literature. Oswald protests he does not know whether he has reaped more instruction or entertainment from it, but you may easily judge what reliance can be placed on his judgment. He has been engaged all his life in public business, and he never sees any faults in his friends. Millar exults and brags that two-thirds of the edition are already sold, and that he is now sure of success. You see what a son of the earth that is, to value books only by the profit they bring him. In that view, I believe, it may prove a very good book.

Charles Townshend, who passes for the cleverest fellow in England, is so much taken with the performance that he said to Oswald he would put the Duke of Buccleugh under the author's care, and would make it worth his while to accept of that charge. As soon as I heard this I called on him twice with a view of talking with him about the matter, and of convincing him of the propriety of sending that young gentleman to Glasgow, for I could not hope that he could offer you any terms which would tempt you to renounce your professorship; but I missed him. Mr. Townshend passes for being a little uncertain in his resolutions, so perhaps you need not build much on his sally.

In recompense for so many mortifying things, which nothing but truth could have extorted from me, and which I could easily have multiplied to a greater number, I doubt not but you are so good a Christian as to return good for evil, and to flatter my vanity by telling me that all the godly in Scotland abuse me for my account of John Knox and the Reformation. I suppose you are glad to see my paper end, and that I am obliged to conclude with — Your humble servant.

On the 28th of July Hume again writes from London on the same subject: —

I am very well acquainted with Bourke, who was much taken with your book. He got your direction from me with a view of writing to you and thanking you for your present, for I made it pass in your name. I wonder he has not done it. He is now in Ireland. I am not acquainted with Jenyns, but he spoke very highly of the book to Oswald, who is his brother in the Board of Trade. Millar showed me a few days ago a letter from Lord Fitzmaurice, where he tells him that he has carried over a few copies to the Hague for presents. Mr. York was very much taken with it, as well as several others who had read it.

I am told that you are preparing a new edition, and propose to make some additions and alterations in order to obviate objections. I shall use the freedom to propose one; which, if it appears to be of any weight, you may have in your eye. I wish you had more particularly and fully proved that all kinds of sympathy are agreeable. This is the hinge of your system, and yet you only mention the matter cursorily on . Now it would appear that there is a disagreeable sympathy as well as an agreeable. And, indeed, as the sympathetic passion is a reflex image of the principal, it must partake of its qualities, and be painful when that is so. Indeed, *when we converse with a man with whom we can entirely sympathise*, that is when there is a warm and intimate friendship, the cordial openness of such a commerce overbears the pain of a disagreeable sympathy, and renders the whole movement agreeable, but in ordinary cases this cannot have place. A man tired and disgusted with everything, always *ennuié*, sickly, complaining, embarrassed, such a one throws an evident damp on company, which I suppose would be accounted for by sympathy, and yet is disagreeable.

It is always thought a difficult problem to account for the pleasure from the tears and grief and sympathy of tragedy, which would not be the case if all sympathy was agreeable. An hospital would be a more entertaining place than a ball. I am afraid that on and 111 this proposition has escaped you, or rather is interwoven with your reasoning. In that place you say expressly, “It is painful to go along with grief, and we always enter into it with reluctance.” It will probably be requisite for you to modify or explain this sentiment, and reconcile it to your system.

Burke, who was thus reported by Hume to have been so much taken with the book, reviewed it most favourably in the *Annual Register*, and not only recognised Smith’s theory as a new and ingenious one, but

accepted it as being “in all its essential parts just and founded on truth and nature.” “The author,” he says, “seeks for the foundation of the just, the fit, the proper, the decent, in our most common and most allowed passions, and making approbation and disapprobation the tests of virtue and vice, and showing that these are founded on sympathy, he raises from this simple truth one of the most beautiful fabrics of moral theory that has perhaps ever appeared. The illustrations are numerous and happy, and show the author to be a man of uncommon observation. His language is easy and spirited, and puts things before you in the fullest light; it is rather painting than writing.” One of the most interesting characteristics of the book, from a biographical point of view, is that mentioned by this reviewer; it certainly shows the author to have been a man of uncommon observation, not only of his own mental states, but of the life and ways of men about him; as Mackintosh remarks, the book has a high value for “the variety of explanations of life and manners which embellish” it, apart altogether from the thesis it is written to prove.

Charles Townshend adhered to his purpose about Smith with much more steadiness than Hume felt able to give him credit for. Townshend, it need perhaps hardly be said, was the brilliant but flighty young statesman to whom we owe the beginnings of our difficulties with America. He was the colonial minister who first awoke the question of “colonial rights,” by depriving the colonists of the appointment of their own judges, and he was the Chancellor of the Exchequer who imposed the tea duty in 1767 which actually provoked the rebellion. “A man,” says Horace Walpole, “endowed with every great talent, who must have been the greatest man of his age if he had only common sincerity, common steadiness, and common sense.” “In truth,” said Burke, “he was the delight and ornament of this house, and the charm of every private society which he honoured with his presence. Perhaps there never arose in this country nor in any other a man of a more pointed and finished wit, and (when his passions were not concerned) of a more refined and exquisite and penetrating judgment.” He had in 1754 married the Countess of Dalkeith, daughter and co-heiress of the famous Duke of Argyle and Greenwich, and widow of the eldest son of the Duke of Buccleugh. She had been left with two sons by her first husband, of whom the eldest had succeeded his grandfather as Duke of Buccleugh in 1751, and was now at Eton under the tutorship of Mr. Hallam, father of the historian. On leaving Eton he was to travel abroad with a tutor for some time, and it was for this post of tutor to the Duke abroad that

Townshend, after reading the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, had set his heart on engaging its author.

Townshend bore, as Hume hints, a bad character for changeability. He was popularly nicknamed the Weathercock, and a squib of the day once reported that Mr. Townshend was ill of a pain in his side, but regretted that it was not said on which side. But he stood firmly to his project about Smith; paid him a visit in Glasgow that very summer, saw much of him, invited him to Dalkeith House, arranged with him about the selection and despatch of a number of books for the young Duke's study, and seems to have arrived at a general understanding with Smith that the latter should accept the tutorship when the time came. Townshend of course delighted the Glasgow professors during this visit, as he delighted everybody, but he seems in turn to have been delighted with them, for William Hunter wrote Cullen a little later in the same year that Townshend had come back from Scotland passing the highest encomiums on everybody. Smith seems to have acted as his chief cicerone in Glasgow, as appears from one of the trivial incidents which were all that the contemporary writers of Smith's obituary notices seemed able to learn of his life. He was showing Townshend the tannery, one of the spectacles of Glasgow at the time— "an amazing sight," Pennant calls it — and walked in his absent way right into the tanpit, from which, however, he was immediately rescued without any harm.

In September 1759, on the death of Mr. Townshend's brother, Smith wrote him the following letter: —

Sir — It gives me great concern that the first letter I ever have done myself the honour to write to you should be upon so melancholy an occasion. As your Brother was generally known here, he is universally regretted, and your friends are sorry that, amidst the public rejoicings and prosperity, your family should have occasion to be in mourning. Everybody here remembers you with the greatest admiration and affection, and nothing that concerns you is indifferent to them, and there are more people who sympathise with you than you are aware of. It would be the greatest pedantry to offer any topics of consolation to you who are naturally so firm and so manly. As your Brother dyed in the service of his country, you have the best and the noblest consolation: That since it has pleased God to deprive you of the satisfaction you might have expected from the continuance of his life, it has at least been so ordered that y^{e} manner of his death does you honour.

You left Scotland so much sooner than you proposed, when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Glasgow, that I had not an opportunity of making you a visit at Dalkieth (*sic*), as I intended, before you should return to London.

I sent about a fortnight ago the books which you ordered for the Duke of Buccleugh to Mr. Campbell at Edinburgh. I paid for them, according to your orders, as soon as they were ready. I send you enclosed a list of them, with the prices discharged on the back. You will compare with the books when they arrive. Mr. Campbell will further them to London. I should have wrote to you of this a fortnight ago, but my natural dilatoriness prevented me. — I ever am, with the greatest esteem and regard, your most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

Adam Smith.

College of Glasgow,

17th September 1759.

The second edition of the *Theory*, which Hume was anticipating immediately in 1759, did not appear till 1761, and it contained none of the alterations or additions he expected; but the *Dissertation on the Origin of Languages* was for the first time published along with it. The reason for the omission of the other additions is difficult to discover, for the author had not only prepared them, but gone the length of placing them in the printer's hands in 1760, as appears from the following letter. They did not appear either in the third edition in 1767, or the fourth in 1774, or the fifth in 1781; nor till the sixth, which was published, with considerable additions and corrections, immediately before the author's death in 1790. The earlier editions were published at 6s., and the 1790 edition at 12s. This was the last edition published in the author's lifetime, and it has been many times republished in the century that has elapsed since. This is the letter just referred to: —

Dear Strahan — I sent up to Mr. Millar four or five Posts ago the same additions which I had formerly sent to you, with a good many corrections and improvements which occurred to me since. If there are any typographical errors remaining in the last edition which had escaped me, I hope you will correct them. In other respects I could wish it was printed pretty exactly according to the copy which I delivered to you. A man, says the Spanish proverb, had better be a cuckold and know nothing of the matter, than not be a cuckold and believe himself to be one. And in the same manner, say I, an author had sometimes better be in the wrong and believe himself in the right, than be in the right and believe or even suspect himself to be in the wrong. To desire you to read

my book over and mark all the corrections you would wish me to make upon a sheet of paper and send it to me, would, I fear, be giving you too much trouble. If, however, you could induce yourself to take this trouble, you would oblige me greatly; I know how much I shall be benefitted, and I shall at the same time preserve the pretious right of private judgment, for the sake of which our forefathers kicked out the Pope and the Pretender. I believe you to be much more infallible than the Pope, but as I am a Protestant, my conscience makes me scruple to submit to any unscriptural authority.

Apropos to the Pope and the Pretender, have you read Hook's Memoirs? I have been ill these ten days, otherwise I should have written to you sooner, but I sat up the day before yesterday in my bed and read them thro' with infinite satisfaction, tho' they are by no means well written. The substance of what is in them I knew before, tho' not in such detail. I am afraid they are published at an unlucky time, and may throw a damp upon our militia. Nothing, however, appears to me more excusable than the disaffection of Scotland at that time. The Union was a measure from which infinite good has been derived to this country. The Prospect of that good, however, must then have appeared very remote and very uncertain. The immediate effect of it was to hurt the interest of every single order of men in the country. The dignity of the nobility was undone by it. The greater part of the gentry who had been accustomed to represent their own country in its own Parliament were cut out for ever from all hopes of representing it in a British Parliament. Even the merchants seemed to suffer at first. The trade to the Plantations was, indeed, opened to them. But that was a trade which they knew nothing about; the trade they were acquainted with, that to France, Holland, and the Baltic, was laid under new embar(r)assments, which almost totally annihilated the two first and most important branches of it. The Clergy, too, who were then far from insignificant, were alarmed about the Church. No wonder if at that time all orders of men conspired in cursing a measure so hurtful to their immediate interest. The views of their Posterity are now very different; but those views could be seen by but few of our forefathers, by those few in but a confused and imperfect manner.

It will give me the greatest satisfaction to hear from you. I pray you write to me soon. Remember me to the Franklins. I hope I shall have the grace to write to the youngest by next post to thank him, in the name both of the College and of myself, for his very agreeable present. Remember me likewise to Mr. Griffiths. I am greatly obliged to him for

the very handsom character he gave of my book in his review. — I ever am, dear Strahan, most faithfully and sincerely yours,

Adam Smith.

Glasgow,
4th April 1760.

The Franklins mentioned in this letter are Benjamin Franklin and his son, who had spent six weeks in Scotland in the spring of the previous year— “six weeks,” said Franklin, “of the densest happiness I have met with in any part of my life.” We know from Dr. Carlyle that during this visit Franklin met Smith one evening at supper at Robertson’s in Edinburgh, but it seems from this letter highly probable that he had gone through to Glasgow, and possibly stayed with Smith at the College. Why otherwise should the younger, or, as Smith says, youngest, Franklin have thought of making a presentation to Glasgow College, or Smith of thanking him not merely in the name of the College, but in his own? Strahan was one of Franklin’s most intimate private friends. They took a pride in one another as old compositors who had risen in the world; and Smith had no doubt heard of, and perhaps from, the Franklins in some of Strahan’s previous letters.

The Mr. Griffiths to whom Smith desires to be remembered was the editor of the *Monthly Review*, in which a favourable notice of his book had appeared in the preceding July.

CHAPTER X. FIRST VISIT TO LONDON

1761. *Aet.* 38

Smith visited London for the first time in September 1761, when Hume and probably others of his Scotch friends happened to be already there. He had not visited London in the course of his seven years' residence at Oxford, for, as Mr. Rogers reports, the Balliol Buttery Books show him never to have left Oxford at all during that time, and he had not visited London in the course of the first ten years he spent in Glasgow, otherwise the University would be certain to have preserved some record of it. For Glasgow University had much business to transact in London at that period, and would be certain to have commissioned Smith, if he was known to be going there, to transact some of that business for it. It never did so, however, till 1761. But in that year, on the 16th of June, the Senate having learned Smith's purpose of going to London, authorise him to get the accounts of the ordinary revenue of the College and the subdeanery for crops 1755, 1756, 1757, and 1758 cleared with the Treasury (that public office being then always in deep arrears with its work); to meet with Mr. Joshua Sharpe and settle his accounts with respect to the lands given to the College by Dr. Williams (the Dr. Williams of Williams's Library); to inquire into the state of the division of Snell's estate as to Coleburn farm, and the affair of the Prebends of Lincoln; and to get all particulars about the £500 costs in the Snell lawsuit with Balliol, which had to be paid to the University. Those documents were delivered, on the 27th of August, to Smith *in præsentia*, and then on the 15th of October, after his return, he reported what he had done, and produced a certificate, signed by the Secretary to the Treasury, finding that the University had in the four years specified and the years preceding expended above their revenue the sum of £2631:6:5-11/12. I mention all these details with the view of showing that during Smith's residence in Glasgow the University had a variety of important and difficult business to transact in London, which they would be always glad to get one of their own number to attend to personally on the spot, and that as Smith was never asked to transact any of this business for them except in 1761, it may almost with certainty be inferred that he never was in London on any other occasion during his connection with that University.

Now this journey to London in 1761 is memorable because it constituted the economic “road to Damascus” for a future Prime Minister of England. It was during this journey, I believe, that Smith had Lord Shelburne for his travelling companion, and converted the young statesman to free trade. In 1795 Shelburne (then become Marquis of Lansdowne) writes Dugald Stewart: “I owe to a journey I made with Mr. Smith from Edinburgh to London the difference between light and darkness through the best part of my life. The novelty of his principles, added to my youth and prejudices, made me unable to comprehend them at the time, but he urged them with so much benevolence, as well as eloquence, that they took a certain hold which, though it did not develop itself so as to arrive at full conviction for some few years after, I can truly say has constituted ever since the happiness of my life, as well as the source of any little consideration I may have enjoyed in it.”

Shelburne was the first English statesman, except perhaps Burke, who grasped and advocated free trade as a broad political principle; and though his biographer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, attributes his conversion to Morellet, it is plain from the letter to Stewart that Morellet had only watered, it was Smith that sowed.

It is important, therefore, to fix if possible the date of this interesting journey. It occurred, Lord Shelburne says, in his own youth, and the only journeys to London Smith made during the period which with any reasonable stretching may be called Shelburne’s youth, were made in 1761, 1763, and 1773. Now we have no positive knowledge of Shelburne being in Scotland any of these years, but in 1761 his brother, the Hon. Thomas Fitzmaurice, who had been studying under Smith in Glasgow, and living in Smith’s house, left Glasgow for Oxford; and Shelburne, who, since his father’s death that very year, was taking, as we know from his correspondence with Sir William Blackstone on the subject, a very responsible concern in his younger brother’s education and welfare, may very probably have gone to Scotland to attend him back. This circumstance seems to turn the balance in favour of 1761 and against the other two dates.

It is almost certain that the journey was not in 1773, for Shelburne would hardly have thought of himself as so young at that date, six years after he had been Secretary of State, and besides he had probably cast off his prejudices by that time, and was already (as we shall presently find) receiving instruction from Smith on colonial policy in 1767; and whether it was 1761 or 1763, it in either case shows at what a long period before the appearance of the *Wealth of Nations* Smith was advocating those

broad principles which struck Shelburne at the time for their “novelty,” and were only fully comprehended and accepted by him a few years afterwards.

Of Smith’s visit to London on this occasion we know almost no particulars, but I think the notorious incident of his altercation with Johnson at the house of Strahan the printer must be referred to this visit. The story was told by Robertson to Boswell and Allan Ramsay, the painter, one evening in 1778, when they were dining together at the painter’s house, and Johnson was expected as one of the guests. Before the doctor arrived the conversation happened to turn on him, and Robertson said, “He and I have always been very gracious. The first time I met him was one evening at Strahan’s, when he had just had an unlucky altercation with Adam Smith, to whom he had been so rough that Strahan, after Smith was gone, had remonstrated, and told him that I was coming soon, and that he was uneasy to think that he might behave in the same way to me. ‘No, no, sir,’ said Johnson, ‘I warrant you Robertson and I shall do very well.’ Accordingly he was gentle and good-humoured and gracious with me the whole evening, and he has been so on every occasion that we have met since. I have often said laughing that I have been in a great measure indebted to Smith for my good reception.”

Now this incident must have occurred years before 1778, the date of Ramsay’s dinner-party at which it was related, for Robertson speaks of having met Johnson many times between; and it probably occurred before 1763, because in 1763 Boswell mentions in his journal having told Johnson one evening that Smith had in his lectures in Glasgow expressed the strongest preference for rhyme over blank verse, and Johnson alludes in his reply to an unfriendly meeting he had once had with Smith. “Sir,” said he, “I was once in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other, but had I known that he loved rhyme so much as you tell me he does I should have hugged him.” This answer seems to imply that the meeting was not quite recent — not in 1763 — and if it occurred before 1763, it must have been in 1761.

It was, no doubt, this unhappy altercation that gave rise to the legendary anecdote which has obtained an immortality it ill deserved, but which cannot be passed over here, because it has been given to the world by three independent authorities of such importance as Sir Walter Scott, Lord Jeffrey, and Bishop Wilberforce. Scott communicates the anecdote to Croker for his edition of Boswell’s *Johnson*, as it was told him by Professor John Millar of Glasgow, who had it from Smith himself the night the affair happened. Wilberforce gives it ostensibly as it was heard

by his father from Smith's lips; and Jeffrey, in reviewing Wilberforce's book in the *Edinburgh Review*, says he heard the story, in substantially the same form as Wilberforce tells it, nearly fifty years before, "from the mouth of one of a party into which Mr. Smith came immediately after the collision."

The story, as told by Scott, is in this wise: "Mr. Boswell has chosen to omit (in his account of Johnson's visit to Glasgow), for reasons which will be presently obvious, that Johnson and Adam Smith met at Glasgow; but I have been assured by Professor John Millar that they did so, and that Smith, leaving the party in which he had met Johnson, happened to come to another company where Millar was. Knowing that Smith had been in Johnson's society, they were anxious to know what had passed, and the more so as Dr. Smith's temper seemed much ruffled. At first Smith would only answer, 'He's a brute; he's a brute;' but on closer examination it appeared that Johnson no sooner saw Smith than he attacked him for some point of his famous letter on the death of Hume. Smith vindicated the truth of his statement. 'What did Johnson say?' was the universal inquiry. 'Why, he said,' replied Smith, with the deepest impression of resentment, 'he said, You lie.' 'And what did you reply?' 'I said, You are a son of a —— !' On such terms did these two great moralists meet and part, and such was the classical dialogue between two great teachers of philosophy."

Wilberforce's version is identical with Scott's, except that it commits the absurdity of making Smith tell not the story itself, but the story of his first telling it. "'Some of our friends,' said Adam Smith, 'were anxious that we should meet, and a party was arranged for the purpose in the course of the evening. I was soon after entering another society, and perhaps with a manner a little confused. "Have you met Dr. Johnson?" my friends exclaimed. "Yes, I have." "And what passed between you?"'" and so on. All this at any rate is legendary outgrowth on the very face of it, and nonsensical even for that. But even the story itself, as told so circumstantially by Scott, is demonstrably mythical in most of its circumstances. Johnson was never in Glasgow except one day, the 29th of October 1773, and in October 1773 Smith was in London, and as we know from an incidental parenthesis in the *Wealth of Nations*, engaged in the composition of that great work. Hume, again, did not die till 1776, so that there were better and more "obvious reasons" than Scott imagined for Boswell's omitting mention of a meeting between Johnson and Smith at Glasgow which never took place, and a collision between them about a famous letter which was not then written. Time, place, and subject are all

alike wrong, but these Scott might think but the mortal parts of the story, and he sometimes varied them in the telling himself. Moore heard him tell it at his own table at Abbotsford somewhat differently from the version he gave to Croker. But when so much is plainly the insensible creation of the imagination, what reliance can be placed on the remainder? All we know is that apparently at their very first meeting those two philosophers did, in Strahan's house in London in September 1761, have a personal altercation of an outrageous character, at which, if not the very words reported by Scott, then words quite as strong must manifestly have passed between them; that their host declared Johnson to be entirely in the wrong, and that Smith withdrew from the company, and would very possibly go, as the story relates, to another company, his Scotch friends at the British Coffee-House in Cockspur Street, then the great Scotch resort, — a house which was kept by the sister of his friend Bishop Douglas, which was frequented much by Wedderburn, John Home, and others, and to which Smith's own letters used to be addressed.

One thing remains to be said: if the world has never been able to suffer this little morsel of scandal to be forgotten, the two principals in the feud themselves were able to forget it entirely. Smith was at a later period in the habit of meeting Johnson constantly at the table of common friends in London, and was elected in 1775 a member of Johnson's famous club, which would of course have been impossible — and indeed in so small a society never have been thought of — had the slightest remnant of animosity continued on either side. Johnson, it is true, was still occasionally rude to Smith, as he was occasionally rude to every other member of the club; and certainly Smith never established with him anything of the cordial personal friendship he enjoyed with Burke, Gibbon, or Reynolds; but their common membership in the Literary Club is proof of the complete burial of their earlier quarrel.

CHAPTER XI. LAST YEAR IN GLASGOW

1763. *Aet.* 40

In 1763 the Rev. William Ward of Broughton, chaplain to the Marquis of Rockingham, was bringing out his *Essay on Grammar*, which Sir William Hamilton thought “perhaps the most philosophical essay on the English language extant,” and sent an abstract of it to Smith through a common friend, Mr. George Baird, to whom Smith wrote the following letter on the subject: —

Glasgow, *7th February 1763*.

Dear Sir — I have read over the contents of your Friend’s work with very great pleasure; and heartily wish it was in my power to give, or to procure him all the encouragement which his ingenuity and industry deserve. I think myself greatly obliged to him for the very obliging notice he has been pleased to take of me, and should be glad to contribute anything in my power to compleating his design. I approve greatly of his plan for a Rational Grammar, and am convinced that a work of this kind, executed with his abilities and industry, may prove not only the best system of grammar, but the best system of logic in any language, as well as the best history of the natural progress of the human mind in forming the most important abstractions upon which all reasoning depends. From the short abstract which Mr. Ward has been so good as to send me, it is impossible for me to form any very decisive judgment concerning the propriety of every part of his method, particularly of some of his divisions. If I was to treat the same subject, I should endeavour to begin with the consideration of verbs; these being in my apprehension the original parts of speech, first invented to express in one word a compleat event; I should then have endeavoured to show how the subject was divided to form the attribute, and afterwards how the object was distinguished from both; and in this manner I should have tried to investigate the origin and use of all the different parts of speech and of all their different modifications, considered as necessary to express the different qualifications and relations of any single event. Mr. Ward, however, may have excellent reasons for following his own method; and perhaps if I was engaged in the same task I should find it necessary to follow the same; things frequently appearing in a very

different light when taken in a general view, which is the only view I can pretend to have taken of them, and when considered in detail.

Mr. Ward, when he mentions the definitions which different authors have given of nouns substantive, takes no notice of that of the Abbé Girard, the author of the book called *Les Vrais Principes de la Langue Françoise*, which made me think it might be possible that he had not seen it. It is the book which first set me a thinking upon these subjects, and I have received more instruction from it than from any other I have yet seen upon them. If Mr. Ward has not seen it, I have it at his service. The grammatical articles, too, in the French *Encyclopédie* have given me a good deal of entertainment. Very probably Mr. Ward has seen both these works, and as he may have considered the subject more than I have done, may think less of them. Remember me to Mrs. Baird and Mr. Oswald, and believe me to be, with great truth, dear sir, sincerely yours,

Adam Smith.

Shortly after the date of this letter, Smith, who was now probably beginning to see the approach of the day when he would lay down his Glasgow professorship in order to superintend the studies of the young Duke of Buccleugh, writes David Hume, pressing for his long-promised visit to the West. The occasion of the letter is to introduce a young gentleman of whom I know nothing, but who was doubtless one of the English students who were attracted to Glasgow by Smith's rising fame. He was possibly the first Earl of Carnarvon, of whose uncle, Nicholas Herbert, Smith told Rogers the story that he had read over once a list of the Eton boys and repeated it four years afterwards to his nephew, then Lord Porchester. Smith said he knew him well. The letter is as follows: —

My Dear Hume — This letter will be presented to you by Mr. Henry Herbert, a young gentleman who is very well acquainted with your works, and upon that account extremely desirous of being introduced to the authour. As I am convinced that you will find him extremely agreeable, I shall make no apology for introducing him. He proposes to stay a few days in Edinburgh while the company are there, and would be glad to have the liberty of calling upon you sometimes when it suits your conveniency to receive him. If you indulge him in this, both he and I will think ourselves infinitely obliged to you.

You have been long promising us a visit at Glasgow, and I have made Mr. Herbert promise to endeavour to bring you along with him. Though you have resisted all my sollicitations, I hope you will not resist his. I hope I need not tell you that it will give me the greatest pleasure to see

you. — I ever am, my dear friend, most affectionately and sincerely yours,

Adam Smith.

Glasgow, *22nd February 1763*.

To that letter Hume returned the following answer: —

Dear Smith — I was obliged to you both for your kind letter and for the opportunity which you afforded me of making acquaintance with Mr. Herbert, who appears to me a very promising young man. I set up a chaise in May next, which will give me the liberty of travelling about, and you may be sure a journey to Glasgow will be one of the first I shall undertake. I intend to require with great strictness an account how you have been employing your Leisure, and I desire you to be ready for that purpose. Wo be to you if the Ballance be against you. Your friends here will also expect that I should bring you with me. It seems to me very long since I saw you. — Most sincerely,

David Hume.

Edinburgh, *28th March 1763*.

This long-meditated visit was apparently never accomplished, the chaise, notwithstanding. Only a few months more pass and the scene completely changes; the two friends are one after the other transported suddenly to France on new vocations, and their first meeting now was in Paris.

Hume writes Smith from Edinburgh on the 9th of August 1763 intimating his appointment as Secretary to the English Embassy at Paris, and bidding him adieu. “I am a little hurried,” he says, “in my preparations, but I could not depart without bidding you adieu, my good friend, and without acquainting you with the reasons of so sudden a movement. I have not great expectations of revisiting this country soon, but I hope it will not be impossible; but we may meet abroad, which will be a great satisfaction to me.”

Smith’s reply has not been preserved, but it seems to have contained among other things a condemnation, in Smith’s most decisive style, of the recent proceedings of his friend Lord Shelburne in connection with various intrigues and negotiations set agoing by the Court and Lord Bute with the view of increasing the power of the Crown in English politics. That appears from a letter Hume writes Smith from London on 13th September, wanting information about his new chief’s eldest son, Lord Beauchamp, regarding whom he had once heard Smith mention something told by “that severe critic Mr. Herbert,” and to whom Hume

was now to act in the capacity of tutor in conjunction with his official duties as Secretary of Legation. Then after relating the story of Bute's negotiations with Pitt through Shelburne, and stating that Lord Shelburne resigned because he found himself obnoxious on account of his share in that negotiation, he says: "I see you are much incensed with that nobleman, but he always speaks of you with regard. I hear that your pupil, Mr. Fitzmaurice, makes a very good figure at Paris."

Smith was always a stout Whig, strongly opposed to any attempt to increase the power of the Crown, and cordially denounced Bute and all his works. He was delighted with the famous No. 45 of the *North Briton*, published in the April of this very year 1763, and after reading it exclaimed to Dr. Carlyle, "Bravo! this fellow (Wilkes) will either be hanged in six months, or he will get Lord Bute impeached." Shelburne after his resignation in September voted against the Court in the Wilkes affair, but up till then, at any rate, his public conduct could not be viewed by a man of Smith's political principles with anything but the most absolute condemnation, and the condemnation would be all the stronger because, from personal intercourse with his lordship, Smith knew that he was really a man of liberal mind and reforming spirit, from whom he had a right to look for better things.

When Hume arrived in France the first letter he wrote to any of his friends at home was to Smith. He had been only a week in the country, and describes his first experiences of the curious transformation he then suddenly underwent: from being the object of attack and reproach and persecution for half a lifetime among the honest citizens of Edinburgh, he had become the idol of extravagant worship among the great and powerful at the Court of France.

"During the last days in particular," he says, "that I have been at Fontainebleau I have *suffered* (the expression is not improper) as much flattery as almost any man has ever done in the same time, but there are few days in my life when I have been in good health that I would not rather pass over again.

"I had almost forgot in this effusion, shall I say, of my misanthropy or my vanity to mention the subject which first put my pen in my hand. The Baron d'Holbach, whom I saw at Paris, told me that there was one under his eye that was translating your *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and desired me to inform you of it. Mr. Fitzmaurice, your old friend, interests himself strongly in this undertaking. Both of them wish to know if you

propose to make any alteration on the work, and desire you to inform me of your intentions in that particular.”

Hume’s hope of their “not impossible” meeting in Paris was destined to be gratified sooner than he could have conjectured. A few days before Smith received this letter from Hume he had received likewise the following letter from Charles Townshend, intimating that the time had now come for the Duke of Buccleugh to go abroad, and renewing to Smith the offer of the post of travelling tutor to his Grace: —

Dear Sir — The time now drawing near when the Duke of Buccleugh intends to go abroad, I take the liberty of renewing the subject to you: that if you should still have the same disposition to travel with Him I may have the satisfaction of informing Lady Dalkeith and His Grace of it, and of congratulating them upon an event which I know that they, as well as myself, have so much at heart. The Duke is now at Eton: He will remain there until Christmass. He will then spend some short time in London, that he may be presented at Court, and not pass instantaneously from school to a foreign country; but it were to be wished He should not be long in Town, exposed to the habits and companions of London, before his mind has been more formed and better guarded by education and experience.

I do not enter at this moment upon the subject of establishment, because if you have no objection to the situation, I know we cannot differ about the terms. On the contrary, you will find me more sollicitous than yourself to make the connection with Buccleugh as satisfactory and advantageous to you as I am persuaded it will be essentially beneficial to him.

The Duke of Buccleugh has lately made great progress both in his knowledge of ancient languages and in his general taste for composition. With these improvements his amusement from reading and his love of instruction have naturally increased. He has sufficient talents: a very manly temper, and an integrity of heart and reverence for truth, which in a person of his rank and fortune are the firmest foundation of weight in life and uniform greatness. If it should be agreeable to you to finish his education, and mould these excellent materials into a settled character, I make no doubt but he will return to his family and country the very man our fondest hopes have fancied him.

I go to Town next Friday, and should be obliged to you for your answer to this letter. — I am, with sincere affection and esteem, dear sir, your most faithful and most obedient humble servant,

C. Townshend.

Lady Dalkeith presents her compliments to you.

Adderbury, *25th October 1763*.

Smith accepted the offer. The terms were a salary of £300 a year, with travelling expenses while abroad, and a pension of £300 a year for life afterwards. He was thus to have twice his Glasgow income, and to have it assured till death. The pension was no doubt a principal inducement to a Scotch professor in those days to take such a post, for a Scotch professor had then no resource in his old age except the price he happened to receive for his chair from his successor in the event of his resignation; and we find several of them — Professors Moor and Robert Simson of Glasgow among others — much harassed with pecuniary cares in their last years. Smith's remuneration was liberal, but nothing beyond what was usual in such situations at the time. Dr. John Moore, who gave up his medical practice in Glasgow a few years later to be tutor to the young Duke of Hamilton, got also £300 a year while actively employed in the tutorship and a pension of £100 a year afterwards. Professor Rouet, who, as already mentioned, sacrificed his chair in Glasgow for his tutorial appointment, is said to have received a pension of £500 a year from Lord Hopetoun, in addition to a pension of £50 he received, in consideration of previous services of the same kind, from Sir John Maxwell; and Professor Adam Ferguson, who was appointed tutor to the Earl of Chesterfield on Smith's recommendation, had £400 a year while on duty, and a pension of £200 a year, which he lived to enjoy for forty years after, receiving from first to last nearly £9000 for his two years' work. Smith did almost as well, for with the pension, which he drew for twenty-four years, he got altogether more than £8000 for his three years' service.

This residence abroad for a few years with a competent tutor was then a common substitute for a university education. The Duke of Buccleugh, for example, was never sent to a university after he came back from his travels with Smith, but married almost immediately on his return, and entered directly into the active duties of life. It was generally thought that travel really supplied a more liberal education and a better preparation for life for a young man of the world than residence at a university; and it is not uninteresting to recall here how strongly Smith disagrees with that opinion in the *Wealth of Nations*, while admitting that some excuse could be found for it in the low state of learning into which the English universities had suffered themselves to fall: —

"In England it becomes every day more and more the custom to send young people to travel in foreign countries immediately upon their

leaving school, and without sending them to any university. Our young people, it is said, generally return home much improved by their travels. A young man who goes abroad at seventeen or eighteen, and returns home at one-and-twenty, returns three or four years older than he was when he went abroad; and at that age it is very difficult not to improve a good deal in three or four years. In the course of his travels he generally acquires some knowledge of one or two foreign languages; a knowledge, however, which is seldom sufficient to enable him either to speak or write them with propriety. In other respects he commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more dissipated, and more incapable of any serious application, either to study or to business, than he could well have become in so short a time had he lived at home. By travelling so very young, by spending in the most frivolous dissipation the most precious years of his life, at a distance from the inspection and controul of his parents and relations, every useful habit which the earlier parts of his education might have had some tendency to form in him, instead of being riveted and confirmed, is almost necessarily either weakened or effaced. Nothing but the discredit into which the universities are allowing themselves to fall could ever have brought into repute so very absurd a practice as that of travelling at this early period of life. By sending his son abroad, a father delivers himself, at least for some time, from so disagreeable an object as a son unemployed, neglected and going to ruin before his eyes."

Smith must have written Townshend accepting the situation almost immediately on receiving the offer of it, and he at the same time applied to the University authorities for leave of absence for part of the session. He does not as yet resign his chair, nor does he make in his application any formal mention of the nature of the business that required his absence; he merely asks for their sanction to some highly characteristic arrangements which he desired to make in connection with the conduct of his class by a substitute. On the 8th of November 1763, according to the Faculty Records, "Dr. Smith represented that some interesting business would probably require his leaving the College some time this winter, and made the following proposals and request to the meeting:-?

"1st, That if he should be obliged to leave the College without finishing his usual course of lectures, he should pay back to all his students the fees which he shall have received from them; and that if any of them should refuse to accept of such fees, he should in that case pay them to the University.

“2nd, That whatever part of the usual course of lectures he should leave unfinished should be given gratis to the students, by a person to be appointed by the University, with such salary as they shall think proper, which salary is to be paid by Dr. Smith.

“The Faculty accept of the above proposals, and hereby unanimously grant Dr. Smith leave of absence for three months of this session if his business shall require, and at such time as he shall find it necessary.”

The reason he asks in the first instance only for this temporary and provisional arrangement is no doubt to be found in the fact that the precise date for the beginning of the tutorship was not yet determined. As it might very possibly be fixed upon suddenly and involve a somewhat rapid call for his services, the precaution of obtaining beforehand a three months’ leave of absence would enable him to remain in constant readiness to answer that call whenever it might come, without in the meanwhile requiring him to give up his duties to his Glasgow class prematurely; and it would at the same time allow ample time to the University to make more permanent arrangements before the temporary provision expired. The call when it came did come rather suddenly. Up till the middle of December Smith never received any manner of answer from Townshend, and the matter was not settled till after the Christmas holidays. For on the 12th of December 1763 Smith writes Hume, who was now in Paris: —

My Dear Hume — The day before I received your last letter I had the honour of a letter from Charles Townshend, renewing in the most obliging manner his former proposal that I should travel with the Duke of Buccleugh, and informing me that his Grace was to leave Eton at Christmas, and would go abroad very soon after that. I accepted the proposal, but at the same time expressed to Mr. Townshend the difficulties I should have in leaving the University before the beginning of April, and begged to know if my attendance upon his Grace would be necessary before that time. I have yet received no answer to that letter, which, I suppose, is owing to this, that his Grace is not yet come from Eton, and that nothing is yet settled with regard to the time of his going abroad. I delayed answering your letter till I should be able to inform you at what time I should have the pleasure of seeing you.... — I ever am, my dearest friend, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

After the Duke reached London, however, at the Christmas recess, it seems to have been quickly settled to send him out on his travels without more delay, and on the 8th of January 1764 Smith intimated to the

Faculty of Glasgow College that he was soon to leave that city under the permission granted him by the Dean of Faculty's meeting of the 8th of November, and that he had returned to the students all the fees he had received that session. He likewise acquainted the meeting that he proposed to pay his salary as paid by the College for one half-year, commencing the 10th of October previous, to the person who should teach his class for the remainder of the session. Mr. Thomas Young, student of divinity, was, on Smith's recommendation, chosen for this purpose. A committee was appointed to receive from Smith the private library of the Moral Philosophy class; next day at a meeting of Senatus he was paid the balance due to him on his accounts as Quæstor, and was entrusted with a copy of Foulis's large *Homer*, which they asked him to carry to London and deliver, in their name, to Sir James Gray, as a present to his Sicilian majesty, who had shown them some favour; and the Senate-room of Glasgow knew him no more.

His parting with his students was not quite so simple. They made some difficulty, as he seems to have anticipated, about taking back the fees they had paid him for his class, and he was obliged to resort almost to force before he succeeded in getting them to do so. The curious scene is described by Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee) in his *Life of Lord Kames:* "After concluding his last lecture, and publicly announcing from the chair that he was now taking a final leave of his auditors, acquainting them at the same time with the arrangements he had made, to the best of his power, for their benefit, he drew from his pocket the several fees of the students, wrapped up in separate paper parcels, and beginning to call up each man by his name, he delivered to the first who was called the money into his hand. The young man peremptorily refused to accept it, declaring that the instruction and pleasure he had already received was much more than he either had repaid or ever could compensate, and a general cry was heard from every one in the room to the same effect. But Mr. Smith was not to be bent from his purpose. After warmly expressing his feelings of gratitude and the strong sense he had of the regard shown to him by his young friends, he told them this was a matter betwixt him and his own mind, and that he could not rest satisfied unless he performed what he deemed right and proper. 'You must not refuse me this satisfaction; nay, by heavens, gentlemen, you shall not;' and seizing by the coat the young man who stood next him, he thrust the money into his pocket and then pushed him from him. The rest saw it was in vain to contest the matter, and were obliged to let him have his own way."

This is a signal proof of the scrupulous delicacy of Smith's honour; he had firmly determined not to touch a shilling of this money, and if the students had persisted in refusing it he intended, as we have seen, to give it to the funds of the University. Many may think his delicacy even excessive, for it is common enough for a professor's class to be conducted by a substitute in the absence, through ill-health or other causes, of the professor himself, and nobody thinks the students suffer any such injury by the arrangement as to call for even a reduction of the fees. What Smith would have done had his absence been due to ill-health one cannot say, but as his engagement with the students for a session's lectures was broken off by his own spontaneous acceptance of an office of profit, he felt he could not honourably retain the wages when he had failed to implement the engagement, — a thing which a barrister in large practice does without scruple every day.

The same sense of right led Smith to resign his chair. He did not do so till he reached France, but he manifestly contemplated doing it from the first, for he only made arrangements for paying his substitute till the end of the first half of the session, by which time he would expect his successor to have entered on office, as indeed actually happened, for Reid came there in the beginning of June. Moreover, his resignation was evidently an understood thing at the University long before it was really sent in, for a good deal of intriguing had already been going on for the place. The Lord Privy Seal (the Hon. James Stuart Mackenzie, Lord Bute's brother), who was Scotch Minister, writes Baron Mure on the 2nd February 1764, a fortnight before Smith resigned, asking whether it was true the University were to appoint Dr. Wight to succeed Smith, and mentions incidentally having had some conversation with Smith himself (apparently in London) on the subject, particularly with regard to the possible claims of Mr. Young, his substitute, to the appointment.

It was not always necessary — nor, indeed, does it seem to have been the more usual practice — for a Scotch professor to resign his chair on accepting a temporary place like a travelling tutorship. Adam Ferguson fought the point successfully with the Edinburgh Town Council when he left England as tutor to Lord Chesterfield; and Dalzel, when Professor of Greek in Edinburgh, went to live at Oxford as tutor to Lord Maitland; but we have already seen, in connection with the case of Professor Rouet, that Smith held strong views against the encouragement of absenteeism and the growth of any feeling that the University was there for the convenience of the professors, instead of the professors being there for the service of the University.

Under these circumstances it was natural for Smith to resign his chair on his acceptance of the tutorship; and although he only sent the letter of resignation after his arrival in France, it is perhaps more convenient to print it here in its natural connection with Glasgow University affairs than to defer it to its more strictly chronological place in the chapter describing his French travels. The letter is addressed "To the Right Hon. Thomas Miller, Esq., His Majesty's Advocate for Scotland," Lord Rector of Glasgow University at the time; and it runs as follows:

My Lord — I take this first opportunity after my arrival in this place, which was not till yesterday, to resign my office into the hands of your lordship, of the Dean of Faculty, of the Principal of the College, and of all my other most respectable and worthy colleagues. Into your and their hands, therefor, I do hereby resign my office of Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow and in the College thereof, with all the emoluments, privileges, and advantages which belong to it. I reserve, however, my right to the salary for the current half year, which commenced at the 10th of October for one part of my salary and at Martinmas last for another; and I desire that this salary may be paid to the gentleman who does that part of my duty which I was obliged to leave undone, in the manner agreed on between my very worthy colleagues and me before we parted. I never was more anxious for the good of the College than at this moment; and I sincerely wish that whoever is my successor may not only do credit to the office by his abilities, but be a comfort to the very excellent men with whom he is likely to spend his life, by the probity of his heart and the goodness of his temper. — I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most faithful servant,

Adam Smith.

Paris, *14th February 1764*.

The Senate accepted his resignation on the 1st of March, and expressed their regret at his loss in the following terms: "The University cannot help at the same time expressing their sincere regret at the removal of Dr. Smith, whose distinguished probity and amiable qualities procured him the esteem and affection of his colleagues; whose uncommon genius, great abilities, and extensive learning did so much honour to this society; his elegant and ingenious *Theory of Moral Sentiments* having recommended him to the esteem of men of taste and literature throughout Europe. His happy talents in illustrating abstracted subjects, and faithful assiduity in communicating useful knowledge,

distinguished him as a professor, and at once afforded the greatest pleasure and the most important instruction to the youth under his care.”

CHAPTER XII. TOULOUSE

Smith joined his pupil in London in the end of January 1764, and they set out together for France in the beginning of February. They remained abroad two years and a half — ten days in Paris, eighteen months in Toulouse, two months travelling in the South of France, two months in Geneva, and ten months in Paris again. Smith kept no journal and wrote as few letters as possible, but we are able from various sources to fill in some of the outlines of their course of travel.

At Dover they were joined by Sir James Macdonald of Sleat, a young baronet who had been at Eton College with the Duke of Buccleugh, and who had been living in France almost right on since the re-establishment of peace. Sir James was heir of the old Lords of the Isles, and son of the lady who, with her factor Kingsburgh, harboured Prince Charlie and Flora Macdonald in Skye; and he was himself then filling the world of letters in Paris and London alike with astonishment at the extent of his knowledge and the variety of his intellectual gifts. Walpole, indeed, said that when he grew older he would choose to know less, but to Grimm he seemed the same marvel of parts as he seemed to Hume. He accompanied Smith and the Duke to Paris, where they arrived (as we know from Smith's letter to the Rector of Glasgow University) on the 13th of February.

In Paris they did not remain long — not more than ten days at most, for it took at that period six days to go from Paris to Toulouse, and they were in Toulouse on the 4th of March. Smith does not appear during this short stay in Paris to have made the personal acquaintance of any of the eminent men of letters whom he afterwards knew so well, for he never mentions any of them in his subsequent letters to Hume from Toulouse, though he occasionally mentions Englishmen whose acquaintance he first made at that time. He probably could not as yet speak French, for even to the last he could only speak it very imperfectly. Most of their time in Paris seems, therefore, to have been spent with Hume and Sir James Macdonald and Lord Beauchamp, who was Hume's pupil and Sir James's chief friend. Paris, moreover, was merely a halting-place for the present; their immediate destination was Toulouse, at that time a favourite resort of the English. It was the second city of the kingdom, and wore still much of the style of an ancient capital. It was the seat of an archbishopric, of a university, of a parliament, of modern academies of

science and art which made some ado with their annual *Jeux Floraux*, and the nobility of the province still had their town houses there, and lived in them all winter. The society was more varied and refined than anywhere else in France out of Paris.

Among the English residents was a cousin of David Hume, who had entered the Gallican Church, and was then Vicar-General of the diocese of Toulouse, the Abbé Seignelay Colbert. Smith brought a letter from Hume to the Abbé, and the Abbé writes Hume in reply on the 4th of March, thanking him for having introduced Smith, who, he says, appeared to be all that was said of him in the letter. “He has only just arrived,” the Abbé proceeds, “and I have only seen him for an instant. I am very sorry that they have not found the Archbishop here. He went some six weeks ago to Montpellier, whence he will soon go to Paris. He told me he had a great desire to make your acquaintance. I fear that my long black cassock will frighten the Duke of Buccleugh, but apart from that I should omit nothing to make his stay in this town as agreeable and useful as possible.” He writes again on the 22nd of April, after having a month’s experience of his new friends: “Mr. Smith is a sublime man. His heart and his mind are equally admirable. Messrs. Malcolm and Mr. Urquhart of Cromartie are now here. The Duke, his pupil, is a very amiable spirit, and does his exercises well, and is making progress in French. If any English or Scotch people ask your advice where to go for their studies, you could recommend Toulouse. There is a very good academy and much society, and some very distinguished people to be seen here.” In a subsequent letter he says, “There are many English people here, and the district suits them well.”

This Abbé Colbert, who was Smith’s chief guide and friend in the South of France, was the eldest son of Mr. Cuthbert of Castlehill in Inverness-shire, and was therefore head of the old Highland family to which Colbert, the famous minister of Louis XIV., was so anxious to trace his descent. That minister had himself gone the length of petitioning the Scotch Privy Council for a birth-brieve, or certificate, to attest his descent from the Castlehill family, and the petition was refused through the influence of the Duke of Lauderdale. But his successor, the Marquis de Seignelay, found the Scotch Parliament more accommodating in 1686 than the Scotch Privy Council had been, and obtained the birth-brieve in an Act of that year, which was passed, as it states, in order that “this illustrious and noble family of Colbert may be restored to us their friends and to their native country,” and which declared that the family came from the south of Scotland, took their

name from St. Cuthbert (pronounced, says the Act, by the Scotch Culbert, though “soaftened” by the French into Colbert), and received their arms for their valour in the battle of Harlaw.

The link between the Scotch Cuthberts and the French Colberts, thus attested by Act of Parliament, may or may not be fabulous, but it was a link of gold to many members of the family of Castlehill, who emigrated to France, and were advanced into high positions through the interest of their French connections. One of these was the present Abbé, who had come over in 1750 a boy of fourteen, was now at twenty-eight Vicar-General of Toulouse, and was in 1781 made Bishop of Rodez. As Bishop he distinguished himself by the work he did for the improvement of agriculture and industry in his diocese, and, as member of the States General in 1789, he became the hero of the hour in Paris and was carried shoulder-high through the streets for proposing the union of the clergy with the Third Estate. When the Civil Constitution of the clergy was declared he refused to submit, and returning to this country, spent the remainder of his days here as Secretary to Louis XVIII.

It would appear from the Abbé’s first letter that Smith had either brought with him from Paris an introduction to the Archbishop of Toulouse, or that Hume had asked his cousin to give him one. This Archbishop — who was so desirous to make Hume’s acquaintance — was the celebrated Loménie de Brienne, afterwards Cardinal and Minister of France, who was thought at this time, Walpole says, to be the ablest man in the Gallican Church, and was pronounced by Hume to be the only man in France capable of restoring the greatness of the kingdom. When he obtained the opportunity he signally falsified Hume’s prognostication, and did much to precipitate the Revolution by his incapacity. Smith must no doubt have met him occasionally during his protracted sojourn at Toulouse, though we have no evidence that he did, and the Archbishop was rather notorious for his absence from his see. If he did meet his Grace he would have found him as advanced an economist as himself, for having been a college friend of Turgot and Morellet at the Sorbonne, he became a strong advocate of their new economic principles, and succeeded in getting the principle of free trade in corn adopted by the States of Languedoc. Whether they were personally acquainted or not, the Archbishop does not appear to have cherished any profound regard for Smith, for when he was Minister of France he refused his friend Morellet the trifling sum of a hundred

francs, which the Abbé asked to pay for the printing of his translation of the *Wealth of Nations*.

During Smith's first six months at Toulouse he does not seem to have seen the Archbishop, or to have seen much of anybody, as the following letter shows. Indeed he found the place extremely dull, the life he led in Glasgow having been, he says, dissipation itself in comparison. They had not received the letters of recommendation they had expected from the Duc de Choiseul, and for society they were as yet practically confined to the Abbé Colbert and the English residents. For a diversion Smith contemplates an excursion to Bordeaux, and suggests a visit for a month from Sir James Macdonald, for the sake not only of his agreeable society, but of the service "his influence and example" would render the Duke. Personally he had, to mitigate his solitude, taken a measure no less important than effectual — he had begun to write a book — the *Wealth of Nations*— "to pass away the time. You may believe I have very little to do."

They had arrived in Toulouse on the 3rd or 4th of March, but it is the 5th of July before Smith thinks of writing Hume; at least the following letter reads as if it were the first since they parted: —

My Dearest Friend — The Duke of Buccleugh proposes soon to set out for Bordeaux, where he intends to stay a fortnight or more. I should be much obliged to you if you could send us recommendations to the Duke of Richelieu, the Marquis de Lorges, and the Intendant of the Province. Mr. Townshend assured me that the Duc de Choiseul was to recommend us to all the people of fashion here and everywhere else in France. We have heard nothing, however, of these recommendations, and have had our way to make as well as we could by the help of the Abbé, who is a stranger here almost as much as we. The Progress indeed we have made is not very great. The Duke is acquainted with no Frenchman whatever. I cannot cultivate the acquaintance of the few with whom I am acquainted, as I cannot bring them to our house, and am not always at liberty to go to theirs. The life which I led at Glasgow was a pleasurable dissipated life in comparison of that which I lead here at Present. I have begun to write a book in order to pass away the time. You may believe I have very little to do. If Sir James would come and spend a month with us in his travels, it would not only be a great satisfaction to me, but he might by his influence and example be of great service to the Duke. Mention these matters, however, to nobody but to him. Remember me in the most respectful manner to Lord Beauchamp and to Dr. Trail, and believe me, my dear friend, ever yours,

Adam Smith.

Toulouse, *5th July 1764*.

The trip to Bordeaux was taken probably in August, and in the company of Abbé Colbert. At Bordeaux they fell in with Colonel Barré, the furious orator, whose invective made even Charles Townshend quail, but who was now over on a visit to his French kinsfolk, and making the hearts of these simple people glad with his natural kindnesses. He seems to have been much with Smith and his party during their stay in Bordeaux, and to have accompanied them back to Toulouse. For he writes Hume on the 4th of September from the latter town, and says: “I thank you for your last letter from Paris, which I received just as Smith and his *élève* and L’Abbé Colbert were sitting down to dine with me at Bordeaux. The latter is a very honest fellow and deserves to be a bishop; make him one if you can.... Why will you triumph and talk of *platte couture*? You have friends on both sides. Smith agrees with me in thinking that you are turned soft by the *délices* of the French Court, and that you don’t write in that nervous manner you was remarkable for in the more northern climates. Besides, what is still worse, you take your politics from your Elliots, Rigbys, and Selwyns.”

Smith was already acquainted with Barré before he left Scotland, where the colonel, for services rendered to Lord Shelburne, held the lucrative post of Governor of Stirling Castle; and now he could not go sight-seeing in a French town under two better guides than Barré and Colbert — a Frenchman who had become an English politician, and an Englishman who had become a French ecclesiastic. He seems to have been struck with the contrast between the condition of the working class in Bordeaux and their condition in Toulouse, as he had already been struck with the same contrast between Glasgow and Edinburgh. In Bordeaux they were in general industrious, sober, and thriving; in Toulouse and the rest of the parliament towns they were idle and poor; and the reason was that Bordeaux was a commercial town, the *entrepôt* of the wine trade of a rich wine district, while Toulouse and the rest were merely residential towns, employing little capital more than was necessary to supply their own consumption. The common people were always better off in a town like Bordeaux, where they lived on capital, than in a town like Toulouse, where they lived on revenue. But while he speaks as if he thought the people of Bordeaux more sober as well as more industrious than the people of Toulouse, he looked upon the inhabitants of the southern provinces of France generally as among the soberest people in Europe, and ascribes their sobriety to the cheapness of

their liquor. “People are seldom guilty of excess,” he says, “in what is their daily fare.” He tells that when a French regiment came from some of the northern provinces of France, where wine was somewhat dear, to be quartered in the southern, where wine was very cheap, the soldiers were at first debauched by the cheapness and novelty of good wine; but after a few months’ residence the greater part of them became as sober as the rest of the inhabitants. And he thinks the same effect might occur in this country from a reduction of the wine, malt, and ale duties.

Besides seeing the places, they visited some of the notabilities, to whom the Earl of Hertford had sent them the letters of introduction for which Smith had asked through Hume. The governor of the province was away from home at the time, however; but Smith hoped to see him on a second visit to Bordeaux he was presently to pay to meet his pupil’s younger brother on his way round from Paris to Toulouse. But they found the Duke of Richelieu at home, and the gallant old field-marshal, the hero of a hundred fights and a thousand scandals, seems to have received them with great civility and even distinction. Smith used to have much to say ever afterwards of this famous and ill-famed man.

The excursion to Bordeaux in August was so agreeable that they made another — probably in September — up to the fashionable watering-place Bagnères de Bigorre, and in October, when Smith wrote the following letter to Hume, they were on the eve of the second visit to Bordeaux of which I have spoken, and even contemplating after that a visit to Montpellier, when the States of Languedoc — the local assembly of the province — met there in the end of November.

Toulouse, *21st October 1764*.

My Dear Hume — I take this opportunity of Mr. Cook’s going to Paris to return to you, and thro’ you to the Ambassador, my very sincere and hearty thanks for the very honourable manner in which he was so good as to mention me to the Duke of Richelieu in the letter of recommendation which you sent us. There was, indeed, one small mistake in it. He called me Robinson instead of Smith. I took upon me to correct this mistake myself before the Duke delivered the letter. We were all treated by the Maréchal with the utmost Politeness and attention, particularly the Duke, whom he distinguished in a very proper manner. The Intendant was not at Bordeaux, but we shall soon have an opportunity of delivering his letter, as we propose to return to that place in order to meet my Lord’s Brother.

Mr. Cook goes to Caen to wait upon Mr. Scot, and to attend him from that place to Toulouse. He will pass by Paris, and I must beg the favour

of you that as soon as you understand he is in town you will be so good as to call upon him and carry him to the Ambassador’s, as well as to any other place where he would chuse to go. I must beg the same favour of Sir James. Mr. Cook will let you know when he comes to town. I have great reason to entertain the most favourable opinion of Mr. Scot, and I flatter myself his company will be both useful and agreeable to his Brother. Our expedition to Bordeaux and another we have made since to Bagnères has made a great change upon the Duke. He begins now to familiarise himself to French company, and I flatter myself I shall spend the rest of the time we are to live together not only in Peace and contentment, but in gayetty and amusement.

When Mr. Scot joins us we propose to go to see the meeting of the States of Languedoc at Montpelier. Could you promise us recommendations to the Comte d’Eu, to the Archbishop of Narbonne, and to the Intendant? These expeditions, I find, are of the greatest service to my Lord. — I ever am, my dear friend, most, faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

A few days after the date of that letter Smith writes Hume again, introducing one of the English residents in Toulouse, Mr. Urquhart of Cromartie, as Abbé Colbert describes him in one of his letters, a descendant therefore probably of Sir Thomas. The letter is of no importance, but it shows at least Smith’s hearty liking for a good fellow.

My Dear Friend — This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. Urquhart, the only man I ever knew who had a better temper than yourself. You will find him most perfectly amiable. I recommend him in the most earnest manner to your advice and protection. He is not a man of letters, and is just a plain, sensible, agreeable man of no pretensions of any kind, but whom you will love every day better and better. — My dear friend, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

Toulouse, *4th November 1764*.

Smith and his two pupils made their proposed expedition to Montpellier during the sittings of the States, for we find them visited there by Horne Tooke, then still parson of Brentford, who had been on a tour in Italy, and stayed some time in Montpellier on his way back. Tooke, it may be said here, was no admirer of Smith; he thought the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* nonsense, and the *Wealth of Nations* written for a wicked purpose, and this is the only occasion on which they are known to have met.

The little provincial assembly which Smith had come to Montpellier to see was at that period, it ought to be mentioned, attracting much attention from all the thinkers and reformers of France, and was thought by many of the first of them to furnish the solution of the political question of that age. The States of Languedoc were almost the only remains of free institutions then left in France. In all the thirty-two provinces of the country except six the States had been suppressed altogether, and in five of these six they were too small to be important or vigorous; but Languedoc was a great province, containing twenty-three bishoprics and more territory than the kingdom of Belgium, and the States governed its affairs so well that its prosperity was the envy of the rest of France. They dug canals, opened harbours, drained marshes, made roads, which Arthur Young singles out for praise, and made them without the *corvée* under which the rest of rural France was groaning. They farmed the imperial taxes of the province themselves, to avoid the exactions of the farmers-general. They allowed the *noblesse* none of the exemptions so unfairly enjoyed by them elsewhere. The *taille*, which was a personal tax in other parts of the kingdom, was in Languedoc an equitable land tax, assessed according to a valuation periodically revised. There was not a poorhouse in the whole province, and such was its prosperity and excellent administration that it enjoyed better credit in the market than the Central Government, and the king used sometimes, in order to get more favourable terms, to borrow on the security of the States of Languedoc instead of his own.

Under those circumstances it is not surprising that one of the favourite remedies for the political situation in France was the revival of the provincial assemblies and the suppression of the intendants— “Grattan’s Parliament and the abolition of the Castle.” Turgot, among others, favoured this solution, though he was an intendant himself. Necker had just put it into execution when the Revolution came and swept everything away. Smith himself has expressed the strongest opinion in favour of the administration of provincial affairs by a local body instead of by an intendant, and he must have witnessed with no ordinary interest the proceedings of this remarkable little assembly at Montpellier, with its 23 prelates on the right, its 23 barons on the left, and the third estate — representatives of 23 chief towns and 23 dioceses — in the centre, and on a dais in front of all, the President, the Archbishop of Narbonne. The Archbishop, to whom, it will be remembered, Smith asked, and no doubt received, a letter of introduction from Lord Hertford, was a countryman of his own, Cardinal Dillon, a prince of prelates, afterwards Minister of

France; a strong champion of the rights of the States against the pretensions of the Crown, and, if we may judge from the speech with which Miss Knight heard him open the States of Languedoc in 1776, a very thorough free-trader.

With all these excursions, Smith was now evidently realising in some reasonable measure the “gayetty and amusement” he told Hume he anticipated to enjoy during the rest of his stay in the South of France. His command of the language, too, grew easier, though it never became perfect, and he not only went more into society, but was able to enjoy it better. Among those he saw most of in Toulouse were, he used to tell Stewart, the presidents and counsellors of the Parliament, who were noted, like their class in other parliament towns, for their hospitality, and noted above those of other parliament towns for keeping up the old tradition of blending their law with a love of letters. They were men, moreover, of proved patriotism and independence; in no other society would Smith be likely to hear more of the oppressed condition of the peasantry, and the necessity for thoroughgoing reforms. In those days the king’s edict did not run in a province till it was registered by the local parliament, and the Parliament of Toulouse often used this privilege of theirs to check bad measures. They had in 1756 remonstrated with the king against the *corvée*, declaring that the condition of the peasantry of France was “a thousand times less tolerable than the condition of the slaves in America.” At the very moment of Smith’s first arrival in Toulouse they were all thrown in prison — or at least put under arrest in their own houses — for refusing to register the *centième denier*, and Smith no doubt had that circumstance in his mind when he animadverted in the *Wealth of Nations* on the violence practised by the French Government to coerce its parliaments. He thought very highly of those parliaments as institutions, stating that though not very convenient courts of law, they had never been accused or even suspected of corruption, and he gives a curious reason for their incorruptibility; it was because they were not paid by salary, but by fees dependent on their diligence.

During Smith’s residence in Toulouse the town was raging (as Abbé Colbert mentions in his letters to Hume) about one of the judgments of this Parliament, and for the most part, strangely enough, taking the Parliament’s side. This was its judgment in the famous Calas case, to which Smith alludes in the last edition of his *Theory*. Jean Calas, it may be remembered, had a son who had renounced his Protestantism in order to become eligible for admission to the Toulouse bar, and then worried himself so much about his apostasy that he committed suicide in his

father’s house; and the father was unjustly accused before the Parliament of the town of having murdered the youth on account of his apostasy, was found guilty without a particle of proof, and then broken on the wheel and burnt on the 9th of March 1762. But the great voice of Voltaire rose against this judicial atrocity, and after three years’ agitation procured a new trial before a special court of fifty masters of requests, of whom Turgot was one, on the 9th of March 1765, with the result that Calas was pronounced absolutely innocent of the crime he suffered for, and his family was awarded a compensation of 36,000 livres. The king received them at court, and all France rejoiced in their rehabilitation except their own townsfolk in Toulouse. On the 10th of April 1765 — a month after the verdict — Abbé Colbert writes Hume: “The people here would surprise you with their fanaticism. In spite of all that has happened, they every man believe Calas to be guilty, and it is no use speaking to them on the subject.”

Smith makes use of the incident to illustrate the proposition that while unmerited praise gives no satisfaction except to the frivolous, unmerited reproach inflicts the keenest suffering even on men of exceptional endurance, because the injustice destroys the sweetness of the praise, but enormously embitters the sting of the condemnation. “The unfortunate Calas,” he writes— “a man of much more than ordinary constancy (broken upon the wheel and burnt at Tholouse for the supposed murder of his own son, of which he was perfectly innocent) — seemed with his last breath to deprecate not so much the cruelty of the punishment, as the disgrace which the imputation must bring upon his memory. After he had been broke, and when just going to be thrown into the fire, the monk who attended the execution exhorted him to confess the crime for which he had been condemned. ‘My father,’ said Calas, ‘can you bring yourself to believe that I was guilty?’”

CHAPTER XIII. GENEVA

In the end of August Smith and his pupils left Toulouse and made what Stewart calls an extensive tour in the South of France. Of this tour no other record remains, but the Duke's aunt, Lady Mary Coke, incidentally mentions that when they were at Marseilles they visited the porcelain factory, and that the Duke bought two of the largest services ever sold there, for which he paid more than £150 sterling. They seem to have arrived in Geneva some time in October, and stayed about two months in the little republic of which, as we have seen, Smith had long been a fervent admirer. In making so considerable a sojourn at Geneva, he was no doubt influenced as a political philosopher by the desire to see something of the practical working of those republican institutions which he regarded speculatively with so much favour, to observe how the common problems of government worked themselves out on the narrow field of a commonwealth with only 24,000 inhabitants all told, which yet contrived to keep its place among the nations, to sit sometimes as arbiter between them, and to surpass them all in the art of making its people prosperous. He had the luck to observe it at an interesting moment, for it was in the thick of a constitutional crisis. The government of the republic had hitherto been vested in the hands of 200 privileged families, and the rest of the citizens were now pressing their right to a share in it, with the active assistance of Voltaire. This important struggle for the conversion of the aristocratic into the democratic republic continued all through the period of Smith's visit, and the city of Geneva, which in its usual state was described by Voltaire as "a tedious convent with some sensible people in it," was day after day at this time the animated scene of the successive acts of that political drama.

During his stay there Smith made many personal friends, both among the leading citizens of the commonwealth and among the more distinguished of the foreign visitors who generally abounded there. People went to Geneva in those days not to see the lake or the mountains, but to consult Dr. Tronchin and converse with Voltaire. Smith needed no introduction to Tronchin, who, as we have seen, held so high an opinion of his abilities that he had sent his own son all the way to Glasgow to attend his philosophical classes; and it was no doubt through Tronchin, Voltaire's chief friend in that quarter, that Smith was introduced to Voltaire. Smith told Rogers he had been in Voltaire's

company on five or six different occasions, and he no doubt enjoyed, as most English visitors enjoyed, hospitable entertainment at Ferney, the beautiful little temporality of the great literary pontiff, overlooking the lake.

There was no living name before which Smith bowed with profounder veneration than the name of Voltaire, and his recollections of their intercourse on these occasions were always among those he cherished most warmly. Few memorials, however, of their conversation remain, and these are preserved by Samuel Rogers in his diary of his visit to Edinburgh the year before Smith's death. They seem to have spoken, as was very natural, of the Duke of Richelieu, the only famous Frenchman Smith had yet met, and of the political question as to the revival of the provincial assemblies or the continuance of government by royal intendants. On this question Smith said that Voltaire expressed great aversion to the States and favoured the side of the royal prerogative. Of the Duke of Richelieu Voltaire said that he was an old friend of his, but a singular character. A few years before his death his foot slipped one day at Versailles, and the old marshal said that was the first *faux pas* he had ever made at court. Voltaire then seems to have told anecdotes of the Duke's being bastilled and of his borrowing the Embassy plate at Vienna and never returning it, and to have passed the remark he made elsewhere that the English had only one sauce, melted butter. Smith always spoke of Voltaire with a genuine emotion of reverence. When Samuel Rogers happened to describe some clever but superficial author as "a Voltaire," Smith brought his hand down on the table with great energy and said, "Sir, there is only one Voltaire." Professor Faujas Saint Fond, Professor of Geology in the Museum of Natural History in Paris, visited Smith in Edinburgh a few years before Rogers was there, and says that the animation of Smith's countenance was striking when he spoke of Voltaire, whom he had known personally, and whose memory he revered. "Reason," said Smith one day, as he showed M. Saint Fond a fine bust of Voltaire he had in his room, "reason owes him incalculable obligations. The ridicule and the sarcasm which he so plentifully bestowed upon fanatics and heretics of all sects have enabled the understanding of men to bear the light of truth, and prepared them for those inquiries to which every intelligent mind ought to aspire. He has done much more for the benefit of mankind than those grave philosophers whose books are read by a few only. The writings of Voltaire are made for all and read by all." On another occasion he observed to the same visitor, "I cannot pardon the Emperor Joseph II., who pretended to travel as a philosopher, for

passing Ferney without doing homage to the historian of the Czar Peter I. From this circumstance I concluded that Joseph was but a man of inferior mind."

One of the warmest of Smith's Swiss friends was Charles Bonnet, the celebrated naturalist and metaphysician, who, in writing Hume ten years after the date of this visit, desires to be remembered "to the sage of Glascow," adding, "You perceive I speak of Mr. Smith, whom we shall always recollect with great pleasure." On the day this letter was written by Bonnet to Hume, another was written to Smith himself by a young Scotch tutor then in Geneva, Patrick Clason, who seems to have carried an introduction from Smith to Bonnet, and who mentions having received many civilities from Bonnet on account of his being one of Smith's friends. Clason then goes on to tell Smith that the Syndic Turretin and M. Le Sage also begged to be remembered to him. The Syndic Turretin was the President of the Republic, and M. Le Sage was the eminent Professor of Physics, George Louis Le Sage, who was then greatly interested in Professor Black's recent discoveries about latent heat and Professor Matthew Stewart's in astronomy, and was one of a group who gathered round Bonnet for discussions in speculative philosophy and morals, at which, it may be reasonably inferred, Smith would have also occasionally assisted. Le Sage seems to have met Smith first, however, and to have been in the habit of meeting him often afterwards, at the house of a high and distinguished French lady, the Duchesse d'Enville, who was living in Geneva under Tronchin's treatment, and whose son, the young and virtuous Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who was afterwards stoned to death in the Revolution, was receiving instruction from Le Sage himself. Le Sage writes the Duchesse d'Enville on 5th February 1766, "Of all the people I have met at your house, that is, of all the *élite* of our good company, I have only continued to see the excellent Lord Stanhope and occasionally Mr. Smith. The latter wished me to make the acquaintance of Lady Conyers and the Duke of Buckleugh, but I begged him to reserve that kindness for me till his return."

This letter shows that Smith was so much taken with Geneva that he meant to pay it a second visit before he ended his tutorial engagement, but the intention was never fulfilled, in consequence of unfortunate circumstances to be presently mentioned.

The Duchesse d'Enville, at whose house Smith seems to have been so steady a guest, was herself a Rochefoucauld by blood, a grand-daughter

of the famous author of the *Maxims*, and was a woman of great ability, who was popularly supposed to be the inspirer of all Turgot's political and social ideas, the chief of the "three Maries" who were alleged to guide his doings. Stewart tells us that Smith used to speak with very particular pleasure and gratitude of the many civilities he received from this interesting woman and her son, and they seem on their part to have cherished the same lively recollection of him. When Adam Ferguson was in Paris in 1774 she asked him much about Smith, and often complained, says Ferguson in a letter to Smith himself, "of your French as she did of mine, but said that before you left Paris she had the happiness to learn your language." After two and a half years' residence in France, Smith seems then to have been just succeeding in making himself intelligible to the more intelligent inhabitants in their own language, and this agrees with what Morellet says, that Smith's French was very bad. The young Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who, like his mother, was a devoted friend of Turgot, became presently a declared disciple of Quesnay, and sat regularly with the rest of the economist sect at the economic dinners of Mirabeau, the "Friend of Man." When Samuel Rogers met him in Paris shortly after the outbreak of the Revolution, he expressed to Rogers the highest admiration for Smith, then recently dead, of whom he had seen much in Paris as well as Geneva, and he had at one time begun to translate the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* into French, abandoning the task only when he found his work anticipated by the Abbé Blavet's translation in 1774. The only surviving memorial of their intercourse is a letter from the Duke, which will be given in its place, and in which he begs Smith to modify the opinion pronounced in the *Theory* on the writer's ancestor, the author of the *Maxims*.

The Earl Stanhope, whom Smith used to meet at the Duchess's, and with whom he established a lasting friendship, was the second Earl, the editor of Professor Robert Simson's mathematical works, and himself a distinguished mathematician. He took no part in public life, but his opinions were of the most advanced Liberal order. He had come to Geneva to place his son, afterwards also so distinguished in science, under the training of Le Sage. The Lady Conyers, to whom the Scotch was so anxious to introduce the Swiss philosopher, was the young lady who a few years afterwards ran away from her husband, the fifth Duke of Leeds, with the poet Byron's father, whom she subsequently married, and by whom she became the mother of the poet's sister Augusta.

CHAPTER XIV. PARIS

Smith left Geneva in December for Paris, where he arrived, according to Dugald Stewart, about Christmas 1765. The Rev. William Cole, who was in Paris in October of the same year, notes in his journal on the 26th of that month, that the Duke of Buccleugh arrived in Paris that day from Spa along with the Earl and Countess of Fife; but this must be a mistake, for Horace Walpole, who was also in Paris that autumn, writes on the 5th of December that the Duke was then expected to arrive in the following week, and as Walpole was staying in the hotel where the Duke and Smith stayed during their residence in that city — the Hotel du Parc Royal in the Faubourg de St. Germain — he probably wrote from authentic information about the engagement of their rooms. It may be taken, therefore, that they arrived in Paris about the middle of December, just in time to have a week or two with Hume before he finally left Paris for London with Rousseau on the 3rd of January 1766. Hume had been looking for Smith ever since midsummer. As far back as the 5th of September he wrote, “I have been looking for you every day these three months,” but that expectation was probably founded on reports from Abbé Colbert, for Smith himself does not seem to have written Hume since the previous October, except the short note introducing Mr. Urquhart. At any rate in this letter of September 1765 Hume, as if in reply to Smith’s account of his pupil’s improvement in his letter of October 1764, says, “Your satisfaction in your pupil gives me equal satisfaction.” It is no doubt possible that Smith may have written letters in the interval which have been lost, but he had clearly written none for the previous three months, and it is most probable, with his general aversion to writing, that he wrote none for the four or five months before that. Hume’s own object in breaking the long silence is, in the first place, to inform him that, having lost his place at the Embassy through the translation of his chief to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, he should be obliged to return to England in October before Smith’s arrival in Paris; and in the next, to consult him on a new perplexity that was distressing him, whether he should not come back to Paris and spend the remainder of his days there. In compensation for the loss of his place, he had obtained a pension of £900 a year, without office or duty of any kind— “opulence and liberty,” as he calls it. But opulence and liberty brought their own cares, and he was rent with temptations to belong to different

nations. “As a new vexation to temper my good fortune,” he writes to Smith, “I am in much perplexity about fixing the place of my future abode for life. Paris is the most agreeable town in Europe, and suits me best, but it is a foreign country. London is the capital of my own country, but it never pleased me much. Letters are there held in no honour; Scotsmen are hated; superstition and ignorance gain ground daily. Edinburgh has many objections and many allurements. My present mind this forenoon, the 5th of September, is to return to France. I am much press’d also to accept of offers which would contribute to my agreeable living, but might encroach on my independence by making me enter into engagements with Princes and great lords and ladies. Pray give me your judgment.”

Events soon settled the question for him. He was appointed Under Secretary of State in London by Lord Hertford’s brother, General Conway, and left Paris, as I have just said, early in January 1766. Rousseau had been in Paris since the 17th of December waiting to accompany Hume to England, and Smith must no doubt have met Rousseau occasionally with Hume during that last fortnight of 1765, though there is no actual evidence that he did. Before leaving, moreover, Hume would have time to introduce his friend to the famous men of Paris itself, and to initiate him into those literary and fashionable circles in which he had moved like a demigod for the preceding two years. The philosophe was then king in Paris, and Hume was king of the philosophes, and everything that was great in court or salon fell down and did him obeisance. “Here,” he tells Robertson, “I feed on ambrosia, drink nothing but nectar, breathe incense only, and walk on flowers. Every one I meet, and especially every woman, would consider themselves as failing in the most indispensable duty if they did not favour me with a lengthy and ingenious discourse on my celebrity.” Hume could, therefore, open to his friend every door in Paris that was worth entering, but Smith’s own name was also sufficiently known and esteemed, at least among men of letters, in France to secure to him a cordial welcome for his own sake. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* had been translated, at the suggestion of Baron d’Holbach, by E. Dous, and the translation had appeared in 1764 under the title of *Métaphysique de l’Ame*. It was unfortunately a very bad translation, for which Grimm makes the curious apology that it was impossible to render the ideas of metaphysics in a foreign language as you could render the images of poetry, because every nation had its own abstract ideas. But though the book got probably little impetus from this translation, it had been

considerably read in the original by men of letters when it first came out, and many of them had then formed, as Abbé Morellet says he did, the highest idea of Smith's sagacity and depth, and were prepared to meet the author with much interest.

Smith went more into society in the few months he resided in Paris than at any other period of his life. He was a regular guest in almost all the famous literary salons of that time — Baron d'Holbach's, Helvetius', Madame de Geoffrin's, Comtesse de Boufflers', Mademoiselle l'Espinasse's, and probably Madame Necker's. Our information about his doings is of course meagre, but there is one week in July 1766 in which we happen to have his name mentioned frequently in the course of the correspondence between Hume and his Paris friends regarding the quarrel with Rousseau, and during that week Smith was on the 21st at Mademoiselle l'Espinasse's, on the 25th at Comtesse de Boufflers', and on the 27th at Baron d'Holbach's, where he had some conversation with Turgot. He was a constant visitor at Madame Riccoboni the novelist's. He attended the meetings of the new economist sect in the apartments of Dr. Quesnay, and though the economic dinners of the elder Mirabeau, the "Friend of Men," were not begun for a year after, he no doubt visited the Marquis, as we know he visited other members of the fraternity. He went to Compiègne when the Court removed to Compiègne, made frequent excursions to interesting places within reach, and is always seen with troops of friends about him. Many of these were Englishmen, for after their long exclusion from Paris during the Seven Years war, Englishmen had begun to pour into the city, and the Hotel du Parc Royal, where Smith lived, was generally full of English guests. Among others who were there, as I have just mentioned, was Horace Walpole, who remained on till Easter, and with whom Smith seems to have become well acquainted, for in writing Hume in July he asks to be specially remembered to Mr. Walpole.

So much has been written about the literary salons of Paris in last century that it is unnecessary to do more here than describe Smith's connection with them. The salon we happen to hear most of his frequenting is the salon of the Comtesse de Boufflers-Rouvel, but that is due to the simple circumstance that the hostess was an assiduous correspondent of David Hume. She was mistress to the Prince de Conti, but ties of that character, if permanent, derogated nothing from a lady's position in Paris at that period. Abbé Morellet, who was a constant guest at her house, even states that this connection of hers with a prince of the blood, though illicit, really enhanced rather than diminished her

consideration in society, and her receptions were attended by all the rank, fashion, and learning of the city. The Comtesse was very fond of entertaining English guests, for she spoke our language well, and had been greatly pleased with the civilities she had received during her then recent visit to England in 1763. Smith was not long in Paris till he made her acquaintance, and received a very hearty welcome for the love of Hume. She began to read his book, moreover, and it became eventually such a favourite with her that she had thoughts of translating it.

Hume writes to her from Wootton on the 22nd of March 1766: “I am glad you have taken my friend Smith under your protection. You will find him a man of true merit, though perhaps his sedentary recluse life may have hurt his air and appearance as a man of the world.” The Comtesse writes Hume on the 6th of May: “I think I told you that I have made the acquaintance of Mr. Smith, and that for the love of you I had given him a very hearty welcome. I am now reading his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. I am not very far advanced with it yet, but I believe it will please me.” And again on the 25th of July, in the same year, when Hume’s quarrel with Rousseau was raging, she appends to a letter to Hume on that subject a few words about Smith, who had apparently called upon her just as she had finished it: “I entreated your friend Mr. Smith to call upon me. He has just this moment left me. I have read my letter to him. He, like myself, is apprehensive that you have been deceived in the warmth of so just a resentment. He begs of you to read over again the letter to Mr. Conway. It does not appear that he (Rousseau) refuses the pension, nor that he desires it to be made public.” The *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which she had then begun to read, grew more and more in favour with her, and a few years after this — in 1770 — when the two sons of Smith’s friend, Sir Gilbert Elliot, visited her, they found her at her studies in her bedroom, and talking of translating the book, if she had time, because it contained such just ideas about sympathy. She added that the book had come into great vogue in France, and that Smith’s doctrine of sympathy bade fair to supplant David Hume’s immaterialism as the fashionable opinion, especially with the ladies. The vogue would probably be aided by Smith’s personal introduction into French literary circles, but evidence of its extent is found in the fact that although one French translation of the work had already appeared, three different persons were then preparing or contemplating another — the Abbé Blavet, who actually published his; the Due de la Rochefoucauld, who discontinued his labour when he found himself forestalled by the Abbé; and the Comtesse de Boufflers

who perhaps did little more than entertain the design. The best translation was published some years after by another lady, the widow of Condorcet.

The Baron d'Holbach's weekly or bi-weekly dinners, at one of which it has been mentioned Smith had a conversation with Turgot, were, as L. Blanc has said, the regular states-general of philosophy. The usual guests were the philosophes and encyclopedists and men of letters — Diderot, Marmontel, Raynal, Galiani. The conversation ran largely towards metaphysics and theology, and, as Morellet, who was often there, states, the boldest theories were propounded, and things spoken which might well call down fire from heaven. It was there that Hume observed he had neither seen an atheist, nor did he believe one existed, and was informed by his host in reply, "You have been a little unfortunate; you are here at table with seventeen for the first time."

Morellet mentions that it was at the table of Helvetius, the philosopher, he himself first met Smith. Helvetius was a retired farmer-general of the taxes, who had grown rich without practising extortion, and instead of remaining a bachelor, as Smith says other farmers-general in France did, because no gentlewoman would marry them, and they were too proud to marry anybody else, he had married a pretty and clever wife, an early friend of Turgot's, who helped to make his Tuesday dinners among the most agreeable entertainments in Paris. He had recently returned from a long sojourn in England, so enchanted with both country and people that d'Holbach, who could find nothing to praise in either, declared he could really have seen nothing in England all the time except the persecution for heresy which he had shortly before suffered in France, and would have escaped in our freer air; and he was always very hospitable to English celebrities, so that it may be inferred that Smith enjoyed many opportunities of conversation with this versatile and philosophical financier during his stay in Paris.

Morellet, whose acquaintance Smith made at Helvetius' house, became one of his fastest friends in France, and on leaving Paris Smith gave him for a keepsake his own pocket-book, — a very pretty English-made pocket-book, says the Abbé, which "has served me these twenty years." Morellet, besides being an advanced economist, whose views ran in sympathy with Smith's own, was the most delightful of companions, uniting with strong sense and a deep love of the right an unfailing play of irony and fun, and ever ready, as Fanny Burney found him still at eighty-five, to sing his own songs for the entertainment of his friends. The Abbé was a metaphysician as well as an economist, but, according to his

account of his conversations with Smith, they seem to have discussed mainly economic subjects— “the theory of commerce,” he says, “banking, public credit, and various points in the great work which Smith was then meditating,” *i.e.* the *Wealth of Nations*. This book had therefore by that time taken shape so far that the author made his Paris friends aware of his occupation upon it, and discussed with them definite points in the scheme of doctrine he was unfolding. Morellet formed a very just estimate of him. “I regard him still,” he says, “as one of the men who have made the most complete observations and analyses on all questions he treated of,” and he gave the best proof of his high opinion by writing a translation of the *Wealth of Nations* himself. Smith would no doubt derive some assistance towards making his observations and analyses more complete from the different lights in which the matters under consideration would be naturally placed in the course of discussions with men like Morellet and his friends; but whatever others have thought, Morellet at least sets up no claim, either on his own behalf or on behalf of his very old and intimate college friend Turgot, or of any other of the French economists, of having influenced or supplied any of Smith’s ideas. The Scotch inquirer had been long working on the same lines as his French colleagues, and Morellet seems to have thought him, when they first met, as he thought him still, when he wrote those memoirs, as being more complete in his observations and analyses than the others.

A frequent resort of Smith in Paris was the salon of Mademoiselle de l’Espinasse, which differed from the others by the greater variety of the guests and by the presence of ladies. The hostess — according to Hume, one of the most sensible women in Paris — had long been Madame du Deffand’s principal assistant in the management of her famous salon, but having been dismissed in 1764 for entertaining Turgot and D’Alembert on her own account without permission, she set up a rival salon of her own on improved principles, with the zealous help of her two eminent friends; and to her unpretending apartments ambassadors, princesses, marshals of France, and financiers came, and met with men of letters like Grimm, Condillac, and Gibbon. D’Alembert indeed lived in the house, having come there to be nursed through an illness and remaining on afterwards, and as D’Alembert was one of Smith’s chief friends in Paris, his house was naturally one of the latter’s chief resorts. Here, moreover, he often met Turgot, as indeed he did everywhere he went, and of all the friends he met in France there was none in whose society he took more pleasure, or for whose mind and character he formed a profounder

admiration, than that great thinker and statesman. If his conversation with Morellet ran mainly on political and economic subjects, it would most probably run even more largely on such subjects with Turgot, for they were both at the moment busy writing their most important works on those subjects. Turgot's *Formation and Distribution of Wealth* was written in 1766, though it was only published three years later in the *Éphémérides du Citoyen*; and it cannot, I think, be doubted that the ideas and theories with which his mind was then boiling must have been the subject of discussion again and again in the course of his numerous conversations with Smith. So also if Smith brought out various points in the work he was undertaking for discussion with Morellet, he may reasonably be inferred to have done the same with Morellet's greater friend Turgot, and all this would have been greatly to their mutual advantage. No vestiges of their intercourse, however, remain, though some critics profess to see its results writ very large on the face of their writings.

Professor Thorold Rogers thinks the influences of Turgot's reasoning on Smith's mind to be easily perceptible to any reader of the *Formation and Distribution of Wealth* and of the *Wealth of Nations*. Dupont de Nemours once went so far as to say that whatever was true in Smith was borrowed from Turgot, and whatever was not borrowed from Turgot was not true; but he afterwards retracted that absurdly-sweeping allegation, and confessed that he had made it before he was able to read English; while Leon Say thinks Turgot owed much of his philosophy to Smith, and Smith owed much of his economics to Turgot. Questions of literary obligation are often difficult to settle. Two contemporary thinkers, dealing with the same subject under the same general influences and tendencies of the time, may think nearly alike even without any manner of personal intercommunication, and the idea of natural liberty of trade, in which the main resemblance between the writers in the present case is supposed to occur, was already in the ground, and sprouting up here and there before either of them wrote at all. Smith's position on that subject, moreover, is so much more solid, balanced, and moderate than Turgot's, that it is different in positive character; the extremer form of the doctrine taught by Turgot appears to have been taught also by Smith in earlier years and abandoned. At least the fragment published by Stewart of Smith's Society paper of 1755 — eleven years before Turgot wrote his book or saw Smith — proclaims individualism of the extremer form, and intimates that he had taught the same views in Edinburgh in 1750. Smith had thus been teaching free trade many years before he met Turgot, and

teaching it in Turgot's own form; he had converted many of the merchants of Glasgow to it and a future Prime Minister of England; he had probably, moreover, thought out the main truths of the work he was even then busy upon. He was therefore in a position to meet Turgot on equal terms, and give full value for anything he might take, and if obligations must needs be assessed and the balance adjusted, who shall say whether Smith owes most to the conversation of Turgot or Turgot owes most to the conversation of Smith? The state of the exchange cannot be determined from mere priority of publication; no other means of determining it exist, and it is of no great moment to determine it at all.

Turgot and Smith are said — on authority which cannot be altogether disregarded, Condorcet, the biographer of Turgot — to have continued their economic discussions by correspondence after Smith returned to this country; but though every search has been made for this correspondence, as Dugald Stewart informs us, no trace of anything of the kind was ever discovered on either side of the Channel, and Smith's friends never heard him allude to such a thing. "It is scarcely to be supposed," says Stewart, "that Mr. Smith would destroy the letters of such a correspondent as M. Turgot, and still less probable that such an intercourse was carried on between them without the knowledge of Mr. Smith's friends. From some inquiries that have been made at Paris by a gentleman of this society since Smith's death, I have reason to believe that no evidence of the correspondence exists among the papers of M. Turgot, and that the whole story has taken its rise from a report suggested by the knowledge of their former intimacy." Some of Hume's letters to Turgot — one from this year 1766, combating among other things Turgot's principle of the single tax on the net product of the land — still exist among the Turgot family archives, but none from Smith, for Leon Say examined those archives a few years ago with this purpose among others expressly in view.

An occasional letter, however, certainly did pass between them, for, as Smith himself mentions in a letter which will appear in a subsequent chapter, it was "by the particular favour of M. Turgot" that he received the copy of the *Mémoires concernant les Impositions*, which he quotes so often in the *Wealth of Nations*. This book was not printed when he was in France, and as it needed much influence to get a copy of it, his was most probably got after Turgot became Controller-General of the Finances in 1774. But in any case it would involve the exchange of letters.

Smith, with all his admiration for Turgot, thought him too simple-hearted for a practical statesman, too prone, as noble natures often are, to

underrate the selfishness, stupidity, and prejudice that prevail in the world and resist the course of just and rational reform. He described Turgot to Samuel Rogers as an excellent person, very honest and well-meaning, but so unacquainted with the world and human nature that it was a maxim with him, as he had himself told David Hume, that whatever is right may be done.

Smith would deny the name of statesman altogether to the politician who did not make it his aim to establish the right, or, in other words, had no public ideal; such a man is only “that crafty and insidious animal vulgarly termed a statesman.” But he insists that the truly wise statesman in pressing his ideal must always practise considerable accommodation. If he cannot carry the right he will not disdain to ameliorate the wrong, but, “like Solon, when he cannot establish the best system of laws, he will endeavour to establish the best that the people can bear.” Turgot made too little account, he thought, of the resisting power of vested interests and confirmed habits. He was too optimist, and the peculiarity attaches to his theoretical as well as his practical work. Smith himself was prone rather to the contrary error of overrating the resisting power of interests and prejudices. If Turgot was too sanguine when he told the king that popular education would in ten years change the people past all recognition, Smith was too incredulous when he despaired of the ultimate realisation of slave emancipation and free trade; and under a biographical aspect, it is curious to find the man who has spent his life in the practical business of the world taking the more enthusiastic view we expect from the recluse, and the man who has spent his life in his library taking the more critical and measured view we expect from the man of the world.

Another statesman whom Smith knew well in Paris was Necker. His wife had very possibly begun by this time her rather austere salon, where free-thinking was strictly tabooed, and Morellet, her right-hand man in the entertainment of the guests, confesses the restraint was really irksome; and if she had, Morellet would probably have brought Smith there. But anyhow Sir James Mackintosh, who had means of hearing about Smith from competent sources, states explicitly that he was upon intimate terms with Necker during his residence in the French capital, that he formed only a poor opinion of that minister’s abilities, and that he used to predict the fall of his political reputation the moment his head was put to any real proof, always saying of him with emphasis, “He is a mere man of detail.” Smith was not always lucky in his predictions, but here for once he was right.

While Smith was frequenting these various literary and philosophical salons they were all thrown into a state of unusual commotion by the famous quarrel between Rousseau and Hume. The world has long since ceased to take any interest in that quarrel, having assured itself that it all originated in the suspicions of Rousseau's insane fancy, but during the whole summer of 1766 it filled column after column of the English and continental newspapers, and it occupied much of the attention of Smith and the other friends of Hume in Paris. It will be remembered that when Rousseau was expelled from Switzerland, Hume, who was an extravagant admirer of his, offered to find him a home in England, and on the offer being accepted, brought him over to this country in January 1766. Hume first found quarters for him at Chiswick, but the capricious philosopher would not live at Chiswick because it was too near town. Hume then got him a gentleman's house in the Peak of Derby, but Rousseau would not enter it unless the owner agreed to take board. Hume induced the owner to gratify even this whim, and Rousseau departed and established himself comfortably at Wootton in the Peak of Derby. Hume next procured for him a pension of £100 a year from the king. Rousseau would not touch it unless it were kept secret; the king agreed to keep it secret. Rousseau then would not have it unless it were made public; the king again agreed to meet his whim. But the more Hume did for him the more Rousseau suspected the sincerity of his motives, and used first to assail him with the most ridiculous accusations, and then fall on his neck and implore forgiveness for ever doubting him. But at last, on the 23rd of June, in reply to Hume's note intimating the king's remission of the condition of secrecy, and the consequent removal of every obstacle to the acceptance of the pension, Rousseau gave way entirely to the evil spirit that haunted him, and wrote Hume the notorious letter, declaring that his horrible designs were at last found out.

Hume lost no time in going with his troubles to Smith, and asking him to lay the true state of the case before their Paris friends. To that letter Smith wrote the following reply: —

Paris, *6th July 1766*.

My Dear Friend — I am thoroughly convinced that Rousseau is as great a rascal as you and as every man here believe him to be. Yet let me beg of you not to think of publishing anything to the world upon the very great impertinence which he has been guilty of. By refusing the pension which you had the goodness to solicit for him with his own consent, he

may have thrown, by the baseness of his proceedings, a little ridicule upon you in the eyes of the court and the ministry. Stand this ridicule; expose his brutal letter, but without giving it out of your own hand, so that it may never be printed, and, if you can, laugh at yourself, and I will pawn my life that before three weeks are at an end this little affair which at present gives you so much uneasiness shall be understood to do you as much honour as anything that has ever happened to you. By endeavouring to unmask before the public this hypocritical pedant, you run the risk of disturbing the tranquillity of your whole life. By leaving him alone he cannot give you a fortnight's uneasiness. To write against him is, you may depend upon it, the very thing he wishes you to do. He is in danger of falling into obscurity in England, and he hopes to make himself considerable by provoking an illustrious adversary. He will have a great party — the Church, the Whigs, the Jacobites, the whole wise English nation — who will love to mortify a Scotchman, and to applaud a man who has refused a pension from the king. It is not unlikely, too, that they may pay him very well for having refused it, and that even he may have had in view this compensation. Your whole friends here wish you not to write, — the Baron, D'Alembert, Madame Riccoboni, Mademoiselle Rianecourt, M. Turgot, etc. etc. M. Turgot, a friend every way worthy of you, desired me to recommend this advice to you in a particular manner as his most earnest entreaty and opinion. He and I are both afraid that you are surrounded with evil counsellors, and that the advice of your English *literati*, who are themselves accustomed to publishing all their little gossiping stories in newspapers, may have too much influence upon you. Remember me to Mr. Walpole, and believe me, etc.

P.S. — Make my apology to Millar for not having yet answered his last very kind letter. I am preparing the answer to it, which he will certainly receive by next post. Remember me to Mrs. Millar. Do you ever see Mr. Townshend?

The deep love of tranquillity this letter breathes, the dislike of publicity as a snare fatal to future quiet, the contempt for the petty vanity that makes men of letters run into print with their little personal affairs, as if they were of moment to anybody but themselves, are all very characteristic of Smith's philosophic temper of mind; and there is also — what appears on other occasions as well as this in the intercourse of the two philosophers — a certain note of affectionate anxiety on the part of the younger and graver philosopher towards the elder as towards a man

of less weight of natural character and experience, and perhaps less of the wisdom of this world, than himself.

Smith seems to have shown Hume's letter to their common friends in Paris, and while deeply interested, as was only natural, in the quarrel, they with one consent took Hume's side, the only possible view of the transaction. The subject continued to furnish matter of conversation and conference among Hume's French literary friends during the whole time of Smith's residence in Paris. Hume sent Smith another letter a little later on in the month of July, which he asked him specially to show to D'Alembert. This Smith did on the 21 st, when he met D'Alembert at dinner at Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse's, in company with Turgot, Marmontel, Roux, Morellet, Saurin, and Duclos; and on the same evening D'Alembert wrote Hume that he had just had the honour of seeing Mr. Smith, who had shown him the letter he had received, and that they had talked much together about Hume and his affairs. Apparently Smith's objections to Hume publishing anything on the quarrel were now overcome; at all events, the result of this consultation of Hume's French friends was to advise publication; and accordingly a week or two later Hume sent on a complete narrative of his relations with Rousseau, together with the whole correspondence from first to last, to D'Alembert, with full permission to make any use of it he thought best, and he wrote Smith at the same time asking him to go and get a sight of it. "Pray tell me," he adds, "your judgment of my work, if it deserves the name. Tell D'Alembert I make him absolute master to retrench or alter what he thinks proper in order to suit it to the latitude of Paris."

On the 27th of July Turgot writes Hume, mentioning that he had that day met Smith at Baron d'Holbach's, and they had discussed the Rousseau affair together. Smith had told him of the letter from Rousseau to General Conway, which he had been shown on the 25th by the Comtesse de Boufflers, and had repeated to him the same interpretation of that letter which he had already expressed to the Comtesse, viz. that Rousseau had not made the secrecy a ground for refusing the pension, but merely regretted that that condition made it impossible for him adequately to show his gratitude. Smith was thus inclined to give Rousseau the benefit of a better construction when a better construction was possible, but Hume writes Turgot on the 5th of August that Smith was quite wrong in that supposition.

One of those two letters of Smith's on the Rousseau affair mentions the name of Madame Riccoboni among those of Hume's friends with whom he had been in communication on the subject, and Madame

Riccoboni about the same date writes Garrick that Smith and Changuion, the English ambassador's private secretary, were her two great confidants on the business of this famous quarrel. Madame Riccoboni had been a popular actress, but giving up the stage for letters, had become the most popular novelist in France. Her *Letters of Fanny Butler* and her *History of Miss Jenny* were dividing the attention of Paris with the novels of our own Richardson; and Smith, in the 1790 edition of his *Theory*, brackets her with Racine, Voltaire, and Richardson as instructors in "the refinements and delicacies of love and friendship." She was an effusive admirer of Smith, as, indeed, she was of Changuion, and of that *bel Anglais* Richard Burke, and of Garrick himself;— "you are," she writes the player, "the dearling of my heart"; — and when Smith was returning home from France, she gave him the following letter of introduction to Garrick: —

Je suis bien vaine, my dear Mr. Garrick, de pouvoir vous donner ce que je perds avec un regret trés-vif, le plaisir de voir Mr. Smith. Ce charming philosopher vous dira combien il a d'esprit, car je le défie de parler sans en montrer. Je sui vraiment fâchée que la politesse m'oblige à lui donner ma lettre ouverte: cet usage établi retient mon coeur tout prêt à lui rendre justice, mais sa modestie est aussi grande que son mérite, et je craindrois que la plus simple vérité ne parût à ses yeux une grosse flaterie; je puis vous dire de lui, ce qu'il disoit un jour d'un autre — le métier de cet homme-là est d'être aimable. J'ajouterai, — et de mériter l'estime de tous ceux qui ont le bonheur de le connoitre.

Oh ces Ecossois! ces chiens d'Ecossois! ils viennent me plaire et m'affliger. Je suis comme ces folles jeunes filles qui écoutent un amant sans penser an regret, toujours voisin du plaisir. Grondez-moi, battez-moi, tuez-moi! mais j'aime Mr. Smith, je l'aime beaucoup. Je voudrois que le diable emportât tous nos gens de lettres, tous nos philosophes, et qu'il me rapportât Mr. Smith. Les hommes supérieurs se cherchent. Rempli d'estime pour Mr. Garrick, désirant le voir et l'entretenir, Mr. Smith a voulu être introduit par moi. Il me flate infiniment par cette préférence, bien des gens se mélent de présenter un ami à un autre ami, peu sont comme moi dans le cas d'être sûre de la reconnoissance des tous deux. Adieu, mon très-aimable et très-paresseux ami. Embrassez pour moi vôtre gracieuse compagne. La mienne vous assure l'un et l'autre de sa plus tendre amitié.

Riccoboni

Not content with this letter of recommendation which she gave to Smith to deliver, Madame Riccoboni at the same time sent Garrick

another through the post, and shows the sincerity of the feelings of high esteem she had expressed in the open letter by expressing them again quite as decisively in the closed one: —

6 Octobre.

Aujourd'huy je vous écris uniquement pour vous prévenir sur une visite que vous recevrez à Londres. Mr. Smith, un Ecossois, homme d'un très grand mérite, aussi distingué par son bon naturel, par la douceur de son caractère que par son esprit et son sçavoir, me demande une lettre pour vous. Vous verrez un philosophe moral et pratique; gay, riant, à cent lieues de la pédanterie des nôtres. Il vous estime beaucoup et désire vous connoître particulièrement. Donnez son nom à votre porte, je vous en prie, vous perdriez beaucoup à ne pas le voir, et je serois désolée de ne pas recevoir de lui un détail du bon accueil que vous lui aurez fait.... Donnez son nom à votre porte, je vous le répète. S'il ne vous voit pas, je vous étrangle.

Smith had apparently begged of her also a letter of introduction to R. Burke, and she wrote him one, but he went away without it; as she says to Garrick, in a letter of 3rd January 1767: "Ma bête de philosophe est partie sans songer à la prendre." Nor apparently had Smith as yet delivered her letter to Garrick, for she asks, "Vous ne l'avez pas encore vu Mr. Smith? c'est la plus distraite créature! mais c'est une des plus aimables. Je l'aime beaucoup et je l'estime encore d'avantage." A few weeks later, on the 29th of January, she again returns to the subject of Smith, asking Garrick whether he had yet seen him, whether he was in London or had delivered her letter, and adding, "C'est un homme charmant, n'est-il pas?"

Madame Riccoboni was not the only Frenchwoman who was touched with Smith's personal charms; we hear of another, a marquise, "a woman too of talents and wit," who actually fell in love with him. It was during an excursion Smith made from Paris to Abbeville, with the Duke of Buccleugh and several other English noblemen and a certain Captain Lloyd, a retired officer, who was afterwards a friend, perhaps a patient, of Dr. Currie, the author of the *Life of Burns*, and told the doctor this and many other anecdotes about the economist. Lloyd was, according to Currie, a most interesting and accomplished man, and his acquaintance with Smith was one of great intimacy. The party seem to have stayed some days at Abbeville — to visit Crecy, no doubt, like patriotic Englishmen, and this French marquise was stopping at the same hotel. She had just come from Paris, where she found all the world talking about Hume, and having heard that Smith was Hume's particular friend

and almost as great a philosopher as he, she was bent on making so famous a conquest, but after many persistent efforts was obliged eventually to abandon the attempt. Her philosopher could not endure her, nor could he — and this greatly amused his own party — conceal his embarrassment; but it was not philosophy altogether that steeled his breast. The truth, according to Lloyd, was that the philosopher was deeply in love with another, an English lady, who was also stopping in Abbeville at the time. Of all Currie heard concerning Smith from Captain Lloyd this is the only thing he has chosen to record, and slight though it is, it contributes a touch of nature to that more personal aspect of Smith's life of which we have least knowledge. Stewart makes mention of an attachment which Smith was known to have cherished for several years in the early part of his life to a young lady of great beauty and accomplishment, whom Stewart had himself seen when she was past eighty, but "still retained evident traces of her former beauty," while "the powers of her understanding and the gaiety of her temper seemed to have suffered nothing from the hand of time." Nobody ever knew what prevented their union, or how far Smith's addresses were favourably received, but she never married any more than he. Stewart says that "after this disappointment he laid aside all thoughts of marriage"; but the Abbeville attachment seems to have been a different one from this and a later.

While in Paris Smith was a very steady playgoer. He was always a great admirer of the French dramatists, and now enjoyed very much seeing their plays actually represented on the stage, and discussing them afterwards, we may be sure, with an expert like Madame Riccoboni.

Speaking of his admiration for the great French dramatists, Dugald Stewart states that "this admiration (resulting originally from the general character of his taste, which delighted more to remark that pliancy of genius which accommodates itself to general rules than to wonder at the bolder flights of an undisciplined imagination) was increased to a great degree when he saw the beauties that had struck him in the closet heightened by the utmost perfection of theatrical exhibition." The French theatre, indeed, gave him much material for reflection. In his later years his thoughts and his conversation often recurred to the philosophy of the imitative arts. He meant had he lived to have written a book on the subject; he has actually left us a single essay, one of the most finished pieces of work he ever did; and among his friends he was very fond in those days of speaking and theorising on that topic, and supporting his

conclusions by illustrations from his wide reading and his observation of life. These illustrations seem to have been drawn frequently from his experiences of the French theatre.

The Earl of Buchan says that Smith had no ear for music, but there are few things he seems to have nevertheless enjoyed better than the opera, both serious and comic. He thought the “sprightly airs” of the comic opera, though a more “temperate joy” than “the scenes of the common comedy,” were still a “most delicious” one.’ “They do not make us laugh so loud, but they make us smile more frequently.” And he held the strongest opinion that music was always on virtue’s side, for he says the only musical passions are the good ones, the bad and unsocial passions being, in his view, essentially unmelodious. But he thought scenery was much abused on the French operatic stage. “In the French operas not only thunder and lightning, storms and tempests, are commonly represented in the ridiculous manner above mentioned, but all the marvellous, all the supernatural of epic poetry, all the metamorphoses of mythology, all the wonders of witchcraft and magic, everything that is most unfit to be represented upon the stage, are every day exhibited with the most complete approbation and applause of that ingenious nation.”

Amid all this gaiety of salons and playhouses Smith found a graver retreat with the philanthropic sect of the economists in the apartments of the king’s physician, Dr. Quesnay, in Paris and Versailles. Dupont de Nemours told J.B. Say that he had often met Smith at their little meetings, and that they looked on him as a judicious and simple man, and apparently nothing more, for, he adds, Smith had not at that time shown the stuff he was made of. If they did not then recognise his paramount capacity as they afterwards did, there were some things about his opinions which Dupont thought they learnt better then than they could from the great work in which he subsequently expounded them. In a note to one of Turgot’s works, of which he was editor, Dupont appeals from an opinion expressed, or understood to be expressed, by Smith in his published writings, to the opinion on the same subject which he used to hear from Smith’s own lips in the unreserved intercourse of private life. “Smith at liberty,” he says, “Smith in his own room or in that of a friend, as I have seen him when we were fellow-disciples of M. Quesnay, would not have said that.”

Though Smith met with them, and was indeed their very close scientific as well as personal associate, it is of course impossible, strictly speaking, to count him, as Dupont does, among the disciples of Quesnay. He was no more a disciple of Quesnay than Peter was a disciple of Paul,

although, it is true, Paul wrote first. He neither agreed with all the creed of the French economists, nor did he acquire the articles he agreed with from the teaching of their master. He had been for sixteen years before he met them teaching the two principal truths which they set themselves to proclaim: (1) that the wealth of a country does not consist in its gold and silver, but in its stock of consumable commodities; and (2) that the true way of increasing it is not by conferring privileges or imposing restraints, but by assuring its producers a fair field and no favour. He had taught those truths in 1750, and Quesnay had not written anything bearing on them till 1756. Moreover, much in their system on which they laid most stress he has publicly repudiated. Still he speaks both of their system and of their master with a veneration which no disciple could easily surpass. He pronounces the system to be, "with all its imperfections, perhaps the nearest approximation to the truth that has yet been published upon the subject of political economy," and the author of the system to be "ingenious and profound," "a man of the greatest simplicity and modesty, who was honoured by his disciples with a reverence not inferior to that of any of the ancient philosophers for the founders of their respective systems." He might not, like the Marquis de Mirabeau, call Quesnay a greater than Socrates, or the *Economic Table* a discovery equal to the invention of printing or of money, but he thought him so clearly the head of the economic inquirers of the world that he meant to have dedicated the *Wealth of Nations* to Quesnay had the venerable French economist been alive at the time of its publication. Smith was therefore a very sympathetic associate of this new sect, though not a strict adherent.

It may be well to explain in a word to the general reader that this sect were patriots and practical social and political reformers quite as much as theoretical economists. They believed the condition of the French people to have grown so bad as to be a grave danger to the State, and they preached their system as a revelation of the only way of salvation. They were too earnest for the Paris wits. Voltaire always sneered at them till he came to know Turgot. Grimm calls them "the pietists of philosophy," and Hume, bantering Morellet, wonders how a man like Turgot could herd with such cattle, "the most chimerical and the most arrogant that now exist since the annihilation of the Sorbonne." But they were grappling with living problems, and seeing into the real situation so much further than their contemporaries, that an historian like de Tocqueville thinks the best key to the Revolution is to be found in their writings. The malady of the age, they held, was the ever-increasing distress of the agricultural

population. The great nobles, the financiers, the farmers-general, the monopolists, were very rich; but the agriculturists — the vast body of the people — were sinking into a hopeless impoverishment, for between tithes and heavy war taxes and farmer-generals' extortions, and the high rents which, to Turgot's despair, the smaller peasantry would persist in offering without reflecting in the least on the rise in their burdens, — between all these things, the net product of agriculture — what was left in the hands of the cultivator after all expenses were paid away — was getting less and less every year, and the ruin of the peasantry meant the ruin of the nation. "Poor peasants, poor kingdom," said they; "poor kingdom, poor king."

And the remedy was plain: the net product of agriculture must somehow be made to rise instead of fall. They supported their contention with a certain erroneous theory that agriculture is the sole source of wealth, but the error made little practical difference to the argument, for agriculture is always a sufficiently important source of wealth to make its improvement a national concern. How then was the net product to be increased? By better methods of cultivation, by removal of legal and official interferences, and by lightening the public burdens through the abolition of all existing taxes and of the existing system of collecting them through farmers-general, and the institution instead of a single tax on the net product of the soil, to be collected directly by responsible officials. According to the reminiscences of strangers who happened to fall into their company, the talk of the economists always ran much on the net product and the single tax, for they believed the two great needs of the country were agricultural improvement and financial reform. When Quesnay was offered a farmer-generalship of the taxes for his son, he said, "No; let the welfare of my children be bound up with the public prosperity," and made his son a farmer of the land instead.

In Quesnay's rooms in the palace of Versailles Smith would sometimes hear words that would sound very strange in the house of the king. Mercier de la Rivière, Quesnay's favourite disciple, while writing his book on the *Natural and Essential Order of Political Societies*, published in 1767, almost lived in Quesnay's apartments, discussing the work point by point with the master. The Marquis de Mirabeau mentions having seen him there six whole weeks running, "moulding and remoulding his work, and consequently denying father and mother" for the time. One day Madame du Hausset heard a memorable conversation there between these two economists. "This kingdom," observed Mirabeau, "is in a miserable state. There is neither energy in the nation

nor money to serve in its place." "No," replied Mercier de la Rivière, counsellor of the Parliament of Paris and late Governor of Martinico, "it cannot be regenerated except by a conquest like that of China, or by a great internal convulsion; but woe to those who will be there then, for the French people does nothing by halves." The words made the little lady-in-waiting tremble, and she hurried out of the room; but M. de Marigny, brother of the king's mistress, who was also present, followed her, and bade her have no fear, for these were honest men, if a little chimerical, and they were even, he thought, on the right road, though they knew not when to stop and went past the goal.

The doctor's room was a little sanctuary of free speech pitched by an odd chance in the heart of a despotic court, but his loyalty was known to be as sterling as his patriotism, and Louis himself would come round and listen to his economic parables, and call him the king's thinker?-as indeed he was, for he was no believer in states-general or states-particular, he had no interest in court or party intrigues, and his thought was always for the power of the king as well as for the welfare of the people. Marmontel, who used to come to him feigning an interest in the net product and the single tax, merely, as he confesses, to secure the doctor's word with Madame de Pompadour about an appointment he wanted, writes that "while storms gathered and dispersed again underneath Quesnay's *entre-sol*, he wrought at his axioms and his calculations in rural economy as calmly and with as much indifference to the movements of the court as if he were a hundred leagues away. Below they discussed peace and war, the choice of generals, the dismissal of ministers, while we up in the entre-sol reasoned about agriculture and calculated the net product, or sometimes dined gaily with Diderot, D'Alembert, Duclos, Helvetius, Turgot, Buffon; and Madame de Pompadour, not being able to get that company of philosophers to descend into her salon, used to come up there herself to see them at table, and have a talk with them." None of the famous men mentioned here were members of the sect except Turgot.

The year 1766 was a year of exceptional activity in this economist camp. Turgot, as we have seen, was writing an important work, and Mercier de la Rivière another. The other members of the group were busy too, for they had just for the first time secured an organ in the press in the *Journal de l'Agriculture du Commerce et des Finances*, of which their youngest convert, Dupont de Nemours, was made editor in June 1765, and in which Quesnay himself wrote an article almost every month till Dupont's dismissal in November 1766. The Government, moreover,

which had thrown Mirabeau into prison for his first book and had suppressed his second only a year or two before, now ceased from troubling, and gave even a certain official countenance to the *Journal de l'Agriculture*, for after the war it no longer shut its eyes to the distress that prevailed, and began to give an ear to remedies. They were making converts too, among others the Abbé Baudeau, who used to write them down in his journal, the *Éphémérides du Citoyen*, but now offered to make it their organ when they lost the *Journal de l'Agriculture*. They were thus in the first flush of their active propaganda, which in a year or two more made political economy, Grimm says, the *science de la mode* in France, and won converts to the single tax among the crowned heads of Europe. Quesnay too had taken apartments in town in the house of a disciple to be nearer his friends for pushing the propaganda, so that Smith had especially abundant opportunities of seeing him and them that year.

No memorial of all their intercourse, however, has survived except the slight and rather indefinite reminiscence of Dupont de Nemours, to which allusion has been made. Dupont remembers that Smith used to discuss with them a question, which they no doubt would be often discussing, for they were greatly interested in it, — the question of the effect upon the wages of labour of a tax upon the commodities consumed by the labourers; and he says that Smith, in the freedom of private intercourse with them, expressed quite a different opinion upon that subject from that which he delivered in the *Wealth of Nations*, with the fear of vested interests before his eyes. Dupont could not have read the *Wealth of Nations* very carefully when he hinted this accusation of timidity before vested interests, for there was scarcely a vested interest existing at the time that has not incurred in its turn most vigorous censure in that work. But as the alleged difference amounts merely to this, that Smith in his book asserts a principle with a certain specific limitation to it which he used to assert in conversation without the limitation, it probably represents no real change of opinion, but only a difference between the more exact expositions of the book and the less exact expositions of conversation. The point was this. Smith held, with Dupont and his friends, that a direct tax on the wages of labour, like the French industrial *taille*, would, if the demand for labour and the price of provisions remained the same, have the effect of raising the wages of labour by the sum required to pay the tax. He held, again, with them that an indirect tax on the commodities consumed by the labourers would act in exactly the same way if the commodities taxed were necessaries of

life, because a rise in the price of necessaries would imperil the labourer’s ability to bring up his family. But what seemed new to Dupont was that Smith now in his book held that if the commodities taxed were luxuries, the tax would not act in that way. It would act as a sumptuary law. The labourer would merely spend less on such superfluities, and since this forced frugality would probably increase rather than diminish his ability to bring up a family, he would neither require nor obtain any rise of wages. The high tobacco duty in France and England and a recent rise of three shillings on the barrel of beer had no effect whatever on wages.

That is what Dupont says Smith would not have contended in France. He would not have drawn this distinction between the taxation of a necessary and the taxation of a luxury, and he only drew it in his book to avert the clamour of offended interests, though against his real convictions. The imputation of dissimulation, though explicitly enough made, may be disregarded. The alternative of a real change of opinion is quite possible, inasmuch as the position Smith has actually reached on this question in his book is far from final or perfect; it is obvious at a glance that in a community such as he supposes, where the labourers are in the habit of consuming both necessaries and luxuries, a tax on necessaries would have exactly the same effect as he attributes to a tax on luxuries; it would force the labourer to give up some of his luxuries. But there might be no real change of opinion, and yet a good deal of apparent difference between the loose statements of a speaker in a language of which he had only imperfect command and his more complete and precise statements in a written book. Dupont, it may be added, seems to think that Smith in his talks with the French economists expressed much more unfavourable views of the inconveniences, changes, and general evils of the English system of taxation than would be gathered from the *Wealth of Nations*.

Before Smith left France he had occasion, unhappily, to resort to Quesnay the physician as well as to Quesnay the economist. He had been in the habit while in Paris of taking his pupils for excursions to interesting places in the vicinity, as he had done from Toulouse, and in August 1766 they went to Compiègne to see the camp and the military evolutions which were to take place during the residence of the Court there. In Compiègne the Duke of Buccleugh took seriously ill of a fever, — the consequence of a fall from his horse while hunting, says his aunt, Lady Mary Coke, — and, as will be seen from the following letter, he was watched and nursed by his distinguished tutor with a care and

devotion almost more than paternal. The letter is written to Charles Townshend, the Duke's step-father: —

Compiègne, *26th August 1766*.

Dear Sir — It is, you may believe, with the greatest concern that I find myself obliged to give you an account of a slight fever from which the Duke of Buccleugh is not yet entirely recovered, though it is this day very much abated. He came here to see the camp and to hunt with the King and the Court. On Thursday last he returned from hunting about seven at night very hungry, and ate heartily of a cold supper with a vast quantity of sallad, and drank some cold punch after it. This supper, it seems, disagreed with him. He had no appetite next day, but appeared well and hearty as usual. He found himself uneasy on the field and returned home before the rest of the company. He dined with my Lord George Lennox, and, as he tells me, ate heartily. He found himself very much fatigued after dinner and threw himself upon his servant's bed. He slept there about an hour, and awaked about eight at night in a good deal of disorder. He vomited, but not enough to relieve him. I found his pulse extremely quick. He went to bed immediately and drank some vinegar whey, quite confident that a night's rest and a sweat, his usual remedy, would relieve him. He slept little that night but sweat profusely. The moment I saw him next day (Sunday) I was sure he had a fever, and begged of him to send for a physician. He refused a long time, but at last, upon seeing me uneasy, consented. I sent for Quenay, first ordinary physician to the King. He sent me word he was ill. I then sent for Senac; he was ill likewise. I went to Quenay myself to beg that, notwithstanding his illness, which was not dangerous, he would come to see the Duke. He told me he was an old infirm man, whose attendance could not be depended on, and advised me as his friend to depend upon De la Saone, first physician to the Queen. I went to De la Saone. He was gone out, and was not expected home that night. I returned to Quenay, who followed me immediately to the Duke. It was by this time seven at night. The Duke was in the same profuse sweat which he had been in all day and all the preceding night. In this situation Quenay declared that it was improper to do anything till the sweat should be over. He only ordered him some cooling ptisane drink. Ouenay's illness made it impossible for him to return next day (Monday) and De la Saone has waited on the Duke ever since, to my entire satisfaction. On Monday he found the Duke's fever so moderate that he judged it unnecessary to bleed him.... To-day, Wednesday, upon finding some little extraordinary heat upon the Duke's skin in the morning, he proposed ordering a small quantity of

blood to be taken from him at two o'clock, but upon returning at that hour he found him so very cool and easy that he judged it unnecessary. When a French physician judges bleeding unnecessary, you may be sure that the fever is not very violent. The Duke has never had the smallest headache nor any pain in any part of his body; he has good spirits; his head and his eye are both clear; he has no extraordinary redness in his face; his tongue is not more foul than in a common cold. There is some little quickness in his pulse, but it is soft, full, and regular. In short, there is no one bad symptom about him, only he has a fever and keeps his bed.... De la Saone imagines the whole illness owing to the indigestion of Thursday night. Some part of the undigested matter having got into his blood, the violent commotion which this had occasioned had burst, he supposes, some small vessel in his veins.... Depend upon hearing from me by every post till his perfect recovery; if any threatening symptom should appear I shall immediately despatch an express to you; so keep your mind as easy as possible. There is not the least probability that any such symptom ever will appear. I never stirr from his room from eight in the morning till ten at night, and watch for the smallest change that happens to him. I should sit by him all night too if the ridiculous, impertinent jealousy of Cook, who thinks my assiduity an encroachment upon his duty, would not be so much alarmed, as it gave some disturbance even to his master in his present illness.

The King has inquired almost every day at his levée of my Lord George and of Mr. De la Saone concerning the Duke's illness. The Duke and Dutchess of Fitzjames, the Chevalier de Clermont, the Comte de Guerchy, etc. etc., together with the whole English nation here and at Paris, have expressed the greatest anxiety for his recovery. Remember me in the most respectful manner to Lady Dalkeith, and believe me to be with the greatest regard, dear sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Compiègne, *26th August 1766*.
Wednesday, 5 o'clock afternoon.

Could there be a more pleasing exhibition of the thorough kindness of a manly heart than this picture of the great philosopher sitting day after day by the bedside of his pupil, watching eagerly every indication of change, and only consenting to leave the room for a time at night out of

consideration for the silly jealousy of the valet, who thought the tutor's presence an invasion of his own rights?

The Duke recovered and they returned to Paris. But while still at Compiègne they heard of a sad event that could not fail to shock them greatly, the death of their greatly esteemed young friend and fellow-traveller, Sir James Macdonald. "Were you and I together, dear Smith," writes Hume at this time, "we should shed tears at present for the death of poor Sir James Macdonald. We could not possibly have suffered a greater loss than in that valuable young man."

In this letter Hume had dropped a remark showing that he was still clinging to the idea which he had repeatedly mentioned to Smith of returning and making his home for the remainder of his days somewhere in France — in Paris, or "Toulouse, or Montauban, or some provincial town in the South of France, where" — to quote his words to Sir G. Elliot— "I shall spend contentedly the rest of my life with more money, under a finer sky and in better company than I was born to enjoy." Of this idea Smith strongly disapproved. He thought that Hume would find himself too old to transplant, and that he was being carried away by the great kindness and flatteries he had received in Paris into entertaining a plan which could never promote his happiness, because, in the first place, it would probably prove fatal to work, and in the next, it would certainly deprive him of the support of those old and rooted friendships which could not be replaced by the incense of an hour. For his own part, and with a view to his own future, Smith was of an entirely opposite mind. The contrast between the two friends in natural character stands out very strongly here. Smith had enjoyed his stay in France almost as much as Hume, and had been welcomed everywhere by the best men and women in the country with high respect, but now that the term of his tutorship is approaching its end, he longs passionately for home, feels that he has had his fill of travel, and says if he once gets among his old friends again, he will never wander more. This appears from a letter he wrote Millar, the bookseller, probably after his return from Compiègne, of which Millar sent the following extract to Hume: "Though I am very happy here, I long passionately to rejoin my old friends, and if I had once got fairly to your side of the water, I think I should never cross it again. Recommend the same sober way of thinking to Hume. He is light-headed, tell him, when he talks of coming to spend the remainder of his days here or in France. Remember me to him most affectionately."

His return, for which he was then looking with so much desire, came sooner than he anticipated, and came, unfortunately, with a cloud. His

younger pupil, the Hon. Hew Campbell Scott, was assassinated in the streets of Paris, on the 18th of October 1766, in his nineteenth year; and immediately thereafter they set out for London, bringing the remains of Mr. Scott along with them, and accompanied by Lord George Lennox, Hume's successor as Secretary of Legation. The London papers announce their arrival at Dover on the 1st of November. The tutorship, which ended with this melancholy event, was always remembered with great satisfaction and gratitude by the surviving pupil. "In October 1766," writes the Duke of Buccleugh to Dugald Stewart, "we returned to London, after having spent near three years together without the slightest disagreement or coolness, and, on my part, with every advantage that could be expected from the society of such a man. We continued to live in friendship till the hour of his death, and I shall always remain with the impression of having lost a friend whom I loved and respected, not only for his great talents, but for every private virtue."

Smith's choice for this post of travelling tutor was thought in many quarters at the time to be a very strange choice. Shrewd old Dr. Carlyle thought it so strange that he professes to be quite unable as a man of the world to understand Charles Townshend making it, except "for his own glory of having sent an eminent Scotch philosopher to travel with the Duke." He thought Smith had too much "probity and benevolence" in his own soul to suspect ill in another or check it, and that a man who seemed too absent to make his own way about could hardly be expected to look efficiently after the goings of another. "He was," says Carlyle, "the most absent man in company I ever knew," and "he appeared very unfit for the intercourse of the world as a travelling tutor."

Still Townshend's choice was thoroughly justified by the result, and Carlyle admits it, but thinks that was due less to the efficiency of the tutor than to the natural excellence of the pupil. And there is no doubt that Smith was exceptionally fortunate in his pupil. In his after life this Duke Henry took little part in politics, but he made himself singularly beloved among his countrymen by a long career filled with works of beneficence and patriotism, and brightened by that love of science which has for generations distinguished the house of Buccleuch. It may be true that with such a pupil Smith's natural defects would find little opportunity of causing trouble, but it seems certain, as I have before said, that these defects were habitually exaggerated by Smith's contemporaries, and Carlyle himself acknowledges that Smith's travels with the Duke cured him considerably of his fits of abstraction. This is confirmed by Ramsay of Ochtertyre, who says that Smith grew smarter

during his stay abroad, and lost much of the awkwardness of manner he previously exhibited.

Stewart is disposed to think, however, that the public have not the same reason to be satisfied with Smith's acceptance of this tutorship as either he himself or his pupil had, and that the world at large has been seriously the loser for it, because "it interrupted that studious leisure for which nature seemed to have designed him, and in which alone he could have hoped to accomplish those literary projects which had flattered the ambition of his youthful genius." Now it is, of course, idle to speculate on the things that might have been. Kant was never forty miles from Konigsberg, and had Smith remained in Glasgow all his days there is no reason to doubt he could have produced works of lasting importance. But it is a truism to say that the works would have been other and different from what we have. To a political philosopher foreign travel is an immense advantage, and there never was a country where graver or more interesting problems, both economic and constitutional, offered themselves for study than France in the latter half of last century, nor any political philosopher who enjoyed better opportunities than Smith of discussing such problems with the ablest and best-informed minds on the spot. Smith's residence in France, whatever it was to his pupil, must have been an invaluable education to himself, supplying him day after day with constant materials for fresh comparison and thought. Samuel Rogers was greatly struck with the difference between Smith and the historian Robertson. The conversation of Robertson, who, as we know, had never been out of his own country, was much more limited in its range of interest, but Smith's was the rich conversation of a man who had seen and known a great deal of the world. It does not appear that Smith suffered in France from any such want of literary leisure as Stewart speaks of, for he began writing a book in Toulouse because he had so little else to do, and he had not attempted anything of the kind in Glasgow, so far as we know, for five years; but, at all events, for the wealth of illustration which his new book exhibits, the variety of its points of view, the copiousness of its data drawn from personal observation, the world is greatly indebted to the author's residence abroad. And had Smith lived to finish his work on Government we should probably have had more results of his observation of France, but the *Wealth of Nations* itself contains many.

M'Culloch has expressed astonishment that for all his long stay in France Smith should have never perceived any foreshadowings of the coming Revolution, such as were visible even to a passing traveller like

Smollett. But Smith was quite aware of all the gravities and possibilities of the situation, and occasionally gave expression to anticipations of vital change. He formed possibly a less gloomy view of the actual condition of the French people than he would have heard uttered in Quesnay's room at Versailles, because he always mentally compared the state of things he saw in France with the state of things he knew in Scotland, and though it was plain to him that France was not going forward so fast as Scotland, he thought the common opinion that it was going backward to be ill founded. Then France was a much richer country, with a better soil and climate, and "better stocked," he says, "with all those things which it requires a long time to raise up and accumulate, such as great towns and convenient and well-built houses both in town and country." In spite of these advantages, however, the common people in France were decidedly worse off than the common people of Scotland. The wages of labour were lower — the real wages — for the people evidently lived harder. Their dress and countenance showed it at once. "When you go from Scotland to England the difference which you may remark between the dress and countenance of the common people in the one country and in the other sufficiently indicates the difference in their condition. The contrast is still greater when you return from France." In England nobody was too poor to wear leather shoes; in Scotland even the lowest orders of men wore them, though the same orders of women still went about barefooted. But "in France they are necessaries neither to men nor to women; the lowest rank of both sexes appearing there publicly, without any discredit, sometimes in wooden shoes and sometimes barefooted." Another little circumstance struck him as a proof that the classes immediately above the rank of labourer were worse off in France than they were here. The taste for dressing yew-trees into the shape of pyramids and obelisks by "that very clumsy instrument of sculpture" the gardener's shears had gone out of fashion in this country, merely because it got too common, and was discarded by the rich and vain. The multitude of persons able to indulge the taste was sufficiently great to drive the custom out of fashion. In France, on the other hand, he found this custom still in good repute, "notwithstanding," he adds, "that inconstancy of fashion with which we sometimes reproach the natives of that country." The reason was that the number of people in that country able to indulge this taste was too few to deprive the custom of the requisite degree of rarity. "In France the condition of the inferior ranks of people is seldom so happy as it frequently is in England, and you will there seldom find even pyramids and obelisks of yew in the garden of a

tallow-chandler. Such ornaments, not having in that country been degraded by their vulgarity, have not yet been excluded from the gardens of princes and great lords."

He discusses one great cause of the poorer condition of the French than of the English people. It was generally acknowledged, he says, that "the people of France was much more oppressed by taxation than the people of Great Britain"; and the oppression he found, by personal investigation, to be all due to bad taxes and bad methods of collecting them. The sum that reached the public treasury represented a much smaller burden per head of population than it did in this country. Smith calculated the public revenue of Great Britain to represent an assessment of about 25s. a head of population, and in 1765 and 1766, the years he was in France, according to the best, though, he admits, imperfect, accounts he could get of the matter, the whole sum passed into the French treasury would only represent an assessment of 12s. 6d. per head of the French population. Taxation ought thus to be really lighter in France than in Great Britain, but it was made into a scourge by vicious modes of assessment and collection. Smith even suggested for France various moderate financial reforms, repealing some taxes, increasing others, making a third class uniform over the kingdom, and abolishing the farming system; but though these reforms would be sufficient to restore prosperity to a country with the resources of France, he had no hope of it being possible to carry them against the active opposition of individuals interested in maintaining things as they were.

Smith was thus perfectly alive to the prevailing poverty and distress of the French population, to the oppression they suffered, to the extreme difficulty, the hopelessness even, of any improvement of their situation while the existing distribution of political forces continued, and was able to defeat all efforts at reform. Now from all this it was not very far to the idea of a political upheaval and a new distribution of political forces, and Smith saw tendencies abroad in that direction also. He told Professor Saint Fond in 1782 that the "Social Compact" would one day avenge Rousseau for all the persecutions he had suffered from the powers that were.

CHAPTER XV. LONDON

1766-1767. *Aet.* 43

Arriving in London early in November, Smith seems to have remained on in the capital for the next six months. The body of his unfortunate pupil, which he brought over with him, was ultimately buried in the family vault at Dalkeith, for Dr. Norman Macleod and Mr. Steel say so; but the interment there does not seem to have taken place immediately after the arrival from France, for the London journals, which announce the Duke of Buccleugh's landing at Dover on the 1st of November, mention his presence at the Guildhall with his stepfather, Mr. Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 10th, Lord Mayor's Day; and the Duke, who is stated by Dr. Macleod to have brought his brother's remains north, could not have been to Scotland and back in that interval. Smith was accordingly not required to proceed to Scotland on that sad duty, and on the 22nd of November Andrew Millar, the publisher, writing to David Hume in Edinburgh, mentions the fact that Smith was then in London and moving about among the great. This letter was written about a question on which Hume had sought Smith's counsel, and on which Millar had held some conversation with Smith, the upshot of which he now communicates to Hume — the question whether he should continue his *History of England*. While Smith was still in Paris Hume had written saying: "Some push me to continue my *History*. Millar offers any price. All the Marlborough papers are offered me, and I believe nobody would venture to refuse me, but *cui bono?* Why should I forego dalliance and sauntering and society, and expose myself again to the clamours of a stupid factious public? I am not yet tired of doing nothing, and am become too wise either to want censure or praise. By and by I shall be too old to undergo so much labour."

Smith does not appear to have answered this letter at the time, but his opinion is communicated to Hume in this letter from Millar, who no doubt had a conversation with him on the subject. Millar says: "He is of opinion, with many more of your very good sensible friends, that the history of this country from the Revolution is not to be met with in books yet printed, but from MSS. in this country, to which he is sure you will have ready access, from all accounts he learns from the great here; and therefore you should lay the groundwork here after your perusal of the

MSS. you may have access to, and doing it below will be laying the wrong foundation. I think it my duty to inform you the opinion of your most judicious friends, and I think he and Sir John Pringle may be reckoned amongst that number."

Smith was himself publishing with Millar at this time a new edition of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* — the third, which appeared in 1767, containing, like the second, the addition of the *Dissertation upon the Origin of Languages*. One of his reasons for staying so long in London this winter was no doubt to see the sheets through the press. The book was printed by Strahan, who was also a partner in Millar's publishing business; and there is a letter to him from Smith which, though bearing no date but Friday and no place of writing at all, must have been written, as indeed those two very circumstances indicate, in London, and some time during the winter of 1766-67.

My Dear Strahan — I go to the country for a few days this afternoon, so that it will be unnecessary to send me any more sheets till I return. The *Dissertation upon the Origin of Languages* is to be printed at the end of the *Theory*. There are some literal errors in the printed copy of it which I should have been glad to have corrected, but have not the opportunity, as I have no copy by me. They are of no great consequence. In the titles, both of the *Theory* and *Dissertation*, call me simply Adam Smith without any addition either before or behind. — I ever am, etc.,

Adam Smith.

Friday.

When the *Wealth of Nations* came out in 1776 the author described himself on the title-page as LL.D. and F.R.S., late Professor of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow University, but he wants here on the *Theory* nothing but plain Adam Smith, his mind being at this period apparently averse to making use of his degree even on public and formal occasions, as it always was to using it in private life. He described himself on his visiting cards as "Mr. Adam Smith," he was known in the inner circle of his personal friends as Mr. Smith, and when Dugald Stewart was found fault with by certain critics for speaking of him so in his memoirs, he replied that he never heard Smith called anything else.

But while Smith was superintending the republication of his first book, he was at the same time using his opportunities in London to read up at the British Museum, then newly established, or elsewhere, for his second and greater, of which he had laid the keel in France. One of the subjects which he was engaged in studying at that time was colonial

administration. He seems to have been discussing the subject with Lord Shelburne, who was now Secretary of State, and he gives that statesman the results of his further investigations into at least one branch of the subject in the following letter, written in the first instance, like so many others of Smith's extant letters, to do a service to a friend. He wished to interest Lord Shelburne in the claims of a Scotch friend, Alexander Dalrymple, for the command of the exploring expedition which it was then in contemplation to send to the South Sea, and which was eventually committed to Captain Wallis. This Alexander Dalrymple was afterwards the well-known Hydrographer to the Admiralty and the East India Company, to whom the progress of geographical knowledge lies under deep obligations. He was one of the numerous younger brothers of Lord Hailes, the Scotch judge and historian, and having returned in 1765 from thirteen years' work in the East India Company's service, had devoted himself since then to the study of discoveries in the South Sea, and arrived at a confident belief in the existence of a great undiscovered continent in that quarter. Lord Shelburne would have given him the command of this expedition had not Captain Wallis been already engaged, and next year he was actually offered, and had he been granted naval rank, which he thought essential for maintaining discipline on board ship, he would have undertaken command of the more memorable expedition to observe the transit of Venus, which made Captain Cook the most famous explorer of his age.

The following is Smith's letter: —

My Lord — I send you enclosed Quiros's memorial, presented to Philip the Second after his return from his voyage, translated from the Spanish in which it is published in Purchass. The voyage itself is long, obscure, and difficult to be understood, except by those who are particularly acquainted with the geography and navigation of those countries, and upon looking over a great number of Dalrymple's papers I imagined this was what you would like best to see. He is besides just finishing a geographical account of all the discoveries that have yet been made in the South Seas from the west coast of America to Tasman's discoveries. If your lordship will give him leave, he would be glad to read this to you himself, and show you on his map the geographical ascertainment of the situation of each island. I have seen it; it is extremely short; not much longer than this memorial of Quiros. Whether this may be convenient for your lordship I know not; whether this continent exists or not may perhaps be uncertain; but supposing it does exist, I am very certain you never will find a man fitter for discovering it,

or more determined to hazard everything in order to discover it. The terms that he would ask are, first, the absolute command of the ship, with the naming of all the officers, in order that he may have people who both have confidence in him and in whom he has confidence; and secondly, that in case he should lose his ship by the common course of accidents before he gets into the South Sea, that the Government will undertake to give him another. These are all the terms he would insist upon. The ship properest for such an expedition, he says, would be an old fifty-gun ship without her guns. He does not, however, insist upon this, as a *sine quâ non*, but will go in any ship from an hundred to a thousand tons. He wishes to have but one ship with a good many boats. Most expeditions of this kind have miscarried from one ship's being obliged to wait for the other, or losing time in looking out for the other.

Within these two days I have looked over everything I can find relating to the Roman Colonys. I have not yet found anything of much consequence. They were governed upon the model of the Republic: had two consuls called *duumviri*; a senate called *decuriones* or *collegium decurionum*, and other magistrates similar to those of the Republic. The colonists lost their right of voting or of being elected to any magistracy in the Roman comitia. In this respect they were inferior to many municipia. They retained, however, all the other privileges of Roman citizens. They seem to have been very independent. Of thirty colonies of whom the Romans demanded troops in the second Carthaginian war, twelve refused to obey. They frequently rebelled and joined the enemies of the Republic; being in some measure little independent republics, they naturally followed the interests which their peculiar situation pointed out to them. — I have the honour to be, with the highest regard, my lord, your lordship's most obedient humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Tuesday, *12th February 1767*.

The problem of colonial rights and responsibilities had just come rapidly to the forefront of public questions in England. The abandonment of North America by the French in 1763 had given a new importance to the plantations, and seemed to develop at the same time a stronger disposition to assert colonial rights on the one side of the Atlantic, and to interfere with them on the other. The Stamp Act of 1765 had already begun the struggle against imperial taxation which Charles Townshend's tea duty, imposed a few months after this letter was written, was to precipitate into rebellion. There was therefore very good reason why statesmen like Lord Shelburne should be studying the relations of

dependencies to mother countries, and turning their attention to earlier colonial experiments such as those of ancient Rome. It will be observed that Smith came in the *Wealth of Nations* to modify somewhat the view he expresses in this letter of the independence of the Roman colonies, and explains that the reason they were less prosperous than the Greek colonies was because they were not, like the latter, independent, and were "not always at liberty to manage their own affairs in the way that they judged most suitable to their own interest."

Smith's absent-minded habit, while it seems from various accounts to have been lessened by his travels abroad, was not entirely removed by them, for on the 11th of February 1767 Lady Mary Coke writes her sister that Lady George Lennox and Sir Gilbert Elliot had happened to meet while visiting her, and had talked of "Mr. Smith, the gentleman that went abroad with the Duke of Buccleugh," saying many things in his praise, but adding that he was the most absent man they ever knew. Sir Gilbert mentioned that Mr. Damer (probably Mr. John Damer, Lord Milton's son) had paid Smith a visit a few mornings before as he was sitting down to breakfast, and falling into discourse Smith took a piece of bread and butter, and after rolling it round and round put it into the teapot and poured the water upon it. Shortly after he poured out a cup, and on tasting it declared it was the worst tea he had ever met with. "I have not the least doubt of it," said Mr. Damer, "for you have made it of bread and butter instead of tea."

The Duke of Buccleugh was married in London on the 3rd of May 1767 to Lady Betsy, only daughter of the Duke of Montagu, and Smith probably returned to Scotland immediately after that event. For in writing Hume from Kirkcaldy on the 9th of June 1767, he mentions having now been settled down to his work for about a month. Another circumstance confirms this inference. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London on the 21st of May 1767, but was not admitted till the 27th of May 1773, and that seems to imply that he had left London before the former date, and never returned to it again till shortly before the latter one.

CHAPTER XVI. KIRKCALDY

1767-1773. *Aet*. 44-50

When Smith left Glasgow his mother and cousin went back again to Kirkcaldy, and he now joined them and remained with them there for the next eleven years. Hume, who thought the country an unsuitable place for a man of letters, used every endeavour to persuade him to remove to Edinburgh, but without success. The gaiety and fulness of city life were evidently much less to him than they were to Hume, and he must have found what sufficed him in the little town of his birth. He had his work, he had his mother, he had his books, he had his daily walks in the sea breeze, and he had Edinburgh always in the offing as a place of occasional resort. He is said to have taken much real pleasure, like Shakespeare at Stratford, in mingling again with the simple old folk who were about him in his youth, and he had a few neighbours whose pursuits corresponded more nearly with his own. James Oswald, indeed, was now struck down with illness— "terrible distress" is Smith's expression — and he died in the second year after Smith's return to Scotland. Oswald spent some months in Kirkcaldy, however, in the fall of 1767, and probably again in 1768. One of Smith's other literary neighbours, whom he saw much of during this eleven years' residence in Fife, was Robert Beatson, author of the *Political Index* and other works, to whom there will be occasion to refer again later on. His chief resource, however, throughout this period was his work, which engaged his mind late and early till it told hard, as we shall presently see, on his health.

After being established in Kirkcaldy for some weeks Smith wrote Hume that he was immersed in study, which was the only business he had, that his sole amusements were long solitary walks by the seaside (which, with a man of his gift or infirmity of abstraction, would only be protractions of the study that preoccupied him), and that he never was happier or more contented in all his life. The immediate object of this letter, as so usual with Smith, was to serve a friend — a motive which never failed to overcome his aversion to writing. A French friend— "the best and most agreeable friend I had in France," says Smith — was then in London, and Smith wishes Hume, who was now Under Secretary of State, to show him some attentions during his residence there. This friend was Count de Sarsfield, a gentleman of Irish extraction, an

associate of Turgot and the other men of letters in Paris, and a man who added to almost universal knowledge a special predilection for economics, and indeed wrote a number of essays on economic questions, though he never published any of them. He seems to have really been, as Smith indicates, the perfection of an agreeable companion. John Adams, the second President of the United States, when envoy for that country in Paris, was very intimate with him, and says that Sarsfield was the happiest man he knew, for he led the life of a peripatetic philosopher. "Observation and reflection are all his business, and his dinner and his friend all his pleasure. If a man were born for himself alone, I would take him for a model." He was "the greatest rider of hobby-horses" in all President Adams's acquaintance, and some of his hobbies were for the most serious studies. He published a work in metaphysics, and wrote essays against serfdom and slavery, and on a number of other subjects, which were found in MS. among President Adams's papers. Yet he was a problem — and not a very soluble one — to the worthy President, for he laid a weight on the merest trifles of ceremony or etiquette which seemed difficult to reconcile with his devotion to profound and learned studies. He visited Adams at Washington during his presidency, and used constantly to lecture the President on his little omissions. After any entertainment Sarsfield would say, writes Adams, "that I should have placed the Ambassador of France at my right hand and the Minister of Spain at my left, and have arranged the other principal personages; and when I rose from the table I should have said, Messieurs, voudrez vous, etc., or Monsieur or Duc voudrez vous, etc.... How is it possible to reconcile these trifling contemplations of a master of the ceremonies with the vast knowledge of arts, sciences, history, government, etc., possessed by this nobleman?" Sarsfield kept a journal about all the people he met with, from which Adams makes some interesting quotations, and which, if extant, might be expected to add to our information regarding Smith. Having said so much of Smith's "best and most agreeable friend in France," I will now give the letter: —

Kirkaldy, *7th June 1767*.

My Dearest Friend — The Principal design of this Letter is to Recommend to your particular attention the Count de Sarsfield, the best and most agreeable friend I had in France. Introduce him, if you find it proper, to all the friends of yr. absent friend, to Oswald and to Elliot in particular. I cannot express to you how anxious I am that his stay in London should be rendered agreeable to him. You know him, and must know what a plain, worthy, honourable man he is. I enclose a letter for

him, which you may either send to him, or rather, if the weighty affairs of State will permit it, deliver it to him yourself. The letter to Dr. Morton you may send by the Penny Post.

My Business here is study, in which I have been very deeply engaged for about a month past. My amusements are long solitary walks by the seaside. You may judge how I spend my time. I feel myself, however, extremely happy, comfortable, and contented. I never was perhaps more so in all my life.

You will give me great comfort by writing to me now and then, and by letting me know what is passing among my friends at London. Remember me to them all, particularly to Mr. Adams's family and to Mrs. Montagu.

What has become of Rousseau? Has he gone abroad because he cannot contrive to get himself sufficiently persecuted in Great Britain?

What is the meaning of the bargain that your ministry have made with the India Company? They have not, I see, prolonged their charter, which is a good circumstance.

The rest of the sheet is torn.

Hume replies on the 13th that Sarsfield was a very good friend of his own, whom he had always great pleasure in meeting, as he was a man of merit; but that he did not introduce him, as Smith desired, to Sir Gilbert Elliot, because "this gentleman's reserve and indolence would make him neglect the acquaintance"; nor to Oswald, because he found his intimacy with Oswald, which had lasted more than a quarter of a century, was broken for ever. He goes on to describe his quarrel with Oswald's brother the bishop; and concludes: "If I were sure, dear Smith, that you and I should not some day quarrel in some such manner, I should tell you that I am yours affectionately and sincerely." Count de Sarsfield seems to have gone on to Scotland to pay Smith a visit, for on the 14th of July Hume writes Smith, enclosing a packet, which he desires to be delivered to the Count.

Smith did not reply to either of these letters till the 13th of September, when he writes from Dalkeith House, where he has gone for the home-coming of the Duke and Duchess of Buccleugh. After expressing his mind in the plainest terms about the bishop with whom Hume had the tussle— "He is a brute and a beast," says Smith — he goes on to bespeak Hume's favour for a young cousin of his who happened to be living in the same house with Hume in London, Captain David Skene, afterwards of Pitlour, who was in 1787 made inspector of military roads in Scotland.

Be so good (he says) as convey the enclosed letter to the Count de Sarsfield. I have been much in the wrong for having delayed so long to write both to him and you.

There is a very amiable, modest, brave, worthy young gentleman who lives in the same house with you. His name is David Skeene. He and I are sisters' sons, but my regard for him is much more founded on his personal qualities than upon the relations in which he stands to me. He acted lately in a very gallant manner in America, of which he never acquainted me himself, and of which I came to the knowledge only within these few days. If you can be of any service to him you could not possibly do a more obliging thing to me.

The Duke and Dutchess of Buccleugh have been here now for almost a fortnight. They begin to open their house on Monday next, and, I flatter myself, will both be very agreeable to the People of this country. I am not sure that I have ever seen a more agreeable woman than the Dutchess. I am sorry that you are not here, because I am sure you would be perfectly in love with her. I shall probably be here some weeks. I could wish, however, that both you and the Count de Sarsfield would direct for me as usual at Kirkaldy. I should be glad to know the true history of Rousseau before and since he left England. You may perfectly depend upon my never quoting you to any living soul upon that subject. — I ever am, dear sir, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

The Duke of Buccleugh had never been at Dalkeith since his infancy — if indeed he had been even then, for Dr. Carlyle's words in describing this celebration are, "where his grace had never been before" — because his stepfather, Charles Townshend, was afraid he might grow up too Scotch in accent and feeling; and his home-coming now, with his young and beautiful bride, excited the liveliest interest and expectation, not only on the Buccleugh estates, but over the whole lowlands of Scotland, from the Forth to the Solway. The day originally fixed for the celebration was the Duke's birthday, the 13th of September, the very day Smith wrote Hume; but the event had to be postponed in consequence of the sudden death of Townshend, from an attack of putrid fever, between the day of the Duke's arrival at Dalkeith and the anniversary of his birth. It came off, however, two or three weeks later. An entertainment was given to about fifty ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood; but Dr. Carlyle, who was present, and wrote indeed an ode for the occasion, says that though the fare was sumptuous, the company was formal and dull, because the guests were all strangers to their host and hostess except

Adam Smith, and Adam Smith, says Carlyle, “was but ill qualified to promote the jollity of a birthday.” “Had it not been for Alexander Macmillan, W.S., and myself,” he proceeds, “the meeting would have been very dull, and might have been dissolved without even drinking the health of the day.... Smith remained with them (the Duke and Duchess) for two months, and then returned to Kirkcaldy to his mother and his studies. I have often thought since that if they had brought down a man of more address than he was, how much sooner their first appearance might have been.”

The ice, which Smith is thus blamed for not being able to break on this first meeting of his pupil with his Scotch neighbours, was not long in melting naturally away under the warmth of the Duke’s own kindness of heart. He almost settled among them, for on Townshend’s death he gave up the idea on which that statesman had set his heart, and which was one of his reasons for committing the training of the young Duke to the care of a political philosopher, — the idea of going into politics as an active career; and he lived largely on his Scotch estates; becoming a father to his numerous tenantry, and a powerful and enlightened promoter of all sound agricultural improvement. Dr. Carlyle says the family were always kind to their tenants, but Duke Henry “surpassed them all, as much in justice and humanity as he did in superiority of understanding and good sense.” Without claiming for Smith’s teaching what must in any case have been largely the result of a fine natural character, it is certain that no young man could live for three years in daily intimacy with Adam Smith without being powerfully influenced by that deep love of justice and humanity which animated Smith beyond his fellows, and ran as warmly through his conversation in private life as we see it still runs through his published writings. Smith was always vigorous and weighty in his denunciation of wrong, and so impatient of anything in the nature of indifference or palliation towards it, that he could scarce feel at ease in the presence of the palliator. “We can breathe more freely now,” he once said when a person of that sort had just left the company; “that man has no indignation in him.”

Smith remained the mentor of his pupil all his life. At “Dalkeith, which all the virtues love,” he was always a most honoured guest, and Dugald Stewart says he always spoke with much satisfaction and gratitude of his relations with the family of Buccleugh. Several of the traditional anecdotes of Smith’s absence of mind are localised at Dalkeith House. Lord Brougham, for example, has preserved a story of Smith breaking out at dinner into a strong condemnation of the public

conduct of some leading statesman of the day, then suddenly stopping short on perceiving that statesman's nearest relation on the opposite side of the table, and presently losing self-recollection again and muttering to himself, "Deil care, deil care, it's all true." Or there is the less pointed story told by Archdeacon Sinclair of another occasion when Smith was dining at Dalkeith, and two sons of Lord Dorchester were of the company. The conversation all turned on Lord Dorchester's estates and Lord Dorchester's affairs, and at last Smith interposed and said, "Pray, who is Lord Dorchester? I have never heard so much of him before." The former anecdote shows at once that Smith was in the habit of speaking his mind with considerable plainness, and that he shrank at the same time from everything like personal discourtesy; and the latter, like other stories of his absence of mind, is hardly worth repeating, except for showing that he continued to possess a redeeming infirmity.

From Dalkeith Smith returns to Kirkcaldy and his work. We find him in 1768 in correspondence with the Duke's law-agent, Mr. A. Campbell, W.S., and with Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, about some investigation, apparently of no public importance, into the genealogy of the Scotts, in connection with which he first got Campbell to make a search in the charter-room of Dalkeith for ancient papers connected with the Scotts of Thirlestane, and then wanted to know the explanation Sir James Johnstone had given of Scott of Davington's claim as heir of Rennaldburn upon the Duke of Buccleugh. It shows Smith, however, taking an interest, as if he were entitled to do so, in the business affairs of the Duke. We find him too in correspondence with Lord Hailes on historical points of some consequence to the economic inquiries he was now busy upon. Lord Hailes was one of the precursors of sound historical investigation in this country, and to Smith, with whom he was long intimate, he afterwards paid the curious compliment of translating his letter to Strahan on the death of Hume into Latin.

Of Smith's correspondence with Hailes only two letters have been preserved. The first is as follows: —

Kirkaldy, 5th March 1769.

My lord — I should now be extremely obliged to your Lordship if you would send me the papers you mentioned upon the prices of provisions in former times. In order that the conveyance may be perfectly secure, if your Lordship will give me leave I shall send my own servant sometime this week to receive them at your Lordship's house at Edinburgh. I have not been able to get the papers in the cause of Lord Galloway and Lord Morton. If your Lordship is possessed of them it

would likewise be a great obligation if you would send me them. I shall return both as soon as possible. If your Lordship will give me leave I shall transcribe the manuscript papers; this, however, entirely depends upon your Lordship.

Since the last time I had the honour of writing to your Lordship I have read over with more care than before the Acts of James I., and compared them with your Lordship's remarks. From this last I have received both much pleasure and much instruction. Your Lordship's remarks will, I plainly see, be of much more use to me than, I am afraid, mine will be to you. I have read law entirely with a view to form some general notion of the great outlines of the plan according to which justice has been administered in different ages and nations; and I have entered very little into the detail of particulars of which I see your Lordship is very much master. Your Lordship's particular facts will be of great use to correct my general views; but the latter, I fear, will always be too vague and superficial to be of much use to your Lordship.

I have nothing to add to what your Lordship has observed upon the Acts of James I. They are framed in general in a much ruder and more inaccurate manner than either the English statutes or French ordinances of the same period; and Scotland seems to have been, even during this vigorous reign, as our historians represent it, in greater disorder than either France or England had been from the time of the Danish and Norwegian incursions. The 5, 24, 56, and 85 statutes seem all to attempt a remedy to one and the same abuse. Travelling, from the disorders of the country, must have been extremely dangerous, and consequently very rare. Few people therefore would propose to live by entertaining travellers, and consequently there would be few or no inns. Travellers would be obliged to have recourse to the hospitality of private families in the same manner as in all other barbarous countries; and being in this situation real objects of compassion, private families would think themselves obliged to receive them even though this hospitality was extremely oppressive. Strangers, says Homer, are sacred persons, and under the protection of Jupiter, but no wise man would ever choose to send for a stranger unless he was a bard or a soothsayer. The danger too of travelling either alone or with few attendants made all men of consequence carry along with them a numerous suite of retainers, which rendered this hospitality still more oppressive. Hence the orders to build hostellaries in 24 and 85; and as many people had chosen to follow the old fashion and to live rather at the expense of other people than at their

own, hence the complaint of the keepers of the hostellaries and the order thereupon in Act 85.

I cannot conclude this letter, though already too long, without expressing to your Lordship my concern, and still more my indignation, at what has lately passed both at London and at Edinburgh. I have often thought that the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom very much resembled a jury. The law lords generally take upon them to sum up the evidence and to explain the law to the other peers, who generally follow their opinion implicitly. Of the two law lords who upon this occasion instructed them, the one has always run after the applause of the mob; the other, by far the most intelligent, has always shown the greatest dread of popular odium, which, however, he has not been able to avoid. His inclinations also have always been suspected to favour one of the parties. He has upon this occasion, I suspect, followed rather his fears and his inclinations than his judgment. I could say a great deal more upon this subject to your Lordship, but I am afraid I have already said too much. I would rather, for my own part, have the solid reputation of your most respectable president, though exposed to the insults of a brutal mob, than all the vain and flimsy applause that has ever yet been bestowed upon either or both the other two. — I have the honour to be, with the highest esteem and regard, my Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and obedient servant,

Adam Smith.

A week later Smith wrote Lord Hailes another letter, "giving," says Lord Brougham, "what is evidently the beginning of his speculations on the price of silver," but the letter seems to be now lost, and Lord Brougham quotes from it only the following sentences on the Douglas cause. "If the rejoicings which I read of in the public papers in different places on account of the Douglas cause, had no more foundation than those which were said to have been in this place, there has been very little joy upon the occasion. There was here no sort of rejoicing of any kind, unless four schoolboys having set up three candles upon the trone by way of an illumination, is to be considered as such."

The first of these letters was written almost immediately after Smith heard of the decision of the House of Lords in the famous Douglas case. The news of the decision only reached Edinburgh on the 2nd of March, and was received with such popular enthusiasm that the whole city was illuminated. Smith walking by the shore at Kirkcaldy would have seen the bonfires blazing on Salisbury Crags, and he seems to have heard

before writing that the house of the Lord President of the Court of Session, who was opposed to the Douglas claim, was attacked by the mob, and the President himself insulted next morning in the street on his way to Court. No civil lawsuit ever excited so much popular interest or feeling. The question, it will be remembered, was whether Mr. Douglas, who had been served heir to the estates of the late Duke of Douglas, was really the son of the Duke's sister, Lady Jane, by her husband, Sir John Stewart of Grandtully, whom she had secretly married abroad when she was already fifty years old, or whether he was an impostor, the son of a Frenchwoman, whom Lady Jane had brought up as her own son with a view to the inheritance of those estates. Everybody in Scotland was for the time either a Douglas or a Hamilton, and the sentimental elements in the case had enlisted popular sympathy strongly on the Douglas side. Smith, as will be seen from those letters, was quite as strong and even impassioned a partisan on the unpopular and losing side, and Lord Hailes having been one of the judges who voted with the Lord President for the decision against Mr. Douglas which the House of Lords now reversed, he feels he can give free vent to his disappointment. Brougham, in publishing the letters, calls the opinion Smith gives not only "very strong" but "very rash," and his impeachment of the impartiality of the two great English judges — Lord Camden and Lord Mansfield — cannot seem defensible. But David Hume, though a Tory and an Under Secretary of State, is not a whit less sparing in his denunciation of those two law lords and in his contempt for the general body of the peers than Smith. "To one who understands the case as I do," he writes to Dr. Blair, "nothing could appear more scandalous than the pleading of the two law lords. Such curious misrepresentation, such impudent assertions, such groundless imputations, never came from that place; but they were good enough for the audience, who, bating their quality, are most of them little better than their brothers the Wilkites of the streets." Hume, having lost his place with a change of ministry, returned to Edinburgh for good in August 1769, and presently wrote Smith inviting him over: —

James's Court, *20th August 1769*.

Dear Smith — I am glad to have come within sight of you, and to have a view of Kirkaldy from my windows, but as I wish also to be within speaking terms of you, I wish we could concert measures for that purpose. I am miserably sick at sea, and regard with horror and a kind of hydrophobia the great gulf that lies between us. I am also tired of travelling as much as you ought naturally to be of staying at home. I therefore propose to you to come hither and pass some days with me in

this solitude. I want to know what you have been doing, and purpose to exact a rigorous account of the method in which you have employed yourself during your retreat. I am positive you are in the wrong in many of your speculations, especially when you have the misfortune to differ from me. All these are reasons for our meeting, and I wish you would make me some reasonable proposal for that purpose. There is no habitation on the island of Inchkeith, otherwise I should challenge you to meet me on that spot, and neither of us ever to leave the place till we were fully agreed on all points of controversy. I expect General Conway here to-morrow, whom I shall attend to Roseneath, and I shall remain there a few days. On my return I expect to find a letter from you containing a bold acceptance of this defiance. I am, dear Smith, yours sincerely.

Smith seems to have made such progress with his work in the two years of what Hume here calls his retreat at Kirkcaldy that in the beginning of 1770 there was some word of his going up with it to London for publication. For on the 6th of February Hume again writes him: “What is the meaning of this, dear Smith, which we hear, that you are not to be here above a day or two on your passage to London? How can you so much as entertain a thought of publishing a book full of reason, sense, and learning to those wicked abandoned madmen?”

He had probably completed his first draft of the work from beginning to end, but he kept constantly amplifying and altering parts of it for six years more. He did not go to London in 1770, if he ever contemplated doing so, but he came to Edinburgh and received the freedom of the city in June. He seems to have received this honour for the merits of the Duke of Buccleugh rather than for his own. For the entry in the minutes of the Council of 6th June 1770 runs thus:

“Appoint the Dean of Guild and his Council to admit and receive their Graces the Duke of Buccleugh and the Duke of Montagu in the most ample form, for good services done by them and their noble ancestors to the kingdome. And also Adam Smith, LL.D., and the Reverend Mr. John Hallam to be Burgesses and Gild Brethren of this city in the most ample form.

(Signed) James Stuart, Provost.”

The Duke of Montagu was the Duke of Buccleugh’s father-in-law, and the Rev. Mr. John Hallam — afterwards Dean of Windsor, and father of Henry Hallam, the historian — was the Duke’s tutor at Eton, as Adam Smith was his tutor abroad. The freedom was therefore given to the Duke

of Buccleugh and party. Smith's burgess-ticket is one of the few relics of him still extant; it is possessed by Professor Cunningham of Belfast.

Smith promised Hume a visit about Christmas 1771, but the visit was postponed in consequence of the illness of Hume's sister, and on the 28th of January he received the following letter, in reply apparently to a request for the address of the Comtesse de Boufflers in Paris: —

Edinburgh, *28th January 1772*.

Dear Smith — I should certainly before this time have challenged the Performance of your Promise of being with me about Christmas had it not been for the misfortunes of my family. Last month my sister fell dangerously ill of a fever, and though the fever be now gone, she is still so weak and low, and recovers so slowly, that I was afraid it would be but a melancholy house to invite you to. However, I expect that time will reinstate her in her former health, in which case I shall look for your company. I shall not take any excuse from your own state of health, which I suppose only a subterfuge invented by indolence and love of solitude. Indeed, my dear Smith, if you continue to hearken to complaints of this nature, you will cut yourself out entirely from human society, to the great loss of both parties.

The Lady's Direction is M^{e} la Comtesse de B., Douanière au Temple. She has a daughter-in-law, which makes it requisite to distinguish her. — Yours sincerely,

David Hume.

P.S. — I have not yet read *Orlando Inamorato*. I am now in a course of reading the Italian historians, and am confirmed in my former opinion that that language has not produced one author who knew how to write elegant correct prose though it contains several excellent poets. You say nothing to me of your own work.

Smith seems to have perhaps sent him *Orlando Inamorato*, or at any rate to have been previously in communication, either by letter or conversation, on the subject, for the Italian poets were favourite reading of his. But a more important point in the letter is the indication it affords that Smith's labours and solitude were beginning to tell on the state of his health. Indeed, poor health had now become one of the chief causes of his delay in finishing his work, and it continued to go from bad to worse. He writes his friend Pulteney in September that his book would have been ready for the press by the first of that winter if it were not for the interruptions caused by bad health, "arising," he says, "from want of amusement and from thinking too much upon one thing," together with other interruptions of an equally anxious nature, occasioned by his

endeavours to extricate some of his personal friends from the difficulties in which they were involved by the commercial crisis of that time.

Kirkaldy, *5th September 1772*.

My dear Pulteney — I have received your most friendly letter in due course, and I have delayed a great deal too long to answer it. Though I have had no concern myself in the Public calamities, some of the friends in whom I interest myself the most have been deeply concerned in them; and my attention has been a good deal occupied about the most proper method of extricating them.

In the Book which I am now preparing for the press I have treated fully and distinctly of every part of the subject which you have recommended to me; and I intended to send you some extracts from it; but upon looking them over I find that they are too much interwoven with other parts of the work to be easily separated from it. I have the same opinion of Sir James Stewart's book that you have. Without once mentioning it, I flatter myself that any fallacious principle in it will meet with a clear and distinct confutation in mine.

I think myself very much honoured and obliged to you for having mentioned me to the E. India Directors as a person who would be of use to them. You have acted in your old way of doing your friends a good office behind their backs, pretty much as other people do them a bad one. There is no labour of any kind which you can impose upon me which I will not readily undertake. By what Mr. Stewart and Mr. Ferguson hinted to me concerning your notice of the proper remedy for the disorders of the coin in Bengal, I believe our opinions upon that subject are perfectly the same.

My book would have been ready for the press by the beginning of this winter, but interruptions occasioned partly by bad health, arising from want of amusement and from thinking too much upon one thing, and partly by the avocations above mentioned, will oblige me to retard its publication for a few months longer. — I ever am, my dearest Pulteney, most faithfully and affectionately your obliged servant,

Adam Smith.

To William Pulteney, Esq., *Member of Parliament*,
Bath House, London.

The public calamities to which Smith refers in the opening paragraph of his letter are the bankruptcies of the severe commercial crisis of that year, and the friends he was so much occupied in extricating from its

results were, I think it most likely, the family of Buccleugh. The crash was especially disastrous in Scotland; only three private banks in Edinburgh out of thirty survived it, and a large joint-stock bank, Douglas Heron and Company, started only three years before, for the public-spirited purpose of promoting improvements, particularly improvements of land, now seemed to shake all commercial Scotland with its fall. In this company the Duke of Buccleugh was one of the largest shareholders, and, liability being unlimited, it was impossible to foresee how much of its £800,000 of liabilities his Grace might be eventually called upon to pay. The suggestion that Smith was much consulted by the Duke and his advisers about this grave business is to some extent confirmed by the familiarity which he shows with the whole circumstances of this bank at the time of its failure in the second chapter of the second book of the *Wealth of Nations*.

The situation for which Pulteney had recommended him to the Court of Directors of the East India Company was, no doubt, a place as member of the Special Commission of Supervision which they then contemplated establishing. In 1772 the East India Company was in extremities; in July they were nearly a million and a half sterling behind for their next quarter’s payments; and they proposed to send out to India a commission of three independent and competent men, with full authority to institute a complete examination into every detail of the administration, and to exercise a certain supervision and control of the whole. Burke had already been offered one of the seats on this commission, but had refused it on finding that Lord Rockingham was unwilling to part with him; and at the time this letter was written two of Smith’s own Scotch friends, whose names he happens to mention in the letter — Adam Ferguson and Andrew Stuart, M.P. — were actually candidates for the places, and had apparently been recently seeing Pulteney in London on the subject. Pulteney, who had great influence at the India House, had probably mentioned the names of Smith, Ferguson, and Stuart to the Court of Directors at the same time, and if so, that must have been at least two months before Smith wrote this letter, for Ferguson was in the month of July getting influence brought to bear on the Edinburgh Town Council to secure their permission to retain his professorship in the event of his going to India. Ferguson pushed his candidature vigorously, and went to London repeatedly about it between July and November, but Smith, although he would have accepted the post if he received the offer of it, does not seem to have taken any steps to procure it, and did not even answer Pulteney’s letter till September.

Stuart's candidature was defeated, Horace Walpole says, by Lord Mansfield, but eventually no appointment was made, because Parliament intervened, and forbade any such commission to be sent out at all.

In sending the letter to the *Academy* for publication Professor Rogers observes that it is plain the delay in the publication of the *Wealth of Nations* was due to the negotiations which Mr. Pulteney was evidently making for the purpose of getting Smith appointed to this place. "Had he succeeded," proceeds Mr. Rogers, "it is probable that the *Wealth of Nations* would never have seen the light; for every one knows that in the first and second books of that work the East India Company is criticised with the greatest severity.... I have no doubt that owing to Pulteney's negotiations it lay unrevised and unaltered during four years in the author's desk."

With all respect, this is a strange remark to fall from an editor of the *Wealth of Nations*, for the evidences of continuous revision and alteration during those four years are very numerous in the text of the work itself. He made many changes or additions in 1773; for example, the remarks on the price of hides, in the chapter on Rent, were written in February 1773; and those on the decline of sugar-refining in colonies taken from the French, in the chapter on the Colonies, were written in October; while the passage on American wages, in the chapter on Wages, was inserted some time in the same year. The extensive additions in the chapters on the Revenue, occasioned by reading the *Mémoires concernant les Droits*, must have been written after 1774, because Smith probably obtained that book after Turgot became Minister in the middle of that year; his remarks, in the chapter on Colonies, on the effects of recent events on the trade with North America, and his remarks on the Irish revenue in the chapter on Public Debts, were added in 1775. The chapter on the Regulated Companies, in which the East India Company receives most systematic attention, and which did not appear in the first edition of the book, was apparently not written till 1782.

The book therefore did not lie "unrevised and unaltered" in the author's desk from 1772 to 1776; on the contrary, the chief cause of the four years' delay was the revision and alteration to which it was being incessantly subjected during that whole term. The particular Indian appointment for which Pulteney had recommended him could have nothing to do with the delay, inasmuch as the proposed office was suppressed altogether within two months after this letter was written; and even if he entertained expectations of any other sort from the East India Company, there is no reason why he should on that account have

withheld his work from publication. The more elaborate criticism of that Company in the chapter on Public Works did not appear in the original edition of the book at all, but the only remarks on Indian administration which did appear in that edition, although they are merely incidental in character, are very strong and decided, and might easily have been omitted, had the author been so minded, to please the Company, without any injury to the general argument with which they are connected.

On the other hand, there exists abundance of evidence that Smith was busy for most of three years after this date, and mainly in London, altering, improving, and adding to the manuscript of the book. New lines of investigation would suggest themselves, new theories to be thought out, and the task would grow day by day by a very simple but unforeseen process of natural accretion. Hume thought it near completion in 1769; but towards the end of 1772, a couple of months after Smith's answer to Pulteney, he gives it most of another year yet for being finished. He writes from his new quarters in St. Andrew Square, asking Smith to break off his studies for a few weeks' relaxation with him in Edinburgh about Christmas, and then to return and finish his work before the following autumn.

St. Andrew's Square, *23rd November 1772*.

Dear Smith — I should agree to your Reasoning if I could trust your Resolution. Come hither for some weeks about Christmas; dissipate yourself a little; return to Kirkaldy; finish your work before autumn; go to London, print it, return and settle in this town, which suits your studious, independent turn even better than London. Execute this plan faithfully, and I forgive you....

Ferguson has returned fat and fair and in good humour, notwithstanding his disappointment, which I am glad of. He comes over next week to a house in this neighbourhood. Pray come over this winter and join us. — I am, my dear Smith, ever yours,

David Hume.

While Pulteney was suggesting Smith's name for employment under the East India Company, Baron Mure was trying to secure his services as tutor to the Duke of Hamilton, and Lord Stanhope possibly offered him the position of tutor to his lordship's ward, the young Earl of Chesterfield. Baron Mure was one of the guardians of the young Duke of Hamilton (the son of the beautiful Miss Gunning), and had in that capacity had the chief responsibility in raising and carrying on the great Douglas cause. He was a man of great sagacity and weight, whom we have seen in communication with Hume and Oswald on economic

subjects; he had long been also on terms of personal intimacy with Smith, and he seems to have been anxious in 1772 to send Smith abroad with the Duke of Hamilton, as he had already been sent abroad with the Duke of Buccleugh. Smith would appear to have been sounded on the subject, and even to have given what was considered a favourable reply, for Andrew Stuart, a fellow-guardian of the Duke along with Mure, writes the latter acknowledging receipt of his letter "intimating" — these are the words— "the practicability of having Mr. Smith," but the Duke's mother (then Duchess of Argyle) and the Duke himself preferred Dr. John Moore, the author of *Zelucco*, who was the family medical attendant, and was indeed chosen because he could act in that capacity to his very delicate young charge, though he was strictly required to drop the "doctor," and was severely censured by the Duchess for assisting at a surgical operation in Geneva, inasmuch as if it got known that he was a medical man it would be a bar to their reception in the best society. Accordingly Mure was told that it was "the united opinion of all concerned that matters go no further with Mr. Smith."

The circumstance that so wise and practical a head as Baron Mure's should have thought of Smith for this post is at least a proof that the Buccleugh tutorship had been a success, and that Smith was not considered by other men of the world who knew him well as being so unfit for the situation of travelling tutor as some of his friends thought him.

During this period of severe study in Kirkcaldy his fits of absence might be expected to recur occasionally, and Dr. Charles Rogers relates an anecdote of one of them, which may be repeated here, though Dr. Rogers omits mentioning any authority for it; and stories of that kind must naturally be accepted with scruples, because they are so apt to agglomerate round any person noted for the failing they indicate.

According to Dr. Rogers, however, Smith, during his residence in Kirkcaldy, went out one Sunday morning in his dressing-gown to walk in the garden, but once in the garden he went on to the path leading to the turnpike road, and then to the road itself, along which he continued in a condition of reverie till he reached Dunfermline, fifteen miles distant, just as the bells were sounding and the people were proceeding to church. The strange sound of the bells was the first thing that roused the philosopher from the meditation in which he was immersed. The story is very open to criticism, but if correct it points to sleepless nights and an incapacity to get a subject out of the head, due to over-application.

The persistency of his occupation with his book, according to Robert Chambers in his *Picture of Scotland*, left a mark on the wall of his study which remained there till the room was repainted shortly before that author wrote of it in 1827. Chambers says that it was Smith's habit to compose *standing*, and to dictate to an amanuensis. He usually stood with his back to the fire, and unconsciously in the process of thought used to make his head vibrate, or rather, rub sidewise against the wall above the chimney-piece. His head being dressed, in the ordinary style of that period, with pomatum, could not fail to make a mark on the wall.

M'Culloch says Smith dictated the *Wealth of Nations* but did not dictate the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Whether he had any external ground for making this assertion I cannot tell, and, apart from such, the probability would seem to be that if he dictated his lectures in Edinburgh to an amanuensis, as seems probable, as well as his *Wealth of Nations*, he would have done the same with his *Theory*. But M'Culloch professes to see internal evidences of this difference of manual method in the different style of the respective works. Moore met M'Culloch one evening at Longman's, and they were discussing writers who were in the habit of dictating as they composed. One of the party said the habit of dictating always bred a diffuse style, and M'Culloch supported this view by the example of Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations*, he said, was very diffuse because it had been dictated, while his *Theory*, which was not dictated, was admirable in style. But in reality there is probably more diffuse writing in the *Theory* than in the *Wealth of Nations*, which is for the most part packed tightly enough. Another Scotch critic, Archibald Alison the elder, the author of the *Essay on Taste*, even surpasses M'Culloch in his keenness in detecting the effects of this dictating habit. He says that Smith used to walk up and down the room while he dictated, and that the consequence is that his sentences are nearly all the same length, each containing as much as the amanuensis could write down while the author took a single turn. This is excessive acuteness. Smith's sentences are not by any means all of one length, or all of the same construction. It need only be added that the habit of dictating would in his case arise naturally from his slow and laboured penmanship.

As I have mentioned the house in which the *Wealth of Nations* was composed, it may be added that it stood in the main street of the town, but its garden ran down to the beach, and that it was only pulled down in 1844, without anybody in the place realising at the moment, though it has been a cause of much regret since, that they were suffering their most

interesting association to be destroyed. An engraving of it, however, exists.

CHAPTER XVII. LONDON

1773-1776. *Aet.* 50-53

In the spring of 1773, Smith, having, as he thought, virtually completed the *Wealth of Nations*, set out with the manuscript for London, to give it perhaps some finishing touches and then place it in the hands of a publisher. But his labours had told so seriously on his health and spirits that he thought it not improbable he might die, and even die suddenly, before the work got through the press, and he wrote Hume a formal letter before he started on his journey, constituting him his literary executor, and giving him directions about the destination of the various unpublished manuscripts that lay in his depositories: —

My Dear Friend — As I have left the care of all my literary papers to you, I must tell you that except those which I carry along with me, there are none worth the publishing but a fragment of a great work which contains a history of the astronomical systems that were successively in fashion down to the time of Descartes. Whether that might not be published as a fragment of an intended juvenile work I leave entirely to your judgment, tho' I begin to suspect myself that there is more refinement than solidity in some parts of it. This little work you will find in a thin folio paper book in my writing-desk in my book-room. All the other loose paper which you will find either in that desk or within the glass folding-doors of a bureau which stands in my bedroom, together with about eighteen thin paper folio books, which you will likewise find within the same glass folding-doors, I desire may be destroyed without any examination. Unless I die very suddenly, I shall take care that the Papers I carry with me shall be carefully sent to you. — I ever am, my dear friend, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *16th April 1773*.

To David Hume, Esq., 9 St. Andrew's Square, Edinburgh.

Smith went to London shortly after writing this letter, and spent most of the next four years there. We find him there in May 1773, for he is admitted to the Royal Society on the 27th of that month; he is there in September, for Ferguson then writes to him as if he were still there. He is there in February 1774, for Hume writes him in that month, "Pray what accounts are these we hear of Franklyn's conduct?" — a question he

would hardly have addressed except to one in a better position for hearing the truth about Franklin than he was himself. He is there in September 1774, for he writes Cullen from town in that month, and speaks of having been for some time in it. He is there in January 1775, for on the 11th Bishop Percy met him at dinner at Sir Joshua Reynolds', along with Johnson, Burke, Gibbon, and others. He is there in February, for a young friend, Patrick Clason, addresses a letter to him during that month to the care of Cadell, the bookseller, in the Strand. He is there in December, for on the 27th Horace Walpole writes the Countess of Ossory that "Adam Smith told us t'other night at Beauclerk's that Major Preston — one of two, but he is not sure which — would have been an excellent commander some years hence if he had seen any service. I said it was a pity that the war had not been put off till the Major should be some years older." He returned to Scotland in April 1776, about a month after his book was issued, but we find him back again in London in January 1777, for his letter to Governor Pownall in that month is dated from Suffolk Street. Whether the first three years of his stay in London was continuous I cannot say, but it would almost appear so from the circumstance that nothing remains to indicate the contrary.

Those three years were spent upon the *Wealth of Nations*. Much of the book as we know it must have been written in London. When he went up to London he had no idea that any fresh investigations he contemplated instituting there would detain him so long. He wrote Pulteney, as we have seen, even in the previous September that the book would be finished in a few months, and he led not only Hume but Adam Ferguson also to look for its publication in 1773. In a footnote to the fourth edition of his *History of Civil Society*, published in that year, Ferguson says, "The public will probably soon be furnished (by Mr. Smith, author of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*) with a theory of national economy equal to what has ever appeared on any subject of science whatever." But the researches the author now made in London must have been much more important than he expected, and have occasioned extensive alterations and additions, so that Hume, in congratulating him on the eventual appearance of the work in 1776, writes, "It is probably much improved by your last abode in London." Whole chapters seem to have been put through the forge afresh; and on some of them the author has tool-marked the date of his handiwork himself.

A very circumstantial account of Smith's London labours at the book comes from America. Mr. Watson, author of the *Annals of Philadelphia*, says: "Dr. Franklin once told Dr. Logan that the celebrated Adam Smith

when writing his *Wealth of Nations* was in the habit of bringing chapter after chapter as he composed it to himself, Dr. Price, and others of the literati; then patiently hear their observations and profit by their discussions and criticisms, sometimes submitting to write whole chapters anew, and even to reverse some of his propositions."

Franklin's remark may have itself undergone enlargement before it appeared in print, but though it may have been exaggerated, there seems no ground for rejecting it altogether. Smith became acquainted with Franklin in Edinburgh in 1759, and could not fail to see much of him in London, because some of the most intimate of his own London friends, Sir John Pringle and Strahan, for example, were also among the most intimate friends of Franklin. Then a considerable proportion of the additions, which we know from the text of the *Wealth of Nations* itself to have been made to the work during this London period, bear on colonial or American experience. And as Smith always obtained a great deal of his information from the conversation of competent men, no one would be more likely than Franklin to be laid under contribution or to be able to contribute something worth learning on such questions. The biographer of Franklin states that his papers which belong to this particular period "contain sets of problems and queries as though jotted down at some meeting of philosophers for particular consideration at home," and then he adds: "A glance at the index of the *Wealth of Nations* will suffice to show that its author possessed just that kind of knowledge of the American Colonies which Franklin was of all men the best fitted to impart. The allusions to the Colonies may be counted by hundreds; illustrations from their condition and growth occur in nearly every chapter. We may go further and say that the American Colonies constitute the experimental evidence of the essential truth of the book, without which many of its leading positions had been little more than theory." It ought of course to be borne in mind that Smith had been in the constant habit of hearing much about the American Colonies and their affairs during his thirteen years in Glasgow from the intelligent merchants and returned planters of that city.

After coming to London Smith seems to have renewed his acquaintance with Lord Stanhope, who sought Smith's counsel as to a tutor for his ward the Earl of Chesterfield, and appointed Adam Ferguson on Smith's recommendation. The negotiations with Ferguson were conducted through Smith, and some of Ferguson's letters to Smith on the matter still exist, but contain nothing of any interest for the biography of the latter. But in contemplation of Ferguson's going abroad with the Earl

of Chesterfield, Hume, ever anxious to have his friend near him, sounds Smith on the possibility of his agreeing to act during Ferguson's absence as his substitute in the Moral Philosophy chair at Edinburgh. Smith, however, was apparently unwilling to undertake that duty. As we have already seen, he was strongly opposed to professorial absenteeism, and in the present case it was associated with unpleasant circumstances. The Town Council, the administrators of the College, refused to sanction Ferguson's absence, and called upon him either to stay at home or to resign his chair. Ferguson merely snapped his fingers, appointed young Dugald Stewart his substitute, and went off on his travels, quietly remarking that fools and knaves were necessary in the world to give other people something to do. Hume's letter is as follows: —

St. Andrew's Square, *13th February 1774*.

Dear Smith — You are in the wrong for never informing me of your intentions and resolutions, if you have fix'd any. I am now obliged to write to you on a subject without knowing whether the proposal, or rather Hint, which I am to give you be an absurdity or not. The settlement to be made on Ferguson is a very narrow compensation for his class if he must lose it. He wishes to keep it and to serve by a Deputy in his absence. But besides that this scheme will appear invidious and is really scarce admissible, those in the Town Council who aim at filling the vacancy with a friend will strenuously object to it, and he himself cannot think of one who will make a proper substitute. I fancy that the chief difficulty would be removed if you could offer to supply his class either as his substitute or his successor, with a purpose of resigning upon his return. This notion is entirely my own, and shall never be known to Ferguson if it appear to you improper. I shall only say that he deserves this friendly treatment by his friendly conduct of a similar kind towards poor Russell's family.

Pray what strange accounts are these we hear of Franklyn's conduct? I am very slow in believing that he has been guilty in the extreme degree that is pretended, tho' I always knew him to be a very factious man, and Faction next to Fanaticism is of all passions the most destructive of morality. I hear that Wedderburn's treatment of him before the Council was most cruel without being in the least blamable. What a pity!

Smith's headquarters in London, to which Hume's letters to him were addressed, was the British Coffee-House in Cockspur Street, a great Scotch resort in last century, kept, as I have said, by a sister of his old Balliol friend, Bishop Douglas, "a woman," according to Henry Mackenzie, "of uncommon talents and the most agreeable conversation."

Wedderburn founded a weekly dining club in this house, which Robertson and Carlyle used to frequent when they came to town, and no doubt Smith would do the same, for many of his Scotch friends belonged to it — Dr. William Hunter, John Home, Robert Adam the architect, and Sir Gilbert Elliot. Indeed, though men like Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Garrick, and Richard Cumberland were members, it was predominantly a Scotch club, and both Carlyle and Richard Cumberland say an extremely agreeable one. But during his residence at this period in London Smith was in 1775 admitted to the membership of a much more famous club, the Literary Club of Johnson and Burke and Reynolds at the Turk's Head in Gerrard Street, and he no doubt attended their fortnightly dinners. The only members present on the night of his election were Beauclerk, Gibbon, Sir William Jones, and Sir Joshua Reynolds. Boswell, writing his friend Temple on 28th April 1776, immediately after the *Wealth of Nations* was published, says, "Smith too is now of our club. It has lost its select merit." But another member of the club, Dean Barnard — husband of the authoress of "Auld Robin Gray" — appreciates his worth better, though he wrote the lines in which his appreciation occurs before the *Wealth of Nations* appeared, and his words may therefore be taken perhaps to convey the impression made by Smith's conversation. One of the Dean's verses runs —

If I have thoughts and can't express 'em, Gibbon shall teach me how to dress 'em In form select and terse; Jones teach me modesty and Greek, Smith how to think, Burke how to speak, And Beauclerk to converse.

Smith's conversation seems, from all the accounts we have of it, to have been the conversation of a thinker, often lecturing rather than talk, but always instructive and solid. William Playfair, the brother of Professor John Playfair, the mathematician, says, "Those persons who have ever had the pleasure to be in his company may recollect that even in his common conversation the order and method he pursued without the smallest degree of formality or stiffness were beautiful, and gave a sort of pleasure to all who listened to him."

Bennet Langton mentions the "decisive professorial manner" in which he was used to talk, and according to Boswell, Topham Beauclerk conceived a high opinion of Smith's conversation at first, but afterwards lost it, for reasons unreported, though if Beauclerk was himself, as Dean Barnard indicates, the model converser of the club, he would probably grow tired of expository lectures, however excellent and instructive. A criticism of Garrick's is more curious. After listening to Smith one evening, the great player turned to a friend and whispered, "What say

you to this? eh, flabby, eh?" but whatever may have been the case that particular evening, flabbiness at least was not a characteristic of Smith's talk. It erred rather in excess of substance. He had Johnson's solidity and weight, without Johnson's force and vivacity. Henry Mackenzie, author of the *Man of Feeling*, talking of Smith soon after his death with Samuel Rogers, said of him, "With a most retentive memory, his conversation was solid beyond that of any man. I have often told him after half an hour's conversation, 'Sir, you have said enough to make a book.'" His conversation, moreover, was particularly wide in its range. Dugald Stewart says that though Smith seldom started a topic of conversation, there were few topics raised on which he was not found contributing something worth hearing, and Boswell, no very partial witness, admits that his talk evinced "a mind crowded with all manner of subjects." Like Sir Walter Scott, Smith has been unjustly accused of habitually abstaining from conversing on the subjects he had made his own. Boswell tells us that Smith once said to Sir Joshua Reynolds that he made it a rule in company never to talk of what he understood, and he alleges the reason to have been that Smith had bookmaking ever in his mind, and the fear of the plagiarist ever before his eyes. But the fact thus reported by Boswell cannot be accepted exactly as he reports it, and his explanation cannot be accepted at all. Men able to converse on a variety of subjects will naturally prefer to converse on those unconnected with their own shop, because they go into company for diversion from their own shop, but it is a question of company and circumstances. If Smith ever made any such rule as Boswell speaks of, he certainly seems to have honoured it as often by the breach as by the observance, for when his friends brought round the conversation to his special lines of research, he never seems to have failed to give his ideas quite freely, nay, as may be seen from the remark just quoted from Henry Mackenzie, not freely merely but abundantly — as many as would make a book. He does not appear to have been in this respect a grudging giver. I have already quoted his remark on hearing of Blair's borrowing some of his juridical ideas, "There's enough left." When Sir John Sinclair was writing his *History of the Revenue* Smith offered him the use of everything, either printed or manuscript, in his possession bearing upon the subject. And if it is true that he was discussing his own book chapter by chapter with Franklin, Price, and others, about the very period when this remark to Sir Joshua purports to have been made, it appears most unlikely that he could have thought of setting any churlish watch on his lips in ordinary conversation. But however it be with his disposition to talk about his

own pursuits, we know from Dugald Stewart that he was very fond of talking of subjects remote from them, and as Stewart says, he was never more entertaining than when he gave a loose rein to his speculation on subjects off his own line. “Nor do I think,” says Stewart, “I shall be accused of going too far when I say that he was scarcely ever known to start a new topic himself, or to appear unprepared upon those topics that were introduced by others. Indeed, his conversation was never more amusing than when he gave a loose rein to his genius upon the very few branches of knowledge of which he only possessed the outlines.” One of his defects, according to both Stewart and Carlyle, was his poor penetration into personal character; but he was very fond of drawing the character of any person whose name came up in conversation, and Stewart says his judgments of this kind, though always decided and lively, were generally too systematic to be just, leaning ever, however, to charity’s side, and erring by partiality rather than prejudice; while Carlyle completes the description by stating that when any one challenged or disputed his opinion of a character, he would retrace his steps with the greatest ease and nonchalance and contradict every word he had been saying. Carlyle’s statement is confirmed by the remarks of certain of Smith’s other friends who speak incidentally of the amusing inconsistencies in which he indulged in private conversation. He was fond of starting theories and supporting them, but it is not so easy to explain a man on a theory as to explain some abstract subject on a theory.

His voice seems to have been harsh, his utterance often stammering, and his manner, especially among strangers, often embarrassed, but many writers speak of the remarkable animation of his features as he warmed to his subject, and of the peculiar radiancy of his smile. “His smile of approbation,” says Dr. Carlyle, “was captivating.” “In the society of those he loved,” says Stewart, “his features were often brightened with a smile of inexpressible benignity.”

While living in London, Smith, along with Gibbon, attended Dr. William Hunter’s lectures on anatomy, as we are told by a writer who was one of Hunter’s students at the time, and during that very period he had an opportunity of vindicating the value of the lectures of private teachers of medicine like Hunter against pretensions to monopoly set up at the moment on behalf of the universities. In a long letter written to Cullen in September 1774 Smith defends with great vigour and vivacity the most absolute and unlimited freedom of medical education, treating the University claims as mere expressions of the craft spirit, and recognising none of those exceptional features of medical education

which have constrained even the most extreme partisans of economic liberty now to approve of government interference in that matter.

The letter was occasioned by an agitation which had been long gathering strength in Scotch medical circles against the laxity with which certain of the Scotch universities — St. Andrews and Aberdeen in particular — were in the habit of conferring their medical degrees. The candidate was not required either to attend classes or to pass an examination, but got the degree by merely paying the fees and producing a certificate of proficiency from two medical practitioners, into whose qualifications no inquiry was instituted. In London a special class of agent — the broker in Scotch degrees — sprang up to transact the business, and England was being overrun with a horde of Scotch doctors of medicine who hardly knew a vein from an artery, and had created south of the Border a deep prejudice against all Scotch graduates, even those from the unoffending Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. A case seemed to be brought home even to Edinburgh in the year 1771. The offender — one Leeds — had not, indeed, got his degree from Edinburgh without examination, but he showed his competency to be so doubtful in his duties at the London Hospital that the governors made it a condition of the continuance of his services that he should obtain the diploma of the London College of Physicians, and he failed to pass this London examination and was deprived of his post. This case created much sensation both in London and Edinburgh, and when the Duke of Buccleugh was elected an honorary Fellow of the College of Physicians of Edinburgh in 1774, he made that body something like an offer to take up the question of examination for medical degrees in Parliament and try what could be done to remove this reproach from his country. The College of Physicians thereupon drew up a memorial to Government for the Duke of Buccleugh to present, praying for the prohibition of the universities from granting medical degrees, except honorary ones, to any person in absence, or to any person without first undergoing a personal examination into his proficiency, and bringing a certificate of having attended for two years at a university where physic was regularly taught, and of having applied himself to all branches of medical study. They add that they fix on two years not because they think two years enough, but because that was the term adopted by the London College of Physicians, and they suggest the appointment of a royal commission of inquiry if Government is not prepared for immediate action.

The Duke of Buccleugh sent the memorial for the consideration of Adam Smith, and asked him to write to Cullen his views on the subject.

Smith thought that it was not very practicable in any event for the public to obtain a satisfactory test of medical efficiency, that it was certainly not practicable if the competition by the private teachers were suppressed, that otherwise the medical examination might become as great a quackery as the medical degree, and that the whole question was a mere squabble between the big quack and the little one. He unfolds his views in the following letter: —

Dear Doctor — I have been very much in the wrong both to you and to the Duke of Buccleugh, to whom I certainly promised to write you in a post or two, for having delayed so long to fulfil my promise. The truth is that some occurrences which interested me a good deal, and which happened here immediately after the Duke's departure, made me forget altogether a business which, I do acknowledge, interested me very little.

In the present state of the Scotch universities I do most sincerely look upon them as, in spite of all their faults, without exception the best seminaries of learning that are to be found anywhere in Europe. They are perhaps, upon the whole, as unexceptionable as any public institutions of that kind, which all contain in their very nature the seeds and causes of negligency and corruption, have ever been or are ever likely to be. That, however, they are still capable of amendment, and even of considerable amendment, I know very well, and a Visitation (that is, a Royal Commission) is, I believe, the only proper means of procuring them this amendment. Before any wise man, however, would apply for the appointment of so arbitrary a tribunal in order to improve what is already, upon the whole, very well, he ought certainly to know with some degree of certainty, first, who are likely to be appointed visitors, and secondly, what plan of reformation those visitors are likely to follow; but in the present multiplicity of pretenders to some share in the prudential management of Scotch affairs, these are two points which, I apprehend, neither you nor I, nor the Solicitor-General nor the Duke of Buccleugh, can possibly know anything about. In the present state of our affairs, therefore, to apply for a Visitation in order to remedy an abuse which is not perhaps of great consequence to the public, would appear to me to be extremely unwise. Hereafter, perhaps, an opportunity may present itself for making such an application with more safety.

With regard to an admonition, or threatening, or any other method of interfering in the affairs of a body corporate which is not perfectly and strictly regular and legal, these are expedients which I am convinced neither his Majesty nor any of his present Ministers would choose to employ either now or at any time hereafter in order to obtain an object

even of much greater consequence than this reformation of Scottish degrees.

You propose, I observe, that no person should be admitted to examination for his degrees unless he brought a certificate of his having studied at least two years in some university. Would not such a regulation be oppressive upon all private teachers, such as the Hunters, Hewson, Fordyce, etc.? The scholars of such teachers surely merit whatever honour or advantage a degree can confer much more than the greater part of those who have spent many years in some universities, where the different branches of medical knowledge are either not taught at all, or are taught so superficially that they had as well not be taught at all. When a man has learnt his lesson very well, it surely can be of little importance where or from whom he has learnt it.

The monopoly of medical education which this regulation would establish in favour of universities would, I apprehend, be hurtful to the lasting prosperity of such bodies corporate. Monopolists very seldom make good work, and a lecture which a certain number of students must attend, whether they profit by it or no, is certainly not very likely to be a good one. I have thought a great deal upon this subject, and have inquired very carefully into the constitution and history of several of the principal universities of Europe; I have satisfied myself that the present state of degradation and contempt into which the greater part of these societies have fallen in almost every part of Europe arises principally, first, from the large salaries which in some universities are given to professors, and which render them altogether independent of their diligence and success in their professions; and secondly, from the great number of students who, in order to get degrees or to be admitted to exercise certain professions, or who, for the sake of bursaries, exhibitions, scholarships, fellowships, etc., are obliged to resort to certain societies of this kind, whether the instructions which they are likely to receive there are or are not worth the receiving. All these different cases of negligence and corruption no doubt take place in some degree in all our Scotch universities. In the best of them, however, these cases take place in a much less degree than in the greater part of other considerable societies of the same kind; and I look upon this circumstance as the real cause of their present excellence. In the Medical College of Edinburgh in particular the salaries of the professors are insignificant. There are few or no bursaries or exhibitions, and their monopoly of degrees is broken in upon by all other universities, foreign

and domestic. I require no other explication of its present acknowledged superiority over every other society of the same kind in Europe.

To sign a certificate in favour of any man whom we know little or nothing about is most certainly a practice which cannot be strictly vindicated. It is a practice, however, which from mere good-nature and without interest of any kind the most scrupulous men in the world are sometimes guilty of. I certainly do not mean to defend it. Bating the unhandsomeness of the practice, however, I would ask in what manner does the public suffer by it? The title of Doctor, such as it is, you will say, gives some credit and authority to the man upon whom it is bestowed; it extends his practice and consequently his field for doing mischief; it is not improbable too that it may increase his presumption and consequently his disposition to do mischief. That a degree injudiciously conferred may sometimes have some little effect of this kind it would surely be absurd to deny, but that this effect should be very considerable I cannot bring myself to believe. That Doctors are sometimes fools as well as other people is not in the present time one of those profound secrets which is known only to the learned. The title is not so very imposing, and it very seldom happens that a man trusts his health to another merely because that other is a Doctor. The person so trusted has almost always some knowledge or some craft which would procure him nearly the same trust, though he was not decorated with any such title. In fact the persons who apply for degrees in the irregular manner complained of are, the greater part of them, surgeons or apothecaries who are in the custom of advising and prescribing, that is, of practising as physicians; but who, being only surgeons and apothecaries, are not fee-ed as physicians. It is not so much to extend their practice as to increase their fees that they are desirous of being made Doctors. Degrees conferred even undeservedly upon such persons can surely do very little harm to the public. When the University of St. Andrews very rashly and imprudently conferred a degree upon one Green who happened to be a stage-doctor, they no doubt brought much ridicule and discredit upon themselves, but in what respect did they hurt the public? Green still continued to be what he was before, a stage-doctor, and probably never poisoned a single man more than he would have done though the honours of graduation had never been conferred upon him. Stage-doctors, I must observe, do not much excite the indignation of the faculty; more reputable quacks do. The former are too contemptible to be considered as rivals; they only poison the poor people; and the copper pence which are thrown up to them in

handkerchiefs could never find their way to the pocket of a regular physician. It is otherwise with the latter: they sometimes intercept a part of what perhaps would have been better bestowed in another place. Do not all the old women in the country practise physic without exciting murmur or complaint? And if here and there a graduated Doctor should be as ignorant as an old woman, where can be the great harm? The beardless old woman indeed takes no fees; the bearded one does, and it is this circumstance, I strongly suspect, which exasperates his brethren so much against him.

There never was, and I will venture to say there never will be, a university from which a degree could give any tolerable security that the person upon whom it had been conferred was fit to practise physic. The strictest universities confer degrees only upon students of a certain standing. Their real motive for requiring this standing is that the student may spend more money among them and that they may make more profit by him. When he has attained this standing therefore, though he still undergoes what they call an examination, it scarce ever happens that he is refused his degree. Your examination at Edinburgh, I have all reason to believe, is as serious, and perhaps more so, than that of any other university in Europe; but when a student has resided a few years among you, has behaved dutifully to all his professors, and has attended regularly all their lectures, when he comes to his examination I suspect you are disposed to be as good-natured as other people. Several of your graduates, upon applying for license from the College of Physicians here, have had it recommended to them to continue their studies. From a particular knowledge of some of the cases I am satisfied that the decision of the College in refusing them their license was perfectly just — that is, was perfectly agreeable to the principles which ought to regulate all such decisions; and that the candidates were really very ignorant of their profession.

A degree can pretend to give security for nothing but the science of the graduate; and even for that it can give but a very slender security. For his good sense and discretion, qualities not discoverable by an academical examination, it can give no security at all; but without these the presumption which commonly attends science must render it in the practice of physic ten times more dangerous than the grossest ignorance when accompanied, as it sometimes is, with some degree of modesty and diffidence.

If a degree, in short, always has been, and, in spite of all the regulations which can be made, always must be, a mere piece of

quackery, it is certainly for the advantage of the public that it should be understood to be so. It is in a particular manner for the advantage of the universities that for the resort of students they should be obliged to depend, not upon their privileges but upon their merit, upon their abilities to teach and their diligence in teaching; and that they should not have it in their power to use any of those quackish arts which have disgraced and degraded the half of them.

A degree which can be conferred only upon students of a certain standing is a statute of apprenticeship which is likely to contribute to the advancement of science, just as other statutes of apprenticeship have contributed to that of arts and manufactures. Those statutes of apprenticeship, assisted by other corporation laws, have banished arts and manufactures from the greater part of towns corporate. Such degrees, assisted by some other regulations of a similar tendency, have banished almost all useful and solid education from the greater part of universities. Bad work and high price have been the effect of the monopoly introduced by the former; quackery, imposture, and exorbitant fees have been the consequences of that established by the latter. The industry of manufacturing villages has remedied in part the inconveniences which the monopolies established by towns corporate had occasioned. The private interest of some poor Professors of Physic in some poor universities inconveniently situated for the resort of students has in part remedied the inconveniences which would certainly have resulted from that sort of monopoly which the great and rich universities had attempted to establish. The great and rich universities seldom graduated anybody but their own students, and not even these till after a long and tedious standing; five and seven years for a Master of Arts; eleven and sixteen for a Doctor of Law, Physic, or Divinity. The poor universities on account of the inconvenience of their situation, not being able to get many students, endeavoured to turn a penny in the only way in which they could turn it, and sold their degrees to whoever would buy them, generally without requiring any residence or standing, and frequently without subjecting the candidate even to a decent examination. The less trouble they gave, the more money they got, and I certainly do not pretend to vindicate so dirty a practice. All universities being ecclesiastical establishments under the immediate protection of the Pope, a degree from one of them gave all over Christendom very nearly the same privileges which a degree from any other could have given; and the respect which is to this day paid to foreign degrees, even in Protestant countries, must be considered as a remnant of Popery. The facility of

obtaining degrees, particularly in physic, from those poor universities had two effects, both extremely advantageous to the public, but extremely disagreeable to graduates of other universities whose degrees had cost them much time and expense. First, it multiplied very much the number of doctors, and thereby no doubt sunk their fees, or at least hindered them from rising so very high as they otherwise would have done. Had the universities of Oxford and Cambridge been able to maintain themselves in the exclusive privilege of graduating all the doctors who could practise in England, the price of feeling the pulse might by this time have risen from two and three guineas, the price which it has now happily arrived at, to double or triple that sum; and English physicians might, and probably would, have been at the same time the most ignorant and quackish in the world. Secondly, it reduced a good deal the rank and dignity of a doctor, but if the physician was a man of sense and science it would not surely prevent his being respected and employed as a man of sense and science. If he was neither the one nor the other, indeed, his doctorship would no doubt avail him the less. But ought it in this case to avail him at all? Had the hopeful project of the rich and great universities succeeded, there would have been no occasion for sense or science. To have been a doctor would alone have been sufficient to give any man rank, dignity, and fortune enough. That in every profession the fortune of every individual should depend as much as possible upon his merit and as little as possible upon his privilege is certainly for the interest of the public. It is even for the interest of every particular profession, which can never so effectually support the general merit and real honour of the greater part of those who exercise it, as by resting on such liberal principles. Those principles are even most effectual for procuring them all the employment which the country can afford. The great success of quacks in England has been altogether owing to the real quackery of the regular physicians. Our regular physicians in Scotland have little quackery, and no quack accordingly has ever made his fortune among us.

After all, this trade in degrees I acknowledge to be a most disgraceful trade to those who exercise it; and I am extremely sorry that it should be exercised by such respectable bodies as any of our Scotch universities. But as it serves as a corrective of what would otherwise soon grow up to be an intolerable nuisance, the exclusive and corporation spirit of all thriving professions and of all great universities, I deny that it is hurtful to the public.

What the physicians of Edinburgh at present feel as a hardship is perhaps the real cause of their acknowledged superiority over the greater part of other physicians. The Royal College of Physicians there, you say, are obliged by their charter to grant a license without examination to all the graduates of Scotch universities. You are all obliged, I suppose, in consequence of this, to consult sometimes with very unworthy brethren. You are all made to feel that you must rest no part of your dignity upon your degree, a distinction which you share with the men in the world perhaps whom you despise the most, but that you must found the whole of it upon your merit. Not being able to derive much consequence from the character of Doctor, you are obliged perhaps to attend more to your character as men, as gentlemen, and as men of letters. The unworthiness of some of your brethren may perhaps in this manner be in part the cause of the very eminent and superior worth of many of the rest. The very abuse which you complain of may in this manner perhaps be the real source of your present excellence. You are at present well, wonderfully well, and when you are so, be assured there is always some danger in attempting to be better.

Adieu, my dear Doctor; after having delayed to write to you I am afraid I shall *get my lug* (ear) *in my lufe* (hand), as we say, for what I have written. But I ever am, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

London, *20th September 1774*.

Whether this decided expression of unfavourable opinion on the part of his old and venerated tutor altered the Duke of Buccleugh's mind on the subject, or in any way prevented him from persevering in his contemplated application to Government, we have no means of knowing, but at any rate no further action seems to have been taken in the matter, and it was left to the Scottish universities themselves to remedy abuses which were seriously telling on their own interest and good name.

The last year of Smith's residence in London was overcast by growing anxiety about the condition of his friend Hume, who had always enjoyed fairly good health till the beginning of the year 1775, and then seemed to fall rapidly away. As Smith said one evening at Lord Shelburne's to Dr. Price, who asked him about Hume's health, it seemed as if Hume was one of those persons who after a certain time of life go down not gradually but by jumps. Under those circumstances Smith had determined as soon as his new book was out to go down to Edinburgh and if possible persuade Hume to come back with him to London, to try the effect of change of scene and a little wholesome diversion. But, bad

correspondent that he was, he appears to have left Hume to gather his intentions from the reports of friends, and consequently received from Hume the following remonstrance a few weeks before the publication of his work: —

Edinburgh, *8th February, 1776*.

Dear Smith — I am as lazy a correspondent as you, but my anxiety about you makes me write.

By all accounts your book has been printed long ago, yet it has never yet been so much as advertised. What is the reason? If you wait till the fate of Bavaria be decided you may wait long.

By all accounts you intend to settle with us this spring, yet we hear no more of it. What is the reason? Your chamber in my house is always unengaged; I am always at home; I expect you to land here.

I have been, am, and shall be probably in an indifferent state of health. I weighed myself t'other day, and find I have fallen five compleat stones. If you delay much longer I shall probably disappear altogether.

The Duke of Buccleugh tells me that you are very zealous in American affairs. My notion is that this matter is not so important as is commonly imagined. If I be mistaken I shall probably correct my error when I see you or read you. For navigation and general commerce may suffer more than our manufactures. Should London fall as much in its size as I have done it will be the better. It is nothing but a Hulk of bad and unclean Humours.

The American question was of course the great question of the hour, for the Colonies were already a year in active rebellion, and they issued their declaration of independence but a few months later. Smith followed the struggle, as we see from many evidences in the concluding portion of the *Wealth of Nations*, with the most patriotic interest and anxiety, and having long made a special study of the whole problem of colonial administration, had arrived at the most decided opinions not only on the rights and wrongs of the particular quarrel then at issue, but on the general policy it was requisite to adopt in the government of dependencies. Hume was in favour of separation, because he believed separation to be inevitable sooner or later in the ordinary course of nature, like the separation of the fruit from the tree or the child from the parent. But Smith, shunning all such misleading metaphors, held that there need never be any occasion for separation as long as mother country and dependency were wise enough to keep together, and that the sound policy to adopt was really the policy of closer union — of imperial federation, as we should now call it. He would not say, "Perish

dependencies," but "Incorporate them." He would treat a colony as but a natural expansion of the territory of the kingdom, and have its inhabitants enjoy the same rights and bear the same burdens as other citizens. He did not think it wrong to tax the Colonies; on the contrary, he would make them pay every tax the inhabitants of Great Britain had to pay; but he thought it wrong to put restrictions on their commerce from which the commerce of Great Britain was free, and he thought it wrong to tax them for imperial purposes without giving them representation in the Imperial Parliament — full and equal representation, "bearing the same proportion to the produce of their taxes as the representation of Great Britain might bear to the produce of the taxes levied upon Great Britain." The union he contemplated was to be more than federal; it was to preclude home rule by local assemblies; it was to be like the union which had been established with Scotland, and which he strongly desired to see established with Ireland; and the Imperial Parliament in London was to make laws for the local affairs of the provinces across the Atlantic exactly as it made laws for the local affairs of the province across the Tweed. He shrank from none of the consequences of his scheme, admitting even that when the Colonies grew in population and wealth, as grow they must, till the real centre of empire changed, the time would then arrive when the American members of the Imperial Parliament would far outnumber the British, and the seat of Parliament itself would require to be transferred from London to some Constantinople on the other side of the Atlantic.

He was quite sensible that this scheme of his would be thought wild and called a "new Utopia," but he was not one of those who counted the old Utopia of Sir Thomas More to be either useless or chimerical, and he says that this Utopia of his own is "no more useless or chimerical than the old one." The difficulties it would encounter came, he says, "not from the nature of things, but from the prejudices and opinions of the people both on this and on the other side of the Atlantic." He held, moreover, very strongly that a union of this kind was the only means of making the Colonies a useful factor instead of a showy and expensive appendage of the empire, and the only alternative that could really prevent their total separation from Great Britain. He pleaded for union, too, not merely for the salvation of the Colonies to the mother country, but even more for the salvation of the Colonies to themselves. Separation merely meant mediocrity for Great Britain, but for the Colonies it meant ruin. There would no longer be any check on the spirit of rancorous and virulent faction which was always inseparable from small democracies.

The coercive power of the mother country had hitherto prevented the colonial factions from breaking out into anything worse than brutality and insult, but if that coercive power were entirely taken away they would probably soon break out into open violence and bloodshed.

The event has falsified the last anticipation, but this is not the place to criticise Smith's scheme. It was only requisite to recall for a moment the ideas which, according to the Duke of Buccleugh's statement to Hume, Smith was at this time so zealously working for in the important circles in which he then moved in London.

CHAPTER XVIII. “THE WEALTH OF NATIONS”

1776. *Aet.* 52

The *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* was at length published on the 9th of March 1776. Bishop Horne, one of Smith’s antagonists, of whom we shall presently hear more, said the books which live longest are those which have been carried longest in the womb of the parent. The *Wealth of Nations* took twelve years to write, and was in contemplation for probably twelve years before that. It was explicitly and publicly promised in 1759, in the concluding paragraph of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, though it is only the partial fulfilment of that promise.

The promise is: “I shall in another discourse endeavour to give an account of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in what concerns justice, but in what concerns policy revenue and arms, and whatever else is the object of law.” In speaking of this promise in the preface of the sixth edition of the *Theory* in 1790, Smith says, “In the *Inquiry concerning the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* I have partially executed this promise, at least so far as concerns policy revenue and arms.” Now doubtless when Smith began writing his book in Toulouse he began it on the large plan originally in contemplation, and some part of the long delay that took place in its composition is probably to be explained by the fact that he would have possibly been a considerable time at work before he determined to break his book in two, and push on meanwhile with the section on policy revenue and arms, leaving to a separate publication in the future his discussion of the theory of jurisprudence.

The work was published in two vols. 4to, at the price of £1:16s. in boards, and the author uses this time all his honours on the title-page, describing himself as Adam Smith, LL.D. and F.R.S., formerly Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. What was the extent of this edition, or the terms, as between author and publisher, on which it was put out, is not exactly known. The terms were not half-profits, for that arrangement is proposed by Smith for the second edition as if it were a new one, and is accepted in the same way by Strahan, who in a letter

which I shall presently quote, pronounces it a “very fair” proposal, “and therefore very agreeable to Mr. Cadell and me”; nor was it printed for the author, for the presentation copies he gave away were deducted from the copy money he received. On the whole, it seems most probable that the book was purchased from him for a definite sum, and as he mentions in his letter of the 13th November 1776 that he had received, £300 of his money at that time, and had still a balance owing to him, one may reasonably conjecture that the full sum was £500 — the same sum Cadell’s firm had paid for the last economic work they had undertaken, Sir James Steuart’s *Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*.

The book sold well. The first edition, of whose extent, however, we are ignorant, was exhausted in six months, and the sale was from the first better than the publishers expected, for on the 12th of April, when it had only been a month out, Strahan takes notice of a remark of David Hume that Smith’s book required too much thought to be as popular as Gibbon’s, and states, “What you say of Mr. Gibbon’s and Dr. Smith’s book is exactly just. The former is the most popular work; but the sale of the latter, though not near so rapid, has been more than I could have expected from a work that requires much thought and reflection (qualities that do not abound among modern readers) to peruse to any purpose.” The sale is the more remarkable because it was scarce to any degree helped on by reviews, favourable or otherwise. The book was not noticed at all, for example, in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, and it was allowed only two pages in the *Annual Register*, while in the same number Watson’s *History of Philip* got sixteen. This review of the book, however, was probably written by Burke.

Smith speaks in one of his letters to Strahan of having distributed numerous presentation copies. One of the first of these was of course sent to his old friend David Hume, and that copy, by the way, with its inscription, probably still exists, having been possessed for a time by the late Mr. Babbage. Hume acknowledged receipt of it in the following letter, which shows among other things that not even Hume had seen the manuscript of the book before publication: —

Edinburgh, *1st April 1776*.

Euge! Belle! Dear Mr. Smith — I am much pleased with your performance, and the perusal of it has taken me from a state of great anxiety. It was a work of so much expectation, by yourself, by your friends, and by the public, that I trembled for its appearance, but am now much relieved. Not but that the reading of it necessarily requires so much attention, and the public is disposed to give so little that I shall still doubt

for some time of its being at first very popular, but it has depth and solidity and acuteness, and is so much illustrated by curious facts that it must at last attract the public attention. It is probably much improved by your last abode in London. If you were here at my fireside, I should dispute some of your principles. I cannot think that the rent of farms makes any part of the price of the produce, but that the price is determined altogether by the quantity and the demand. It appears to me impossible that the King of France can take a seignorage of 8 per cent upon the coinage. Nobody would bring bullion to the mint, it would be all sent to Holland or England, where it might be coined and sent back to France for less than 2 per cent. Accordingly Necker says that the French king takes only 2 per cent of seignorage. But these and a hundred other points are fit only to be discussed in conversation, which till you tell me the contrary I still flatter myself with soon. I hope it will be soon, for I am in a very bad state of health and cannot afford a long delay. I fancy you are acquainted with Mr. Gibbon. I like his performance extremely, and have ventured to tell him that had I not been personally acquainted with him I should never have expected such an excellent work from the pen of an Englishman. It is lamentable to consider how much that nation has declined in literature during our time. I hope he did not take amiss this national reflection.

All your friends here are in deep grief at present for the death of Baron Mure, which is an irreparable loss to our society. He was among the oldest and best friends I had in the world.

On the same day as Hume wrote this letter from Edinburgh, Gibbon wrote from London to Adam Ferguson and said among other things, “What an excellent work is that with which our common friend Mr. Adam Smith has enriched the public! An extensive science in a single book, and the most profound ideas expressed in the most perspicuous language. He proposes visiting you very soon, and I find he means to exert his most strenuous endeavours to persuade Mr. Hume to return with him to town. I am sorry to hear that the health and spirits of that truly great man are in a less favourable state than his friends could wish, and I am sure you will join your efforts in convincing him of the benefits of exercise, dissipation, and change of air.”

Some of Smith’s personal friends seem to have entertained the common prejudice that a good work on commerce could not be reasonably expected from a man who had never been engaged in any branch of practical business, and seemed in outward air and appearance so ill fitted to succeed in such a line of business if he had engaged in it.

One of these was Sir John Pringle, President of the Royal Society, and formerly, like Smith himself, Professor of Moral Philosophy at a Scotch university. When the *Wealth of Nations* appeared Sir John Pringle remarked to Boswell that Smith, having never been in trade, could not be expected to write well on that subject any more than a lawyer upon physic, and Boswell repeated the remark to Johnson, who at once, however, sent it to the winds. “He is mistaken, sir,” said the Doctor; “a man who has never been engaged in trade himself may undoubtedly write well upon trade, and there is nothing that requires more to be illustrated by philosophy than does trade. As to mere wealth — that is to say, money — it is clear that one nation or one individual cannot increase its store but by making another poorer; but trade procures what is more valuable, the reciprocation of the peculiar advantages of different countries. A merchant seldom thinks but of his own particular trade. To write a good book upon it a man must have extensive views; it is not necessary to have practised to write well upon a subject.”

It is not within the scope of a work like the present to give an account of the doctrines of the *Wealth of Nations*, or any estimate of their originality or value, or of their influence on the progress of science, on the policy and prosperity of nations, or on the practical happiness of mankind. Buckle, as we know, declared it to be “in its ultimate results probably the most important book that has ever been written”; a book, he said, which has “done more towards the happiness of man than has been effected by the united abilities of all the statesmen and legislators of whom history has preserved an authentic account”; and even those who take the most sober view of the place of this work in history readily admit that its public career, which is far from being ended yet, is a very remarkable story of successive conquest.

It has been seriously asserted that the fortune of the book in this country was made by Fox quoting it one day in the House of Commons. But this happened in November 1783, after the book had already gone through two editions and was on the eve of appearing in a third. It is curious, however, that that was the first time it was quoted in the House, and it is curious, again, that the person to quote it then was Fox, who was neither an admirer of the book, nor a believer in its principles, nor a lover of its subject. He once told Charles Butler that he had never read the book, and the remark must have been made many years after its publication, for it was made at St. Anne’s Hill, to which Fox only went in 1785. “There is something in all these subjects,” the statesman added in explanation, “which passes my comprehension; something so wide

that I could never embrace them myself nor find any one who did." On another occasion, when he was dining one evening in 1796 at Sergeant Heywood's, Fox showed his hearty disdain for Smith and political economy together. The Earl of Lauderdale, who was himself an economist of great ability, and by no means a blind follower of Smith, made the remark that we knew nothing of political economy before Adam Smith wrote. "Pooh," said Fox, "your Adam Smiths are nothing, but" (he added, turning to the company) "that is his love; we must spare him there." "I think," replied Lauderdale, "he is everything." "That," rejoined Fox, "is a great proof of your affection." Fox was no believer in free trade, and actively opposed the Commercial Treaty with France in 1787 on the express and most illiberal ground that it proceeded from a novel system of doctrines, that it was a dangerous departure from the established principles of our forefathers, and that France and England were enemies by nature, and ought to be kept enemies by legislation.

It is curious therefore that in a House where Smith had many admirers and not a few disciples, his book was never mentioned for near eight years after its appearance, and was mentioned then by an enemy of its principles. Fox's quotation from it on that occasion was of the most unimportant character. It was in his speech on the Address of Thanks to the Throne, and he said: "There was a maxim laid down in an excellent book upon the Wealth of Nations which had been ridiculed for its simplicity, but which was indisputable as to its truth. In that book it was stated that the only way to become rich was to manage matters so as to make one's income exceed one's expenses. This maxim applied equally to an individual and to a nation. The proper line of conduct therefore was by a well-directed economy to retrench every current expense, and to make as large a saving during the peace as possible." To think of this allusion having any influence on the fortunes of the work is of course out of reason. It was never even mentioned in the House again till the year 1787, when Mr. Robert Thornton invoked it in support of the Commercial Treaty with France, and Mr. George Dempster read an extract from it in the debate on the proposal to farm the post-horse duties. It was quoted once in 1788, by Mr. Hussy on the Wool Exportation Bill, and not referred to again until Pitt introduced his Budget on the 17th February 1792. In then explaining the progressive accumulation of capital that was always spontaneously going on in a country when it was not checked by calamity or by vicious legislation, that great minister, a deep student of Smith's book and the most convinced of all Smith's disciples, made the remark: "Simple and

obvious as this principle is, and felt and observed as it must have been in a greater or less degree even from the earliest periods, I doubt whether it has ever been fully developed and sufficiently explained but in the writings of an author of our own time, now unfortunately no more (I mean the author of the celebrated treatise on the *Wealth of Nations*), whose extensive knowledge of detail and depth of philosophical research will, I believe, furnish the best solution of every question connected with the history of commerce and with the system of political economy." In the same year it was quoted by Mr. Whitbread and by Fox (from the exposition of the division of labour in the first book) in the debate on the armament against Russia, and by Wilberforce in his speech introducing his Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

It was not mentioned in the House of Lords till 1793, when in the debate on the King's Message for an Augmentation of the Forces it was referred to by Smith's two old friends, the Earl of Shelburne (now Marquis of Lansdowne) and Alexander Wedderburn (now Lord Loughborough, and presiding over the House as Lord Chancellor, of England). The Marquis of Lansdowne said: "With respect to French principles, as they had been denominated, those principles had been exported from us to France, and could not be said to have originated among the population of the latter country. The new principles of government founded on the abolition of the old feudal system were originally propagated among us by the Dean of Gloucester, Mr. Tucker, and had since been more generally inculcated by Dr. Adam Smith in his work on the *Wealth of Nations*, which had been recommended as a book necessary for the information of youth by Mr. Dugald Stewart in his *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*." The Lord Chancellor in replying merely said that "in the works of Dean Tucker, Adam Smith, and Mr. Stewart, to which allusion had been made, no doctrines inimical to the principles of civil government, the morals or religion of mankind, were contained, and therefore to trace the errors of the French to these causes was manifestly fallacious."

Lord Lansdowne's endeavour to shield Smith's political orthodoxy under the countenance lent to his book by so safe and trusted a teacher of the sons of the Whig nobility as Dugald Stewart, is hardly less curious than his unreserved identification of the new political economy with that moving cloud of ideas which, under the name of French principles, excited so much alarm in the public mind of that time. For Dugald Stewart was in that same year 1793 (on the evenings of 21st January and 18th March) reading his *Memoir of Adam Smith* to the Royal Society of

Edinburgh, and he tells us himself (in 1810) how he was compelled to abandon the idea of giving a long account of Smith's opinions which he intended to have done, because at that period, he says, "it was not unusual, even among men of some talents and information, to confound studiously the speculative doctrines of political economy with those discussions concerning the first principles of government, which happened unfortunately at that time to agitate the public mind. The doctrine of a Free Trade was itself represented as of a revolutionary tendency, and some who had formerly prided themselves on their intimacy with Mr. Smith, and on their zeal for the propagation of his liberal system, began to call in question the expediency of subjecting to the disputation of philosophers the arcana of State policy, and the unfathomable wisdom of feudal ages." People's teeth had been so set on edge by the events in France that, as Lord Cockburn tells us, when Stewart first began to give a course of lectures in the University on political economy in the winter 1801-2, the mere term "political economy" made them start. "They thought it included questions touching the constitution of governments, and not a few hoped to catch Stewart in dangerous propositions."

The French Revolution seems to have checked for a time the growing vogue of Smith's book and the advance of his principles in this country, just as it checked the progress of parliamentary and social reform, because it filled men's mind with a fear of change, with a suspicion of all novelty, with an unreasoning dislike of anything in the nature of a general principle. By French principles the public understood, it is true, much more than the abolition of all commercial and agrarian privilege which was advocated by Smith, but in their recoil they made no fine distinctions, and they naturally felt their prejudices strongly confirmed when they found men like the Marquis of Lansdowne, who were believers in the so-called French principles and believers at the same time in the principles of Adam Smith, declaring that the two things were substantially the same. Whether and how far Smith or Tucker had any influence on that development of opinion which eventuated in the Revolution, it would be difficult to gauge. Before Lord Lansdowne made this speech in 1793 two different translations of the *Wealth of Nations* into French had already been published; a third (by the Abbé Morellet) had been written but not published, and a fourth was possibly under way, for it appeared in a few years. The first and worst of these translations, moreover (Blavet's), had already gone through three separate editions, after having originally run through a periodical in monthly sections for

two years. These are all tokens that the work was unquestionably influencing French opinion.

But if the French Revolution stopped for a time, as is most likely, the onward advance of Smith's free-trade principles, it does not seem to have exercised the same effect on the actual sale of the book. I do not know whether the successive editions were uniform in number of copies, but as many editions of the *Wealth of Nations* — four English and one Irish — appeared between the years 1791 and 1799 as between the years 1776 and 1786, and since none was called for from 1786 till 1791, the edition of 1786 took longer to sell off than the subsequent editions of 1791, 1793, and 1796. It is quite possible — indeed it is only natural — that the wave of active antagonism which, according to Stewart's testimony, rose against the principles of the book after the outbreak of the French Revolution would have helped on the sale of the book itself by keeping it more constantly under public attention, discussion, and, if you will, vituperation. The fortune of a book, like that of a public man, is often made by its enemies.

But the very early influence of the *Wealth of Nations* in the English political world is established by much better proofs than quotations in Parliament. It had actually shaped parts of the policy of the country years before it was ever publicly alluded to in either House. The very first budget after its publication bore its marks. Lord North was then on the outlook for fresh and comparatively unburdensome means of increasing the revenue, and obtained valuable assistance from the *Wealth of Nations*. He imposed two new taxes in 1777, of which he got the idea there; one on man-servants, and the other on property sold by auction. And the budget of 1778 owed still more important features to Smith's suggestions, for it introduced the inhabited house duty so strongly recommended by him, and the malt tax. Then in the following year 1779 we find Smith consulted by statesmen like Dundas and the Earl of Carlisle on the pressing and anxious question of giving Ireland free trade. His answers still exist, and will appear later on in this work.

CHAPTER XIX. THE DEATH OF HUME

1776

After the publication of his book in the beginning of March, Smith still dallied in London, without taking any steps to carry out his plan of going to see Hume in Edinburgh and bring him up to London. But some hope seems to have been entertained of Hume coming up even without Smith's persuasion and escort. John Home, who was in London and was in correspondence with him, thought so, but he at length received a direct negative to the idea in a letter from Hume himself, written on the 12th of April; and then Smith and John Home set out together immediately for the northern capital, but when the coach stopped at Morpeth, whom should they see standing in the door of the inn but Colin, their friend's servant? Hume had determined to undertake the journey to London after all to consult Sir John Pringle, and was now so far on his way. John Home thereupon accompanied Hume back to London, but Smith, having heard of his mother being taken ill, and being anxious about her, as she was now over eighty years old, continued his journey on to Kirkcaldy. At Morpeth, however, he and Hume had time to discuss the question of the publication, in the event of Hume's death, of certain of his unpublished works. Hume had already on the 4th of January 1776 made Smith his literary executor by will, leaving him full power over all his papers except the *Dialogues on Natural Religion*, which he explicitly desired him to publish. It was years since this work had been written, but its publication had been deferred in submission to the representations of Sir Gilbert Elliot and other friends as to the annoying clamour it was sure to excite. Its author, however, had never ceased to cherish a peculiar paternal pride in the work, and now that his serious illness forced him to face the possibility of its extinction, he resolved at last to save it from that fate, clamour or no clamour. If he lived, he would publish it himself; if he died, he charged his executor to do so.

But this was a duty for which Smith had no mind. He was opposed to the publication of these *Dialogues* on general grounds and under any editorship whatever, as will appear in the course of the correspondence which follows, but he had also personal scruples against editing them, of the same character as those which had already so long prevented their author himself from publishing them. He shrank from the public clamour in which it would involve him, and the injury it might do to his prospects

of preferment from the Crown. When he met Hume at Morpeth accordingly he laid his mind fully before his friend, and the result was that Hume agreed to leave the whole question of publication or no publication absolutely to Smith's discretion, and on reaching London sent Smith a formal letter of authority empowering him to deal with the *Dialogues* as he judged best.

London, *3rd May 1776*.

My dear Friend — I send you enclosed a new ostensible letter, conformably to your desire. I think, however, your scruples groundless. Was Mallet anywise hurt by his publication of Lord Bolingbroke? He received an office afterwards from the present king and Lord Bute, the most prudent men in the world, and he always justified himself by his sacred regard to the will of a dead friend. At the same time I own that your scruples have a specious appearance, but my opinion is that if upon my death you determine never to publish these papers, you should leave them sealed up with my brother and family, with some inscription that you reserve to yourself the power of reclaiming them whenever you think proper. If I live a few years longer I shall publish them myself. I consider an observation of Rochefoucault that the wind, though it extinguishes a candle, blows up a fire.

You may be surprised to hear me talk of living years, considering the state you saw me in and the sentiments both I and all my friends at Edinburgh entertained on that subject. But though I cannot come up entirely to the sanguine notions of our friend John, I find myself very much recovered on the road, and I hope Bath waters and further journies may effect my cure.

By the little company I have seen I find the town very full of your book, which meets with general approbation. Many people think particular parts disputable, but this you certainly expected. I am glad that I am one of the number, as these parts will be the subject of future conversation between us. I set out for Bath, I believe, on Monday, by Sir John Pringle's directions. He says that he sees nothing to be apprehended in my case. If you write to me (hem! hem!) — I say if you write to me, send your letter under cover to Mr. Strahan, who will have my direction.

The ostensible letter which accompanied the other is —

London, *3rd May 1776*.

My Dear Sir — After reflecting more maturely on that article of my will by which I leave you the disposal of all my papers, with a request that you should publish my *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, I have become sensible that both on account of the nature of the work and

of your situation it may be improper to hurry on that publication. I therefore take the present opportunity of qualifying that friendly request. I am content to leave it entirely to your discretion at what time you will publish that piece, or whether you will publish it at all.

You will find among my papers a very inoffensive piece called “My Own Life,” which I composed a few days before I left Edinburgh, when I thought, as did all my friends, that my life was despaired of. There can be no objection that the small piece should be sent to Messrs. Strahan and Cadell and the proprietors of my other works, to be prefixed to any future edition of them.

The ink of those letters was scarcely dry before Hume’s heart softened again towards his *Dialogues*, and in order to make more sure of their eventual publication than he could feel while they were entrusted to Smith’s hands, he wrote Strahan from Bath on the 8th of June asking if he would agree to act as literary executor and undertake the editing and publishing of the work. In this letter he says: “I have hitherto forborne to publish it because I was of late desirous to live quietly and keep remote from all clamour, for though it be not more exceptionable than some things I had formerly published, yet you know some of them were thought exceptionable, and in prudence perhaps I ought to have suppressed them. I there introduce a sceptic who is indeed refuted and at last gives up the argument; nay, confesses that he was only amusing himself by all his cavils, yet before he is silenced he advances several topics which will give umbrage and will be deemed for bold and free as well as much out of the common road. As soon as I arrive at Edinburgh I intend to print a small edition of 500, of which I may give away about 100 in presents, and shall make you the property of the whole, provided you have no scruple, in your present situation, of being the editor. It is not necessary you should prefix any name to the Title-page. I seriously declare that after Mr. Miller and you and Mr. Cadell have publicly avowed your publication of the *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, I know no reason why you should have the least scruple with regard to these *Dialogues*. They will be much less obnoxious to the Law and not more exposed to popular clamour. Whatever your resolution be, I beg you would keep an entire silence on this subject. If I leave them to you by will, your executing the desire of a dead friend will render the publication still more excusable. Mallet never suffered anything by being the editor of Bolingbroke’s works.”

Strahan agreed to undertake this duty, and Hume on the 12th of June added a codicil to his will making Strahan his literary executor and entire master of all his manuscripts. Hume, however, got rapidly worse in health, so that he never printed the small edition he spoke of, and feeling his end to be near, he added a fresh codicil to his will on the 7th of August, desiring Strahan to publish the *Dialogues* within two years, and adding that if they were not published in two years and a half the property should return to his nephew (afterwards Baron of Exchequer), "whose duty," he says, "in publishing them, as the last request of his uncle, must be approved of by all the world."

Hume had meanwhile on the 4th of July 1776 gathered his group of more intimate friends about him to eat together a last farewell dinner before he made the great departure. Smith was present at this touching and unusual reunion, and may possibly have remained some days thereafter, for he speaks in a letter in the following month of having had several conversations with Hume lately, among them being that which he afterwards published in his letter to Strahan. But he was in Kirkcaldy again in the beginning of August, and received there on the 22nd of August the following letter which Hume had written on the 15th, and which, having gone, through some mistake, by the carrier instead of the post, had lain for a week at the carrier's house without being delivered. The delay occasioned by this accident was the more unfortunate on account of the earnest appeal for an early answer with which the letter closes, and which seems to contain a recollection of many past transgressions, for Smith was always a dilatory and backward correspondent, the act of writing, as he repeatedly mentions, being a real pain to him.

Edinburgh, *15th August 1776*.

My Dear Smith — I have ordered a new copy of my *Dialogues* to be made besides that wh. will be sent to Mr. Strahan, and to be kept by my nephew. If you will permit me, I shall order a third copy to be made and consigned to you. It will bind you to nothing, but will serve as a security. On revising them (which I have not done these five years) I find that nothing can be more cautiously and more artfully written. You had certainly forgotten them. Will you permit me to leave you the property of the copy, in case they should not be published in five years after my decease? Be so good as write me an answer soon. My state of health does not permit me to wait months for it. — Yours affectionately,

David Hume.

To this letter Smith, immediately on receiving it, sent the following reply: —

Kirkaldy, *22nd August 1776*.

My Dearest Friend — I have this moment received yr. letter of the 15th inst. You had, in order to save me the sum of one penny sterling, sent it by the carrier instead of the Post, and (if you have not mistaken the date) it has lain at his quarters these eight days, and was, I presume, very likely to lie there for ever.

I shall be very happy to receive a copy of your *Dialogues*, and if I should happen to die before they are published, I shall take care that my copy shall be as carefully preserved as if I was to live a hundred years. With regard to leaving me the property in case they are not published within five years after yr. decease, you may do as you think proper. I think, however, you should not menace Strahan with the loss of anything, in case he does not publish yr. work within a certain time. There is no probability of his delaying it, and if anything could make him delay it, it wd. be a clause of this kind, wh. wd. give him an honourable pretence for doing so. It would then be said I had published, for the sake of an emolument, not from respect to the memory of my friend, what even a printer, for the sake of the same emolument, had not published. That Strahan is sufficiently jealous you will see by the enclosed letter, wh. I will beg the favour of you to return to me, but by the Post, and not by the carrier.

If you will give me leave I will add a few lines to yr. account of your own life, giving some account in my own name of your behaviour in this illness, if, contrary to my own hopes, it should prove your last. Some conversations we had lately together, particularly that concerning your want of an excuse to make to Charon, the excuse you at last thought of, and the very bad reception wh. Charon was likely to give it, would, I imagine, make no disagreeable part of the history. You have in a declining state of health, under an exhausting disease, for more than two years together now looked at the approach of death with a steady cheerfulness such as very few men have been able to maintain for a few hours, tho’ otherwise in the most perfect Health.

I shall likewise, if you give me leave, correct the sheets of the new edition of your works, and shall take care that it shall be published exactly according to your last corrections. As I shall be at London this winter, it will cost me very little trouble.

All this I have written upon the supposition that the event of yr. disease should prove different from what I still hope it may do. For your

spirits are so good, the spirit of life is still so very strong in you, and the progress of your disorder is so slow and gradual, that I still hope it may take a turn. Even the cool and steady Dr. Black, by a letter I received from him last week, seems not to be averse to the same hopes.

I hope I need not repeat to you that I am ready to wait on you whenever you wish to see me. Whenever you do so I hope you will not scruple to call on me. I beg to be remembered in the kindest and most respectful manner to yr. Brother, your sister, your nephew, and all other friends. — I ever am, my dearest friend, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Hume answered this letter next day.

Edinburgh, *23rd August 1776*.

My Dearest Friend — I am obliged to make use of my nephew's hand in writing to you, as I do not rise to-day.

There is no man in whom I have a greater confidence than Mr. Strahan, yet I have left the property of that manuscript to my nephew David, in case by any accident it should not be published within three years after my decease. The only accident I could foresee was one to Mr. Strahan's life, and without this clause my nephew would have had no right to publish it. Be so good as to inform Mr. Strahan of this circumstance.

You are too good in thinking any trifles that concern me are so much worth of your attention, but I give you entire liberty to make what additions you please to the account of my life.

I go very fast to decline, and last night had a small fever, wh. I hoped might put a quicker period to this tedious illness, but unluckily it has in a great measure gone off. I cannot submit to your coming over here on my account, as it is possible for me to see you so small a portion of the day, but Dr. Black can better inform you concerning the degree of strength which may from time to time remain with me. — Adieu, my dearest friend,

David Hume.

P.S. — It was a strange blunder to send yr. letter by the carrier.

These were the last words of this long and memorable friendship. Two days after they were written Hume passed peacefully away, and his bones were laid in the new cemetery on the Calton Crags, and covered a little later, according to his own express provision, with that great round tower, designed by Robert Adam, which Smith once pointed out to the Earl of Dunmore as they were walking together down the North Bridge,

and said, “I don’t like that monument; it is the greatest piece of vanity I ever saw in my friend Hume.”

Smith was no doubt at the funeral, and seems to have been present when the will was read, and to have had some conversation about it with Hume’s elder brother, John Home of Ninewells, for on the 31st of August he writes from Dalkeith House, where he had gone on a visit to his old pupil, discharging Ninewells of any obligation to pay the legacy of £200 which he had been left by Hume in consideration of acting as his literary executor, and which had not been revoked in the codicil superseding him by Strahan. This legacy Smith felt that he could not in the circumstances honourably accept, and he consequently lost no time in forwarding to Ninewells the following letter: —

Dalkeith House, *31st August 1776*.

Dear Sir — As the Duke proposes to stay here till Thursday next I may not have an opportunity of seeing you before yr. return to Ninewells. I therefore take the opportunity of discharging you and all others concerned of the Legacy which you was so good as to think might upon a certain event become due to me by your Brother’s will, but which I think could upon no event become so, viz. the legacy of two hundred pounds sterling. I hereby therefore discharge it for ever, and least this discharge should be lost I shall be careful to mention it in a note at the bottom of my will. I shall be glad to hear that you have received this letter, and hope you will believe me to be, both on yr. Brother’s account and your own, with great truth, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

P.S. — I do not hereby mean to discharge the other Legacy, viz. that of a copy of his works.

Mr. Home answered him on the 2nd of September as follows: —

Dear Sir — I was favoured with yours of Saturday, and I assure you that on perusing the destination I was more of oppinion than when I saw you that the pecuniary part of it was not altered by the codicil, and that it was intended for you at all events, that my brother, knowing your liberal way of thinking, laid on you something as an equivalent, not imagining you would refuse a small gratuity from the hands it was to come from as a testimony of his friendship, and tho’ I most highly esteem the motives and manner, I cannot agree to accept of your renunciation, but leave you full master to dispose of it which way is most agreeable to you.

The copys of the *Dialogues* are finished, and of the life, and will be sent to Mr. Strahan to-morrow, and I will mention to him your intention of adding to the last something to finish so valuable a life, and will leave

you at liberty to look into the correction of the first as it either answers your leisure or ideas with regard to his composition or what effects you think it may have with regard to yourself. The two copys intended for you will be left with my sister when you please to require them, and the copy of the new edition of his works you shall be sure to receive, tho' you have, no better title to that part than the other, tho' much you have to the friendship and esteem, dr. sir, of him who is most sincerely yours,

John Home.

Edinburgh, *2nd September 1776*.

Smith's reply was that though the legacy might be due to him in strict law, he was fully satisfied it was not due to him in justice, because it was expressly given in the will as a reward for a task which he had declined to undertake. This reply was given in a letter of the 7th October, in which he enclosed a copy of the account of Hume's death which he proposed to add to his friend's own account of his life.

Dear Sir — I send you under the same cover with this letter what I propose should be added to the account which your never-to-be-forgotten brother has left of his own life. When you have read it I beg you will return it to me, and at the same time let me know if you wd. wish to have anything either added to it or taken from it. I think there is a propriety in addressing it as a letter to Mr. Strahan, to whom he has left the care of his works. If you approve of it I shall send it to him as soon as I receive it from you.

I have added at the bottom of my will the note discharging the legacy of two hundred pounds which your brother was so kind as to leave me. Upon the most mature deliberation I am fully satisfied that in justice it is not due to me. Tho' it should be due to me therefore in strict law, I cannot with honour accept of it. You will easily believe that my refusal does not proceed from any want of the highest respect for the memory of your deceased brother. — I have the honour to be, with the highest respect and esteem, dear sir, most sincerely and affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Kirkaldy, Fifeshire, *7th October 1776*.

Mr. Home returned Smith's manuscript to him on the 14th of October, and expressed his entire approbation of it except "that as it is to be added to what is wrote in so short and simple a manner, he would have wished that the detail had been less minutely entered into, particularly of the journey which, being of a private concern and having drawn to no consequences, does not interest the publick," but still he expressed that

opinion, he said, with diffidence, and thought the piece would perhaps best stand as it was. He says, too, that instead of the words, “as my worst enemies could wish” in the remark to Dr. Dundas, he was told that the words his brother actually used were, “as my enemies, if I have any, could wish” — a correction which was adopted by Smith. And he repeats that by his interpretation of his brother’s will he considers the legacy to belong to Smith both in law and in equity.

Meanwhile Smith had also written Strahan from Dalkeith: —

My Dear Strahan — By a codicil to the will of our late most valuable friend Mr. Hume, the care of his manuscripts is left to you. Both from his will and from his conversation I understand that there are only two which he meant should be published — an account of his life and *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*. The latter, tho’ finely written, I could have wished had remained in manuscript to be communicated only to a few people. When you read the work you will see my reasons without my giving you the trouble of reading them in a letter. But he has ordered it otherwise. In case of their not being published within three years after his decease, he has left the property of them to his nephew. Upon my objecting to this clause as unnecessary and improper, he wrote to me by his nephew’s hand in the following terms: “There is no man in whom I have a greater confidence than Mr. Strahan, yet have I left the property of that manuscript to my nephew David, in case by any accident they should not be published within three years after my decease. The only accident I could foresee was one to Mr. Strahan’s life, and without this clause my nephew would have had no right to publish it. Be so good as inform Mr. Strahan of this circumstance.” Thus far this letter, which was dated on the 23rd of August. He dyed on the 25th at 4 o’clock afternoon. I once had persuaded him to leave it entirely to my discretion either to publish them at what time I thought proper, or not to publish them at all. Had he continued of this mind the manuscript should have been most carefully preserved, and upon my decease restored to his family; but it never should have been published in my lifetime. When you have read it you will perhaps think it not unreasonable to consult some prudent friend about what you ought to do.

I propose to add to his Life a very well authenticated account of his behaviour during his last illness. I must, however, beg that his life and those *Dialogues* may not be published together, as I am resolved for many reasons to have no concern in the publication of the *Dialogues*. His life, I think, ought to be prefixed to the next edition of his former works,

upon which he has made many very proper corrections, chiefly in what concerns the language. If this edition is published while I am at London, I shall revise the sheets and authenticate its being according to his last corrections. I promised him that I would do so.

If my mother's health will permit me to leave her, I shall be in London by the beginning of November. I shall write to Mr. Home to take my lodgings as soon as I return to Fife, which will be on Monday or Tuesday next. The Duke of Buccleugh leaves this on Sunday. Direct for me at Kirkaldy, Fifeshire, where I shall remain all the rest of the season. — I remain, my dear Strahan, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

Dalkeith House, *5th September 1776*.

Let me hear from you soon.

To this Strahan replied on the 16th of September, and then towards the end of October Smith wrote the following answer, of which the first draft, in Smith's own handwriting, unsigned and undated and containing considerable erasures, exists in the R.S.E. Library. It shows that Smith submitted his account of Hume's illness to the whole circle of Hume's intimate friends, and that at the moment of writing he was waiting for the arrival of John Home, the poet, in Edinburgh, to obtain his remarks upon it.

Dear Sir — When I received your last letter I had not begun the small addition I proposed to make to the life of our late friend. It is now more than three weeks since I finished it, and sent one copy to his brother and another to Dr. Black. That which I sent to his brother is returned with remarks, all of which I approve of and shall adopt. Dr. Black waits for John Home, the Poet, who is expected every day in Edinburgh, whose remarks he proposes to send along with those of all our common friends. The work consists only of two sheets, in the form of a letter to you, but without one word of flattery or compliment. It will not cost my servant a forenoon to transcribe it, so that you will receive it by the first post after it is returned to me.

I am much obliged to you for so readily agreeing to print the life together with my additions separate from the *Dialogues*. I even flatter myself that this arrangement will contribute not only to my quiet but to your interest. The clamour against the *Dialogues*, if published first, might hurt for some time the sale of the new edition of his works, and when the clamour has a little subsided the *Dialogues* may hereafter occasion a quicker sale of another edition.

I do not propose being with you till the Christmas holidays; in the meantime I should be glad to know how things stand between us, what copies of my last book are either sold or unsold, and when the balance of our bargain is likely to be due to me. I beg my most respectful and affectionate compliments to Mr. Cadell; I should have written him, but you know the pain it gives me to write with my own hand, and I look upon writing to him and you as the same thing. I have been since I came to Scotland most exceedingly idle. It is partly in order to bring up in some measure my leeway that I propose to stay here two months longer than I once intended. If my presence, however, was at all necessary in London, I could easily set out immediately.

I beg the favour of you to send the enclosed to Mr. Home. The purpose of it is to bespeak my lodgings.

The second and third paragraphs of this letter as they stood at first are erased entirely, but their original substance is in no way altered in their corrected form. One of the original sentences about the clamour he dreaded may perhaps be transcribed. “I am still,” he says, “uneasy about the clamour which I foresee they will excite.” It may also be noticed that he does not seem to have dictated his account of Hume’s illness to his amanuensis, but to have written it with his own hand and then got his amanuensis to transcribe it. The Mr. Home whom he wishes to bespeak lodgings for him must be John Home the poet, in spite of the circumstance that he speaks of John Home the poet as being expected in Edinburgh every day at the time of writing; and in the event Home does not seem to have come to Edinburgh, for in a subsequent letter to Strahan on 13th of November Smith again mentions having written Mr. Home to engage lodgings for him from Christmas. This letter is as follows: —

Dear Sir — The enclosed is the small addition which I propose to make to the account which our late invaluable friend left of his own life.

I have received £300 of the copy money of the first edition of my book. But as I got a good number of copies to make presents of from Mr. Cadell, I do not exactly know what balance may be due to me. I should therefore be glad he would send me the account. I shall write to him upon this subject.

With regard to the next edition, my present opinion is that it should be printed in four vol. octavo; and I would propose that it should be printed at your expense, and that we should divide the profits. Let me know if this is agreeable to you.

My mother begs to be remembered to Mrs. Strahan and Miss Strahan, and thinks herself much obliged both to you and them for being so good

as to remember her. — I ever am, dear sir, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Kirkaldy, Fifeshire, *13th November 1776.*

I shall certainly be in town before the end of the Christmas holidays. I do not apprehend it can be necessary for me to come sooner. I have therefore written to Mr. Home to bespeak my lodgings from Christmas.

Strahan acknowledges this letter on the 26th of November, and asks Smith's opinion on an idea that has occurred to him of publishing the interesting series of letters from Hume to himself which he possessed, and which, after a curious and remarkable history, have been now preserved for the world through the liberality of Lord Rosebery and the learned devotion of Mr. Birkbeck Hill. To these letters Strahan, if he obtained Smith's concurrence, would like to add those of Hume to Smith himself, to John Home, to Robertson, and other friends, which have now for the most part been lost. But Smith put his foot on this proposal decisively, on the ground apparently that it was most improper for a man's friends to publish anything he had written which he had himself given no express direction or leave to publish either by his will or otherwise. Strahan's letter runs thus: —

Dear Sir — I received yours of the 13th enclosing the addition to Mr. Hume's Life, which I like exceedingly. But as the whole put together is very short and will not make a volume even of the *smallest size*, I have been advised by some very good judges to annex some of his letters to me on political subjects. What think you of this? I will do nothing without your advice and approbation, nor would I for the world publish any letter of his but such as in yr. opinion would do him honour. Mr. Gibbon thinks such as I have shown him would have that tendency. Now if you approve of this in any manner, you may perhaps add partly to the collection from your own cabinet and those of Mr. John Home, Dr. Robertson, and others of your mutual friends which you may pick up before you return hither. But if you wholly disapprove of this scheme say nothing of it, here let it drop, for without your concurrence I will not publish a single word of his. I should be glad, however, of your sentiments as soon as you can, and let me know at the same time as nearly as may be what day you purpose to be in London, for I must again repeat to you that without your approbation I will do nothing.

Your proposal to print the next edition of your work in 4 vols. octavo at *our* expense and to divide the Profits is a very fair one, and therefore very agreeable to Mr. Cadell and me. Enclosed is the List of Books delivered to you of the 1st edit.

My wife and daughter join kindest compliments to your amiable Parent, who, I hope, is still able to enjoy your company, which must be her greatest comfort. — Dear sir, your faithful and affectionate humble servant,

Will. Strahan.

London, *26th November 1776*.

The following is Smith's reply: —

Dear Sir — It always gives me great uneasiness whenever I am obliged to give an opinion contrary to the inclination of my friend. I am sensible that many of Mr. Hume's letters would do him great honour, and that you would publish none but such as would. But what in this case ought principally to be considered is the will of the Dead. Mr. Hume's constant injunction was to burn all his Papers except the *Dialogues* and the account of his own life. This injunction was even inserted in the body of his will. I know he always disliked the thought of his letters ever being published. He had been in long and intimate correspondence with a relation of his own who dyed a few years ago. When that gentleman's health began to decline he was extremely anxious to get back his letters, least the heir should think of publishing them. They were accordingly returned, and burnt as soon as returned. If a collection of Mr. Hume's letters besides was to receive the public approbation, as yours certainly would, the Curls of the times would immediately set about rummaging the cabinets of all those who had ever received a scrap of paper from him. Many things would be published not fit to see the light, to the great mortification of all those who wish well to his memory. Nothing has contributed so much to sink the value of Swift's works as the undistinguished publication of his letters; and be assured that your publication, however select, would soon be followed by an undistinguished one. I should therefore be sorry to see any beginning given to the publication of his letters. His life will not make a volume, but it will make a small pamphlet. I shall certainly be in London by the tenth of January at furthest. I have a little business at Edinburgh which may detain me a few days about Christmas, otherwise I should be with you by the new year. I have a great deal more to say to you; but the post is just going. I shall write to Mr. Cadell by next post. — I ever am, dear sir, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Kirkaldy, *2nd December 1776*.

When we consider Smith's concern about the clamour he expected to arise from the *Dialogues*, and his entire unconcern about the clamour he did not expect to arise from the letter to Strahan on Hume's last illness, the actual event seems one of those teasing perversities which drew from Lord Bolingbroke the exclamation, "What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!" The *Dialogues* fell flat; the world had apparently had its surfeit of theological controversy. A contemporary German observer of things in England states that while the book made something of a sensation in his own country, it excited nothing of that sort here, and was already at the moment he wrote (1785) entirely forgotten.

The letter to Strahan, on the other hand, excited a long reverberation of angry criticism. Smith had certainly in writing it no thought of undermining the faith, or of anything more than speaking a good word for the friend he loved, and putting on record some things which he considered very remarkable when he observed them, but in the ear of that age his simple words rang like a challenge to religion itself. Men had always heard that without religion they could neither live a virtuous life nor die an untroubled death, and yet here was the foremost foe of Christianity represented as leading more than the life of the just, and meeting death not only without perturbation, but with a positive gaiety of spirits. His cheerfulness without frivolity, his firmness, his magnanimity, his charity, his generosity, his entire freedom from malice, his intellectual elevation and strenuous labour, are all described with the affection and confidence of a friend who had known them well; and they are finally summed up in the conclusion: "Upon the whole I have always considered him, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit."

Hume's character was certainly one of great beauty and nobleness, and churchmen who knew him well speak of him in quite as strong admiration as Smith. Robertson used to call him "the virtuous heathen"; Blair said every word Smith wrote about him was true; and Lord Hailes, a grave religious man and a public apologist of Christianity, showed sufficient approbation of this letter to translate it into Latin verse. But in the world generally it raised a great outcry. It was false, it was incredible, it was a wicked defiance of the surest verities of religion. Even Boswell calls it a piece of "daring effrontery," and as he thinks of it being done by his old professor, says, "Surely now have I more understanding than my teachers." Though nothing was further from the intention of the author, it was generally regarded as an attack upon religion, which imperatively

called for repulsion; and a champion soon appeared in the person of Dr. George Horne, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, author of a well-known commentary on the Psalms, and afterwards Bishop of Norwich. In an anonymous pamphlet, entitled “A Letter to Adam Smith, LL.D., on the Life, Death, and Philosophy of David Hume, Esq., by one of the People called Christians,” which ran rapidly through a number of editions, Horne, begging the whole question he raises, contends that a man of Hume’s known opinions could not by any possibility be the good and virtuous man Smith represented him to be, for had he been really generous, or compassionate, or good-natured, or charitable, or gentle-minded, he could never have thought of erasing from the hearts of mankind the knowledge of God and the comfortable faith in His fatherly care, or been guilty of “the atrocious wickedness of diffusing atheism through the land.” Horne goes on to charge this “atrocious wickedness” against Smith too. “You would persuade us,” he says, “by the example of David Hume, Esq., that atheism is the only cordial for low spirits and the proper antidote against the fear of death, but surely he who can reflect with complacency on a friend thus employing his talents in this life, and thus amusing himself with Lucian, whist, and Charon at his death, can smile over Babylon in ruins, esteem the earthquakes which destroyed Lisbon as agreeable occurrences, and congratulate the hardened Pharaoh on his overthrow in the Red Sea.”

Smith never wrote any reply to this attack, nor took any public notice of it whatever, though he had too much real human nature in him to agree with Bishop Horne’s own ethereal maxim that “a man reproached with a crime of which he knows himself to be innocent should feel no more uneasiness than if he was said to be ill when he felt himself in perfect health.” It was of course quite unjust to accuse Smith of atheism, or of desiring to propagate atheism. His published writings, which the Bishop ought in fairness to have consulted, show him to have been a Theist, and there is some ground for thinking that he believed Hume, as many others of Hume’s personal friends did, to have been a Theist likewise. Though Hume was philosophically a doubter about matter, about his own existence, about God, he did not practically think so differently from the rest of the world about any of the three as was often supposed. Dr. Carlyle always thought him a believer. Miss Mure of Caldwell, the sister of his great friend the Baron of Exchequer, says he was the most superstitious man she ever knew. He told Holbach that an atheist never existed, and once, while walking with Adam Ferguson on a beautiful clear night, he stopped suddenly and exclaimed, pointing to the

sky, “Can any one contemplate the wonders of that firmament and not believe that there is a God?” That Smith would not have been surprised to hear his friend make such a confession is apparent from the well-known anecdote told of his absence of mind in connection with Henry Mackenzie’s story of “La Roche.” That story was written soon after Hume’s death; it was published in the *Mirror* in 1779, while Horne’s agitation was raging; and the author introduced Hume as one of the characters of the piece for the very purpose of presenting this more favourable view of the great sceptic’s religious position with which Mackenzie had been impressed in his own intercourse with him. Hume appears in the story as a visitor in Switzerland, an inmate of the simple household of the pastor La Roche, and after describing him as being deeply taken with the sweet and unaffected piety of this family’s life and with the faith that sustained them in their troubles, the author goes on to observe, “I have heard him long after confess that there were moments when, amidst the pride of philosophical discovery and the pride of literary fame, he recalled to his mind the venerable figure of the good La Roche and wished he had never doubted.” Before publishing his story Mackenzie read it to Adam Smith, in order to be told whether anything should be omitted or altered as being out of keeping with Hume’s character, and so completely was Smith carried away by the verisimilitude that he not only said he found not a syllable to object to, but added that he was surprised he had never heard the anecdote before. In his absence of mind he had forgotten for the moment that he had been asked to listen to the story as a work of fiction, and his answer was the best compliment Mackenzie could receive to his fidelity to the probabilities of character.

CHAPTER XX. LONDON AGAIN — APPOINTED COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS

Smith remained at Kirkcaldy from May to December 1776, except for occasional visits to Edinburgh or Dalkeith, but his thoughts, as we have noticed from time to time, were again bent on London, as soon as his mother's health should permit of his leaving home. He seems to have enjoyed London thoroughly during his recent prolonged sojourn, and inspired some hopes in friends like Strahan that he might even settle there as a permanent place of residence. After his departure for Scotland in April Strahan used to write him from time to time a long letter of political news keeping him abreast of all that was going on, and in a letter of the 16th of September he says: "I hope your mother's health will not prevent you from returning hither at the time you propose. You know I once mentioned to you how happy I thought it would make you both if you could bring her along with you to spend the remainder of her days in this Place, but perhaps it will not be easy to remove her so far at this time of her life. I pray you offer her the respectful compliments of my family, who do not forget her genteel and hospitable reception at Kircaldy some years ago." The time Smith proposed to return, as he had written Strahan early in September, was November, but he afterwards put the journey off for two months on account of his own health, which had suffered from his long spell of literary labour, and was in need of more rest; and he might have postponed it still further but for the visit being necessary in order to carry the second edition of his work through the press. Early in January 1777 he is already in London, having found lodgings in Suffolk Street, near the British Coffee-House, and on the 14th of March we find him attending a dinner of the Literary Club, with Fox in the chair, and Gibbon, Garrick, Reynolds, Johnson, Burke, and Fordyce for the rest of the company.

His great work had not yet attracted much public notice. Its merits were being fully recognised by the learned, and it was already leaving its mark on the budget of the year; but it was probable Smith was more talked about in general company at the time for his letter to Strahan than for his *Wealth of Nations*. In one little literary circle he was being zealously but most unjustly decried for taking a shabby revenge on a worthy young Scotch poet who had ventured to differ from him in

opinion about the merits of the East India Company. Mickle, the author of the popular song “There’s nae luck aboot the hoose,” published his translation of the *Lusiad* of Camoens in 1775, and dedicated the book by permission to the Duke of Buccleugh, whose family had been his father’s patrons, and from whose interest he hoped to obtain some advancement himself. When the work appeared the author sent a nicely-bound presentation copy to the Duke, but received no acknowledgment, and at length a common friend waited on his Grace, and, says one of Mickle’s biographers, “heard with the indignation and contempt it deserved, a declaration that the work was at that time unread, and had been represented not to have the merit it had been first said to possess, and therefore nothing could be done on the subject of his mission.” A dedication in those days was often only a more dignified begging letter, and Mickle’s friends declared that he had been cruelly wronged, because the Duke had not only done nothing for him himself, but by accepting the dedication had prevented the author from going to some other patron who might have done something. Whatever could have been the reason for this sudden coolness of the Duke? Mickle and his little group of admirers declared it was all due to an ill word from the Duke’s great mentor, Adam Smith, whom they alleged to have borne Mickle a grudge for having in the preface to the *Lusiad* successfully exposed the futility of some of the views about the East India Company propounded in the *Wealth of Nations*.

But since the *Wealth of Nations* was only published in 1776, its opinions obviously could not, even with the vision and faculty divine of the poet, be commented on either favourably or unfavourably in the *Lusiad*, which was published in 1775. The comments on Smith’s views appeared first in subsequent editions of Mickle’s work, and were probably effects of the injury the author fancied himself to have suffered. Anyhow they could not have been its causes, and the whole story, so thoroughly opposed to the unusual tolerancy and benevolence of Smith’s character, merits no attention. It sprang manifestly from some imaginary suspicion of a sensitive minor poet, but Mickle used to denounce Smith without stint, and, thinking he had an opportunity for retaliation when the letter to Strahan appeared, he wrote a satire entitled, “An Heroic Epistle from Hume in the Shades to Dr. Adam Smith,” which he never published indeed, though he showed it about among his friends, but in which, says Sim, who had seen it, Smith and his noble pupil were rather roughly handled. Mickle afterwards burnt this *jeu d’esprit*, and very probably came to entertain better views of Smith, for he seems to have

been not only quick to suspect injuries, but ready after a space to perceive his error. He once inserted an angry note in one of his poems against Garrick, who had, as he imagined, used him ill; but going afterwards to see the great actor in *King Lear*, he listened to the first three acts without saying a word, and after a fine passage in the fourth, heaved a deep sigh, and turning to his companion said, “I wish that note was out of my book.” Had he foreseen the noise his several friends continued to make, even after his death, about this purely imaginary offence on the part of Adam Smith, the poet would not improbably wish the polemical prefaces out of his book. Smith did not think much of Mickle’s translation of the *Lusiad*, holding the French version to be much superior, but if he happened to express this unfavourable opinion to the Duke of Buccleugh, it could not have been with any thought of injuring a struggling and meritorious young author. He has never shown any such intolerance of public contradiction as Mickle’s friends chose to attribute to him. Dr. James Anderson, the first and true author of what is known as Ricardo’s theory of rent, won Smith’s friendship by a controversial pamphlet challenging some of his doctrines; Bentham won — what is rarer — his conversion from the doctrines impugned, and a very kindly letter still exists which Smith wrote to another hostile critic, Governor Pownall, and which I shall give here, as it was one of the first things he did after now arriving in London. Pownall had been Governor of Massachusetts, a man of much activity of mind and experience of affairs, and author of respectable works on the *Principles of Polity*, the *Administration of the Colonies*, and the *Middle States of America*. He was one of the forty-two persons to whom the authorship of the letters of Junius has been attributed. He differed strongly from many of Smith’s views, especially from his condemnation of the monopoly of the colonial trade, and wrote a pamphlet setting forth his criticisms in the form of a letter to Adam Smith. This pamphlet Smith received in Edinburgh, just before his departure for London, and when he arrived he wrote the Governor as follows: —

Sir — I received the day before I left Edinburgh the very great honour of your letter. Though I arrived here on Sunday last, I have been almost from the day of my arrival confined by a cold, which I caught upon the road; otherwise I should before this time have done myself the honour of waiting on you in person, and of thanking you for the very great politeness with which you have everywhere treated me. There is not, I give you my word, in your whole letter a single syllable relating to myself which I could wish to have altered, and the publication of your

remarks does me much more honour than the communication of them by a private letter could have done.

I hope in a few days to have the honour of waiting on you, and of discussing in person with you both the points on which we agree and those on which we differ. Whether you will think me, what I mean to be, a fair disputant, I know not; I can venture to promise you will not find me an irascible one. In the meantime I have the honour to be, with the highest respect and esteem, etc. etc.

Adam Smith.

Suffolk Street, *12th January 1777*.

The gentleman who forwarded this letter to the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1795, but whose name is not published, states, in further evidence, as he says, of Smith's liberality of mind, that "he altered in his second edition some of the parts objected to, and instead of a reply, sent to Governor Pownall a printed copy of this second edition so altered, and there all contest closed." Smith, however, does not appear to have made any such alterations. In feet, in the second edition he hardly made more than three or four alterations, and these were confined to the introduction of an additional fact or two in confirmation of his argument; and besides, when we refer to Pownall's pamphlet we find that their differences were all about points on which Smith's views were mature and the Governor's raw.

Smith probably remained most of the year 1777 in London, for, as we have seen, one of his reasons for being there was to see the second edition of his work through the press, and the second edition of his work did not appear till 1778. But he was back in Kirkcaldy again before December, and while there he received from Lord North the appointment of Commissioner of Customs in Scotland, vacant through the death of Mr. Archibald Menzies. The offence he unexpectedly gave to the world's religious sensibilities by his account of Hume's last days had not interfered, as he feared such an offence would, with his prospects of employment in the public service, nor, what is quite as remarkable, had his political opinions. For he was always a strong Whig, and the preferment was bestowed by a Tory ministry. It is usually attributed to the influence of the Duke of Buccleugh and Henry Dundas, then a member of the ministry as Lord Advocate for Scotland, and their word may no doubt have helped; but there is reason to believe that the appointment was really a direct reward to the author of the *Wealth of Nations* for the benefit Lord North, who was Chancellor of the

Exchequer as well as Prime Minister, derived from that book in preparing the budgets for the years 1777 and 1778. Smith himself, in a letter to Strahan which will presently appear () attributes the appointment largely to the favour of Sir Grey Cooper, who had been Secretary to the Treasury since 1765, and was naturally Lord North's right-hand man in the preparation of his budgets. At the time the *Wealth of Nations* appeared the English Chancellor of the Exchequer was at his wits' end for fresh and convenient and easy means of increasing the revenue to carry on the American war, and the book was a mine of suggestions to him. He imposed two new taxes in 1777, of which he got the idea there, — one on man-servants, estimated by him to bring in £105,000, though in the event it yielded only £18,000, and the other on property sold by auction, which was to bring in £37,000; but in the budget of 1778, which he would have under consideration at the very moment of Smith's appointment, he introduced two new taxes recommended by Smith, — the inhabited house duty, estimated to yield £264,000, and the malt tax, estimated to yield £310,000. Under those circumstances Smith's appointment to the Commissionership of Customs is to be regarded not as a private favour to the Duke of Buccleugh, but as an express recognition on the part of the Premier of the public value of Smith's work, and the more honourable because rendered to a political opponent who had condemned important parts of the ministerial policy — their American policy, for example — in his recent work.

The appointment was worth £600 a year, — £500 for the Commissionership of Customs and £100 for the Commissionership of the Salt Duties; and Smith still retained his pension of £300 from the House of Buccleugh. When he obtained this place he thought himself bound in honour to give up his Buccleugh pension, possibly because of the assistance he may have believed the Duke to have given in securing it; but he was informed that the pension was meant to be permanent and unconditional, and that if he were consulting his own honour in offering to give it up, he was not thinking of the honour of the Duke of Buccleugh. Smith now settled in Edinburgh accordingly with an assured income of £900 a year, and £900 a year was a comparatively princely revenue in the Scottish capital at a time when a Lord of Session had only £700 a year, and a professor in the best chair in the University seldom made as much as £300.

Though the appointment was made probably in November 1777, Smith did not receive the Commission till January 1778, and there were

still fees to pay and other business to transact about the matter, which he got Strahan to do for him. That occasioned the following letters: —

Dear Sir — The last letter I had the pleasure of receiving from you congratulated me upon my being appointed one of the Commissioners of Customs in Scotland. You told me at the same time that you had dined that day with Sir Grey Cooper, and that you had both been so good as to speak very favourably of me. I have received from London several other congratulations of the same kind. But I have not yet received, nor has the office here received, any official information that any such appointment had been made. It is possible that the Commission is not made out on account of the fees. If this is the case, you may either draw upon me for the amount, which I understand to be about £160, or you may write to me, and I shall by return of post remit you the money to London. Whatever be the cause of the delay, I beg you will endeavour to find it out and let me know as soon as possible, that I may at least be at the end of my hope. Remember me most affectionately to all your family, and believe me to be, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *20th December 1777*.

Neither you nor Mr. Cadell have wrote me anything concerning the new Edition of my Book. Is it published? does it sell well? does it sell ill? does it sell at all? I left directions with Mr. Cadell to send copies of it to several of my friends. If John Hunter was not among the number, put him in *ex dono authoris*, and desire Cadell to send me the account of the whole, that I may pay it. I should write to him, but it would only be plaguing him. If you draw upon me make your bill payable at five days' sight. I return to Kirkaldy on Christmas Day.

On returning to Kirkcaldy Smith again wrote Strahan: —

Dear Sir — I should have sent you the enclosed bill the day after I received your letter accompanyed with a note from Mr. Spottiswood, had not Mr. Charteris, the Solicitor of the Customs here, told me that the fees were not paid in London, but at Edinburgh, where Mr. Shadrach Moyes acted as receiver and agent for the officers of the treasury at London. I have drawn the bill for £120, in order to pay, first, what you have advanced for me; secondly, the exchange between Edinburgh and London; and lastly, the account which I shall owe to Mr. Cadell, after he has delivered the presents I desired him to make of the second edition of my book. To this I beg he will add two copies, handsomely bound and guilt (*sic*), one to Lord North, the other to Sir Gray Cooper. I received Sir Gray's letter, and shall write to him as soon as the new Commission

arrives, in order not to trouble him with answering two Letters. I believe that I have been very highly obliged to him in this business. I shall not say anything to you of the obligations I owe you for the concern you have shewn and the diligence you have exerted on my account. Remember me to Mr. Spottiswood. I shall write to him as soon as the affair is over. Would it be proper to send him any present or fee? I am much obliged to him, and should be glad to express my sense of it in every way in my power.

I would not make any alteration in my title-page on account of my new office.

Remember me to Mrs. and Miss Strahan, likewise to the Homes and the Hunters. How does the Painter go on? I hope he thrives. — I ever am, my dear sir, most faithfully and affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Kirkaldy, *14th January 1777*.

The Mr. Spottiswood mentioned in this letter was a nephew of Strahan, and no doubt an ancestor of Strahan's present successor in his printing business. The Hunters are John and William Hunter, the Homes are John Home and his wife, and the painter is Allan Ramsay.

In the course of a fortnight the Commission arrived, and Smith then wrote Strahan again: —

Edinburgh, *5th February 1778*.

My Dear Strahan — I received the Commission in due course, and have now to thank you for your great attention to my interest in every respect, but above all, for your generosity in so readily forgiving the sally of bad humour which, in consequence of General Skeenes, who meant too very well, most unreasonably broke out upon you. I can only say in my own vindication that I am not very subject to such sallies, and that upon the very few occasions on which I have happened to fall into them, I have soon recovered from them. I am told that no commission ever came so soon to Edinburgh, many having been delayed 3 weeks or a month after appearing in the Gazette. This extraordinary despatch I can impute to nothing but your friendly diligence and that of Mr. Spottiswood, to whom I beg to be remembered in the most respectful manner.

You have made a small mistake in stating our account. You credit me with £150 only, instead of £170; the first bill for £120, the second for £50. Cadell, however, still remains unpaid. As soon as I understand he has delivered the books, or before it, if he will send me the account of

them, I shall send him the money. — I ever am, dear sir, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

What was the cause of Smith's outbreak of very unhabitual irritation with Strahan on the occasion alluded to in this letter, I cannot say, nor probably does it in the least matter. His temper, indeed, was one of unusual serenity and constancy, and but for his own confession in this letter, we should never have known that it was liable, like others, to occasional perturbations, from which it appears, however, he speedily recovered, and of which he is evidently heartily ashamed. General Skeenes was probably one of his relations, the Skenes of Pitlour.

The money transactions mentioned in the concluding paragraph refer doubtless to his Commission fees, which from some calculations made, probably by Strahan, on the back of the letter, seem to have come to £147:18s. But the reference to Mr. Cadell's account shows that the second edition of his book had now appeared. It was not published in four volumes octavo, as he originally proposed to Strahan, but, like the former edition, in two volumes quarto, and the price was now raised from £1:16s. to two guineas, so that under the half-profit arrangement which was agreed upon, he must have obtained a very reasonable sum out of this edition, and we can understand how, from the four authorised editions published during his lifetime, he made, according to his friend Professor Dalzel, a "genteel fortune," as genteel fortunes went in those days.

CHAPTER XXI. IN EDINBURGH

1778-1790. *Aet.* 55-67

On settling in Edinburgh Smith took a house in the Canongate — Panmure House, at the foot of Panmure Close, one of the steep and narrow wynds that descend from the north side of the Canongate towards the base of the Calton Hill; and this house was his home for the rest of his days, and in it he died. The Canongate — the old Court end of the Scottish capital — was still at the close of last century the fashionable residential quarter of the city, although Holyrood had then long lain deserted — as Hamilton of Bangour called it,

A virtuous palace where no monarch dwells.

The Scottish nobility had their town-houses in its gloomy courts, and great dowagers and famous generals still toiled up its cheerless stairs. Panmure House itself had been the residence of the Panmure family before Smith occupied it, and became the residence of the Countess of Aberdeen after his death. Most of his own more particular friends too — the better aristocracy of letters and science — lived about him here. If it was to Edinburgh, as Gibbon remarks, that "taste and philosophy seemed to have retired from the smoke and hurry of the immense capital of London," it was in the ancient smoke and leisure of the Canongate they found their sanctuary. Robertson flitted out, indeed, to the Grange House; Black — Smith's special crony in this Edinburgh period — to the present Blind Asylum in Nicolson Street, then a country villa; and Adam Ferguson to a place at the Sciennes which, though scarce two miles from the Cross, was thought so outrageously remote by the people of the compact little Edinburgh of those days, that his friends always called it Kamtschatka, as if it lay in the ends of the earth. But Kames and Hailes still lived in New Street, Sir John Dalrymple and Monboddo and many other notabilities in St. John Street, Cullen in the Mint, and Dugald Stewart in the Lothian Hut (the town-house of the Marquis of Lothian) in the Horse Wynd.

Panmure House is still standing. It is a much more modern structure than the houses near it, having been built towards the middle of last century; and although its rooms are now mostly tenantless, and its garden a cooper's yard, it wears to this day an air of spacious and substantial comfort which is entirely wanting in the rest of the neighbourhood.

William Windham, the statesman, who dined in it repeatedly when he was in Edinburgh with Burke in 1785, thought it a very stately house indeed for a philosopher. “House magnificent,” he enters in his diary, “and place fine,” and one can still imagine how it would appear so when the plastered walls were yet white, and the eye looked over the long strip of terraced garden on to the soft green slopes of the Calton. There was then no building of any kind on or about the Calton Hill, except the Observatory, and Dugald Stewart, who was very fond of rural scenery, always said that the great charm of his own house a few closes up was its view of the Calton crags and braes.

Smith brought over his mother and his cousin, Miss Douglas, from Kirkcaldy, and a few months later the youngest son of his cousin, Colonel Douglas of Strathendry, who was to attend school and college with a view to the bar, and whom he made his heir. Windham, after visiting them, makes the same note twice in his diary, “Felt strongly the impression of a family completely Scotch.” Smith’s house was noted for its simple and unpretending hospitality. He liked to have his friends about him without the formality of an invitation, and few strangers of distinction visited Edinburgh without being entertained in Panmure House. His Sunday suppers were still remembered and spoken of in Edinburgh when M’Culloch lived there as a young man. Scotch Sabbatarianism had not at that time reached the rigour that came in with the evangelical revival in the beginning of this century, and the Sunday supper was a regular Edinburgh institution. Even the Evangelical leaders patronised it. Lord Cockburn and Mrs. Somerville both speak with very agreeable recollections of the Sunday supper parties of the Rev. Sir Harry Moncreiff, and Boswell mentions being invited to one by another Evangelical leader, Dr. Alexander Webster.

His mother, his friends, his books — these were Smith’s three great joys. He had a library of about 3000 volumes, as varied a collection in point of subject-matter as it would be possible to find. Professor Shield Nicholson, who saw a large portion of it, says: “I was most struck by the large number of books of travel and of poetry, of some of which there were more than one edition, and occasionally *éditions de luxe*. I had hoped to find marginal notes or references which might have thrown light on the authorities of some passages in the *Wealth of Nations* (for Smith gives no references), but even the ingenious oft-quoted author of the *Tracts on the Corn Laws* has escaped without a mark. At the same time pamphlets have been carefully bound together and indexes prefixed in Smith’s own writing.”

Mr. James Bonar has been able to collect a list of probably two-thirds of Smith's books — about 1000 books, or 2200 volumes. Nearly a third of the whole are in French, another third in Latin, Greek, and Italian, and a little more than a third in English. According to Mr. Bonar's analysis, a fifth of them were on Literature and Art; a fifth were Latin and Greek classics; a fifth on Law, Politics, and Biography; a fifth on Political Economy and History; and the remaining fifth on Science and Philosophy. One cannot help remarking, as an indication of the economist's tastes, the almost complete absence of works in theology and prose fiction. Hume's *Dialogues on Natural Religion* and Pascal's *Pensées* belong as much to philosophy as theology; Jeremy Taylor's *Antiquitates Christianae*, Father Paul Sarpi's *History of the Council of Trent*, and Ruchat's *Histoire de la Reformation de la Suisse* belong as much to history; and except these the only representatives of theology on Smith's shelves were the English Bible, Watson's edition, 1722 — probably his parents' family Bible — a French translation of the Koran, and Van Maestricht's *Theologia*. The only sermons, except those of Massillon in French, are the *Sermons of Mr. Yorick*. Those sermons, however, were the only representative of Sterne. Goldsmith was represented by his poems, but not by his fiction; and Defoe, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollett were not represented at all. One or two French novels were there, but except Gulliver, which came in with the complete edition of Swift's works in 1784, the only English novel Smith seems to have possessed was the *Man of the World*, by his friend Henry Mackenzie. It is perhaps stranger that he ignored the novel than that he ignored theology, for the novel was then a very rising and popular literary form, and Smith began life as a professed literary critic. His mind seems to have been too positive to care much for tales. On the other hand, of the Greek and Latin classics he not unfrequently had several different editions. He had eight, for example, of *Horace*, who seems to have been an especial favourite.

Like most men who are fond of books, he seems to have bound them well, and often elegantly. Smellie, the printer, says that the first time he happened to be in Smith's library he was "looking at the books with some degree of curiosity, and perhaps surprise, for most of the volumes were elegantly, and some of them superbly bound," when Smith, observing him, said, "You must have remarked that I am a beau in nothing but my books." M'Culloch, however, who had seen the books, doubts whether their condition warranted the account given of them by Smellie, and says that while they were neatly, and in some cases even

elegantly bound, he saw few or none of which the binding could with propriety be called superb.

The Custom House was on the upper floors of the Royal Exchange, in Exchange Square, off the High Street; and Kay, standing in his shop over at the corner of the Parliament Close, must often have seen Smith walk past from his house to his office in the morning exactly as he has depicted him in one of his portraits, — in a light-coloured coat, probably linen; knee-breeches, white silk stockings, buckle shoes, and flat broad-brimmed beaver hat; walking erect with a bunch of flowers in his left hand, and his cane, held by the middle, borne on his right shoulder, as Smellie tells us was Smith's usual habit, "as a soldier carries his musket." When he walked his head always moved gently from side to side, and his body swayed, Smellie says, "vermicularly," as if at each alternate step "he meant to alter his direction, or even to turn back." Often, moreover, his lips would be moving all the while, and smiling in rapt conversation with invisible companions. A very noticeable figure he was as he went up and down the High Street, and he used to tell himself the observations of two market women about him as he marched past them one day. "Hegh sirs!" said one, shaking her head significantly. "And he's weel put on too!" rejoined the other, surprised that one who appeared from his dress to be likely to have friends should be left by them to walk abroad alone.

There were five Commissioners in the Scotch Board of Customs, but Smith's colleagues were none of them men of any public reputation at the time, and they are now mere names; but the name of the Secretary of the Board, R.E. Phillips, may be mentioned for the circumstance that, after living to the great age of 104, he was buried — for what reason I know not — in the same grave with Adam Smith in Canongate Churchyard. The business of the office was mostly of a routine and simple character: considering appeals from merchants against the local collector's assessments; the appointment of a new officer here, the suppression of one there; a report on a projected colliery; a plan for a lighthouse, a petition from a wine importer, or the owner of a bounty sloop; a representation about the increase of illicit trade in Orkney, or the appearance of smuggling vessels in the Minch; the despatch of troops to repress illegal practices at some distillery, or to watch a suspected part of the coast; the preparation of the annual returns of income and expenditure, the payment of salaries, and transmission of the balance to the Treasury.

Smith attended to those duties with uncommon diligence; he says himself, in his letter to the Principal of Glasgow College in 1787 on his appointment to the Rectorship, that he was so regular an attendant at the Custom House that he could “take the play for a week at any time” without giving offence or provoking comment. He was evidently a very conscientious and on the whole, no doubt, a satisfactory administrator, though he may have been in some things slower than a clerk bred to business would have been, and caused occasionally a ludicrous mistake through his incidental absence of mind. Sir Walter Scott relates two anecdotes illustrative of that weakness, on the authority of one of Smith’s colleagues on the Board of Customs. Having one day to sign an official document as Commissioner, Smith, instead of signing his own name, wrote an imitation of the signature of the Commissioner who had written before him. The other story, though, possibly enough, embellished unconsciously by the teller in some details, is yet of too distinct and peculiar a character to be easily rejected, and for the same reason will best be given in Scott’s own words: —

“That Board (the Board of Customs) had in their service as porter a stately person, who, dressed in a huge scarlet gown or cloak covered with frogs of worsted lace, and holding in his hand a staff about seven feet high as an emblem of his office, used to mount guard before the Custom House when a Board was to be held. It was the etiquette that as each Commissioner entered the porter should go through a sort of salute with his staff of office, resembling that which officers used formerly to perform through their spontoon, and then marshal the dignitary to the hall of meeting. This ceremony had been performed before the great economist perhaps five hundred times. Nevertheless one day, as he was about to enter the Custom House, the motions of this janitor seem to have attracted his eye without their character or purpose reaching his apprehension, and on a sudden he began to imitate his gestures as a recruit does those of his drill serjeant. The porter having drawn up in front of the door, presented his staff as a soldier does his musket. The Commissioner, raising his cane and holding it with both hands by the middle, returned the salute with the utmost gravity. The inferior officer, much annoyed, levelled his weapon, wheeled to the right, stepping a pace back to give the Commissioner room to pass, lowering his staff at the same time in token of obeisance. Dr. Smith, instead of passing on, drew up on the opposite side and lowered his cane to the same angle. The functionary, much out of consequence, next moved upstairs with his staff upraised, while the author of the *Wealth of Nations* followed with his

bamboo in precisely the same posture, and his whole soul apparently wrapped in the purpose of placing his foot exactly on the same spot of each step which had been occupied by the officer who preceded him. At the door of the hall the porter again drew off, saluted with his staff, and bowed reverentially. The philosopher again imitated his motions, and returned his bow with the most profound gravity. When the Doctor entered the apartment the spell under which he seemed to act was entirely broken, and our informant, who, very much amused, had followed him the whole way, had some difficulty to convince him that he had been doing anything extraordinary."

This inability to recollect in a completely waking state what had taken place during the morbid one separates this story from all the rest that are told of Smith's absence of mind. For his friends used always to observe of his fits of abstraction what a remarkable faculty he possessed of recovering, when he came to himself, long portions of the conversation that had been going on around him while his mind was absent. But here there is an entire break between the one state and the other; the case seems more allied to trance, though it doubtless had the same origin as the more ordinary fits of absence, and, like them, was only one of the penalties of that power of profound and prolonged concentration to which the world owes so much; it was thinker's cramp, if I may use the expression. In one way Smith took more interest in his official work than ordinary Commissioners would do, because he found it useful to his economic studies. In 1778 he wrote Sir John Sinclair, who had desired a loan of the French inquiry entitled *Mémoires concernant les Impositions*, that "he had frequent occasion to consult the book himself both in the course of his private studies and in the business of his present employment," and Sir John states that Smith used to admit "that he derived great advantage from the practical information he derived by means of his official situation, and that he would not have otherwise known or believed how essential practical knowledge was to the thorough understanding of political subjects." This is confirmed by the fact that most of the additions and corrections introduced into the third edition of the *Wealth of Nations* — the first published after his settlement in the Customs — are connected with that branch of the public service.

Still his friends were perhaps right in lamenting that the duties of this office, light though they really were, used up his time and energy too completely to permit his application to the great work on government which he had projected. "Though they required little exertion of thought, they were yet," says Dugald Stewart, "sufficient to waste his spirits and

dissipate his attention; and now that his career is closed, it is impossible to reflect on the time they consumed without lamenting that it had not been employed in labours more profitable to the world and more equal to his mind. During the first years of his residence in this city his studies seemed to be entirely suspended, and his passion for letters served only to amuse his leisure and to animate his conversation. The infirmities of age, of which he very early began to feel the approach, reminded him at last, when it was too late, of what he yet owed to the public and to his own fame. The principal materials of the works which he had announced had been long ago collected, and little probably was wanting but a few years of health and retirement to bestow on them that systematical arrangement in which he delighted."

His leisure seems to have been passed during these later years of his life very largely in the study of the Greek poets, and he frequently remarked to Dugald Stewart, when found in his library with Sophocles or Euripides open before him on the table, that of all the amusements of old age, the most grateful and soothing was the renewal of acquaintance with the favourite studies and the favourite authors of our youth. Besides, the work of composition seems to have grown really more arduous to him. He was always a slow composer, and had never acquired increased facility from increased practice. Much of his time too was now given to the enjoyments of friendship. I have already mentioned his Sunday suppers, but besides these he founded, soon after settling in Edinburgh, in co-operation with the two friends who were his closest associates during the whole of this last period of his career — Black the chemist, and Hutton the geologist — a weekly dining club, which met every Friday at two o'clock in a tavern in the Grassmarket. Dr. Swediaur, the Paris physician, who spent some time in Edinburgh in 1784 making researches along with Cullen, and was made a member of this club during his stay, writes Jeremy Bentham: "We have a club here which consists of nothing but philosophers. Dr. Adam Smith, Cullen, Black, Mr. M'Gowan, etc., belong to it, and I am also a member of it. Thus I spend once a week in a most enlightened and agreeable, cheerful and social company." And of Smith, with whom he says he is intimately acquainted, he tells Bentham he "is quite our man" — in opinion and tendencies, I presume. Ferguson was a member of the club, though after being struck with paralysis in 1780 he never dined out; but among the constant attenders were Henry Mackenzie, Dugald Stewart, Professor John Playfair, Sir James Hall the geologist; Robert Adam, architect; Adam's brother-in-law, John Clerk of Eldin, inventor of the new system

of naval tactics; and Lord Daer — the “noble youthful Daer” — who was the first lord Burns ever met, and taught the poet that in a lord he after all but “met a brither,” with nothing uncommon about him,

Except good sense and social glee, An’ (what surprised me) modesty.

Lord Daer was the eldest son of the fourth Earl of Selkirk, and, on the outbreak of the French Revolution, a few years after Burns met him, became one of the most ardent of the “Friends of the People”; and was intimate with Mirabeau, to whom he ventured to speak a word for the king’s safety, and was told that the French would not commit the English blunder of cutting off their king’s head, because that was the usual way to establish a despotism. Great expectations were cherished of Lord Daer’s future, but they were defeated by his premature death in 1794. The Mr. M’Gowan mentioned by Swediaur is little known now, but he was an antiquary and naturalist, a friend and correspondent of Shenstone, Pennant, and Bishop Percy. M’Gowan kept house with a friend of his youth, who had returned to him after long political exile, Andrew Lumisden, Prince Charlie’s Secretary, who was also a warm friend of Smith, and whose portrait by Tassie is one of the few relics of Smith’s household effects which still exist. Lumisden had been Hamilton of Bangour’s companion in exile at Rouen, and was no doubt also a member of this club.

According to Playfair, the chief delight of the club was to listen to the conversation of its three founders. “As all the three possessed great talents, enlarged views, and extensive information, without any of the stateliness and formality which men of letters think it sometimes necessary to affect, as they were all three easily amused, and as the sincerity of their friendship had never been darkened by the least shade of envy, it would be hard to find an example where everything favourable to good society was more perfectly united, and everything adverse more entirely excluded.” This friendship of Smith, Black, and Hutton, if not so famous as the friendship between Smith and Hume, was not less really memorable. Each of them had founded — or done more than any other single person to found — a science; they may be called the fathers of modern chemistry, of modern geology, and of modern political economy; and for all their great achievements, they were yet men of the most unaffected simplicity of character. In other respects they were very different from one another, but their differences only knit them closer together, and made them more interesting to their friends.

Black was a man of fine presence and courtly bearing, grave, calm, polished, well dressed, speaking, what was then rare, correct English

without a trace of Scotch accent, and always with sense and insight even in fields beyond his own. Smith used to say that he never knew a man with less nonsense in him than Dr. Black, and that he was often indebted to his better discrimination in the judgment of character, a point in which Smith, not only by the general testimony of his acquaintance, but by his own confession, was by no means strong, inasmuch as he was, as he acknowledges, too apt to form his opinion from a single feature. Now the judgment of character was, according to Robison, Black's very strongest point. "Indeed," says Robison, "were I to say what natural talent Dr. Black possessed in the most uncommon degree, I should say it was his judgment of human character, and a talent which he had of expressing his opinion in a single short phrase, which fixed it in the mind never to be forgotten." He was a very brilliant lecturer, for Brougham, who had been one of his students, said that he had heard Pitt and Fox and Plunket, but for mere intellectual gratification he should prefer sitting again on the old benches of the chemistry classroom, "while the first philosopher of his age was the historian of his own discoveries"; and, adored as he was by his students, he was the object of scarce less veneration and pride to the whole body of his fellow-citizens. Lord Cockburn tells us how even the wildest boys used to respect Black. "No lad," says he, "could ever be irreverent towards a man so pale, so gentle, so elegant, and so illustrious."

Hutton was in many respects the reverse of Black. He was a dweller out of doors, a man of strong vitality and high spirits, careless of dress and appearance, setting little store by the world's prejudices or fashions, and speaking the broadest Scotch, but overflowing with views and speculations and fun, and with a certain originality of expression, often very piquant. Every face brightened, says Playfair, when Hutton entered a room. He had been bred a doctor, though he never practised, but, devoting himself to agriculture, had been for years one of the leading improvers of the Border counties, and is said, indeed, to have been the first man in Scotland to plough with a pair of horses and no driver, the old eight-ox plough being then in universal use. Between his early chemical studies and his later agricultural pursuits, his curiosity was deeply aroused as he walked about the fields and dales, not merely concerning the composition but the origin of the soils and rocks and minerals that lay in the crust of the globe, and he never ceased examining and speculating till he completed his theory of the earth which became a new starting-point for all subsequent geological research. He was a bold investigator, and Playfair distinguishes him finely in this respect from

Black by remarking that “Dr. Black hated nothing so much as error, and Dr. Hutton nothing so much as ignorance. The one was always afraid of going beyond the truth, and the other of not reaching it.” He went little into general society, but Playfair says that in the more private circles which he preferred he was the most delightful of companions.

The conversation of the club was often, as was to be expected from its composition, scientific, but Professor Playfair says it was always free, and never didactic or disputatious, and that “as the club was much the resort of the strangers who visited Edinburgh from any objects connected with art or with science, it derived from them an extraordinary degree of vivacity and interest.”

Its name was the Oyster Club, and it may be thought from that circumstance that those great philosophers did not spurn the delights of more ordinary mortals. But probably no three men could be found who cared less for the pleasures of the table. Hutton was an abstainer; Black a vegetarian, his usual fare being “some bread, a few prunes, and a measured quantity of milk diluted with water”; and as for Smith, his only weakness seems to have been for lump sugar, according to an anecdote preserved by Scott, which, trivial though it be, may be repeated here, under the shelter of the great novelist’s example and of Smith’s own biographical principle that nothing about a great man is too minute not to be worth knowing.

Scott, speaking apparently as an eye-witness, says: “We shall never forget one particular evening when he (Smith) put an elderly maiden lady who presided at the tea-table to sore confusion by neglecting utterly her invitation to be seated, and walking round and round the circle, stopping ever and anon to steal a lump from the sugar basin, which the venerable spinster was at length constrained to place on her own knee, as the only method of securing it from his uneconomical depredations. His appearance mumping the eternal sugar was something indescribable.” It is probably the same story Robert Chambers gives in his *Traditions of Edinburgh*, and he makes the scene Smith’s own parlour, and the elderly spinster his cousin, Miss Jean Douglas. It may have been so, for Scott, as a school companion of young David Douglas, would very likely have been occasionally at Panmure House.

CHAPTER XXII. VARIOUS CORRESPONDENCE IN 1778

Soon after Smith settled in Edinburgh he received from his old French friends, the Duchesse d'Enville and her son the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, a presentation copy of a new edition of their ancestor's *Maximes*, accompanied by the following letter from the Duke himself, in which he informs Smith of the interesting circumstance that, in spite of the way his famous ancestor is mentioned in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, he had himself at one time undertaken a translation of that work, and only abandoned the task when he found himself anticipated by the publication of the translation by Abbé Blavet in 1774. It is a little curious that a disciple of Quesnay, a regular frequenter of Mirabeau's economic dinners, should take no notice in his letter of Smith's greater work, so lately published.

Paris, *3 mars 1778*.

Le désir de se rappeller à votre souvenir, monsieur, quand on a eu l'honneur de vous connoître doit vous paroître fort naturel; permettez que nous saisissons pour cela, ma mère et moi, l'occasion d'une édition nouvelle des *Maximes de la Rochefoucauld*, dont nous prenons la liberté de vous offrir un exemplaire. Vous voyez que vous n'avons point de rancune, puisque le mal que vous avez, dit de lui dans la *Théorie des Sentimens Moraux* ne nous empêche point de vous envoyer ce même ouvrage. Il s'en est même fallu de peu que je ne fisse encore plus, car j'avois eu peutêtre la témérité d'entreprendre une traduction de votre *Théorie*; mais comme je venois de terminer la première partie, j'ai vu paroître la traduction de M. l'Abbé Blavet, et j'ai été forcé de renoncer au plaisir que j'aurois eu de faire passer dans ma langue un des meilleurs ouvrages de la vôtre.

Il auroit bien fallu pour lors entreprendre une justification de mon grandpère. Peutêtre n'auroit-il pas été difficile premièrement de l'excuser, en disant, qu'il avoit toujours vu les hommes à la Cour, et dans la guerre civile, *deux théâtres sur lesquels ils sont certainement plus mauvais qu'ailleurs*; et ensuite de justifier, par la conduite personnelle de l'auteur, les principes qui sont certainement trop généralisés dans son ouvrage. Il a pris la partie pour le tout; et parceque les gens qu'il avoit eu le plus sous les yeux étoient animés par *l'amour-propre*, il en a fait le mobile général de tous les hommes. Au reste quoique son ouvrage mérite

à certains égards d'être combattu, il est cependant estimable même pour le fond, et beaucoup pour la forme.

Permettez-moi de vous demander, si nous aurons bientôt une édition complète des oeuvres de votre illustre ami M. Hume? Nous l'avons sincèrement regretté.

Recevez, je vous supplie, l'expression sincère de tous les sentimens d'estime et d'attachement avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être, monsieur, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

Le Duc de la Rochefoucauld.

What immediate answer Smith gave to this letter is unknown, and he certainly suffered the offending allusion to his correspondent's ancestor to remain unmodified in the new edition of the *Theory* which appeared in 1781, but eventually at any rate he came to think that he had done the author of the *Maximes* an injustice by associating him in the same condemnation with Mandeville, and when Dugald Stewart visited Paris in 1789 he was commissioned by Smith to express to the Duc de la Rochefoucauld his sincere regret for having done so, and to inform him that the error would be repaired in the forthcoming edition of the work, which was at that time in preparation. This was done. In that final edition the allusion to Rochefoucauld was entirely suppressed, and the censure confined to Mandeville alone.

While Smith's French friends were remonstrating with him about an incidental allusion in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, his old friend, Lord Kames — still at eighty-three as keen for metaphysical controversy as he had been with Bishop Butler sixty years before — was preparing an elaborate attack upon the theory of the book itself, which he proposed to incorporate in a new edition of his own *Principles of Morality and Religion*. Before publishing this examination of the theory, however, he sent the manuscript to Smith for perusal, and received the following reply: —

16th November 1778.

My Dear Lord — I am much obliged to you for the kind communication of the objections you propose to make in yr. new edition to my system. Nothing can be more perfectly friendly and polite than the terms in which you express yourself with regard to me, and I should be extremely peevish and ill-tempered if I could make the slightest opposition to their publication. I am no doubt extremely sorry to find myself of a different opinion both from so able a judge of the subject and from so old and good a friend; but differences of this kind are inevitable, and besides, *Partium contentionibus respublica crescit*. I should have

been waiting on your Lordship before this time, but the remains of a cold have for these four or five days past made it inconvenient for me to go out in the evening. Remember me to Mrs. Drummond, and believe me to be, my dear Lord, your most obliged and most humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Smith had most probably discussed the merits of Lord Kames's objections with his lordship already, so that he saw no occasion to reply to them in his letter. What Kames principally combated was the idea that sympathy with the sufferings of another originated in any way in our imagining what would be our own feelings if we were in the sufferer's place. He contends, on the contrary, that it is excited directly by the perception of the screams, contortions, tears, or other outward signs of the pain that is endured; and that trying to put ourselves in the sufferer's place produces really a self-satisfaction, on account of our own immunity from his troubles, which has the effect not of awakening the feeling of pity but of moderating and diminishing it.

A second objection he raises is that if Smith's theory were true, those in whom the power of imagination was strongest would feel the force of the moral duties most sensibly, and vice versa, which, he says, is contradicted by experience. His last objection is that while the theory proposes to explain the origin of the moral sentiments so far as they respect other persons, it fails entirely to account for those sentiments in regard to ourselves. Our distress on losing an only son and our gratitude for a kindly office neither need to be explained nor can they be explained by imagining ourselves to be other persons.

One of the first acquaintances Smith made in Edinburgh was a young Caithness laird who was presently to make a considerable figure in public life — the patriotic and laborious Sir John Sinclair, founder of the Board of Agriculture, promoter of the Statistical Account of Scotland, and author of the *History of the Public Revenue*, *the Code of Agriculture*, *the Code of Health*, and innumerable pamphlets on innumerable subjects. Sinclair was not yet in Parliament when Smith came to Edinburgh in the end of 1777, but his hands were already full of serious work. He was busy with his *History of the Public Revenue*, in which Smith gave him every assistance in his power, and he had actually finished a treatise on the Christian Sabbath, which, in deference to Smith's advice, he never gave to the press. The object of this treatise was to show that the puritanical Sabbath observance of Scotland had no countenance in Holy Scripture, and that, while part of the day ought certainly to be devoted to divine service, the rest might be usefully employed in occupations of a

character not strictly religious without infringing any divine law. When the work was completed, Sinclair showed the manuscript to Smith, who dissuaded him strongly from printing it. “Your work, Mr. Sinclair,” said he, “is very ably written, but I advise you not to publish it, for rest assured that the Sabbath as a political institution is of inestimable value independently of its claim to divine authority.”

One day Sinclair brought Smith the news of the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga in October 1777, and exclaimed in the deepest concern that the nation was ruined. “There is a great deal of ruin in a nation,” was Smith’s calm reply. In November 1778 Sinclair wanted Smith to send him to Thurso Castle the loan of the important French book on contemporary systems of taxation, which is so often quoted in the *Wealth of Nations* — the *Mémoires concernant les Impositions* — and of which only 100 copies were originally printed, and only four apparently found their way to this country. Smith naturally hesitated to send so rare a book so far, but promised his young correspondent to give him, when he returned to Edinburgh, not only that book but everything else, printed or written, which he possessed on the subject. Smith’s letter is as follows: —

Mr. Smith presents his most respectful compliments to Mr. Sinclair of Ulbster.

The *Mémoires sur les Finances* are engaged for four months to come to Mr. John Davidson; when he is done with them Mr. Smith would be very happy to accommodate Mr. Sinclair, but acknowledges he is a little uneasy about the safety of the conveyance and the greatness of the distance. He has frequent occasion to consult the book himself, both in the course of his private studies and in the business of his present employment, and is therefore not very willing to let it go out of Edinburgh. The book was never properly published, but there were a few more copies printed than was necessary for the Commission, for whose use it was compiled.

One of these I obtained by the particular favour of Mr. Turgot, the late Controller-General of the Finances. I have heard but of three copies in Great Britain: one belongs to a noble lord, who obtained it by connivance, as he told me; one is in the Secretary of State’s office, and the third belongs to a private gentleman. How these two were obtained I know not, but suspect it was in the same manner. If any accident should happen to my book, the loss is perfectly irreparable. When Mr. Sinclair comes to Edinburgh I shall be very happy to communicate to him not only that book, but everything else I have upon the subject, both printed

and manuscript, and am, with the highest respect for his character, his most obedient humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *24th November 1778*.

The *Mémoires* was printed in 1768, but it may be reasonably inferred, from Smith's account of the extreme difficulty of getting a copy, that he only obtained his in 1774, on the advent of Turgot to power. If that be so, much in the chapters on taxation in the *Wealth of Nations* must have been written in London after that date.

Sir John's biographer quotes a passage from another letter of Smith in connection with his correspondent's financial studies. This letter — which Archdeacon Sinclair describes as a "holograph letter in six folio pages" — is no longer extant, but it concluded with the following remarks on the taxation of the necessaries and luxuries of the poor: —

I dislike all taxes that may affect the necessary expenses of the poor. They, according to circumstances, either oppress the people immediately subject to them, or are repaid with great interest by the rich, *i.e.* by their employers in the advanced wages of their labour. Taxes on the *luxuries* of the poor, upon their beer and other spirituous liquors, for example, as long as they are so moderate as not to give much temptation to smuggling, I am so far from disapproving, that I look upon them as the best of sumptuary laws.

I could write a volume upon the folly and the bad effects of all the legal encouragements that have been given either to the linen manufacture or to the fisheries. — I have the honour to be, with most sincere regard, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

CHAPTER XXIII. FREE TRADE FOR IRELAND

1779

In 1779 Smith was consulted by various members of the Government with respect to the probable effects of the contemplated concession of free trade to Ireland, and two letters of Smith still remain — one to the Earl of Carlisle, First Lord of Trade and Plantations, and the other to Henry Dundas — which state his views on this subject. A few preliminary words will explain the situation. The policy of commercial restriction has probably never been used with more cruelty or more disaster than it was used against the people of Ireland between the Restoration and the Union. They were not allowed to trade as they would with Great Britain or her colonies, because they were aliens, and they were not allowed to trade as they would with foreign countries, because they were British subjects. There were various industries they had special advantages for establishing, but the moment they began to export the products the English Parliament, or their own Irish Parliament under English influence, closed the markets against them. Living in an excellent grazing country, their first great product was cattle, and the export of cattle was prohibited. When stopped from sending live meat, they tried to send dead, but the embargo was promptly extended to salt provisions. Driven from cattle, they betook themselves to sheep, and sent over wool; that was stopped, allowed, and stopped again. When their raw wool was denied a market, they next tried cloth, but England then bargained for the suppression of the chief branches of Irish woollen manufacture by promising Ireland a monopoly of the manufacture of linen. Other infant industries which gave signs of growing to prosperity were by the same means crushed in the cradle, and Ireland was in consequence never able to acquire that nest-egg of industrial capital and training which England won in the eighteenth century.

All this systematic oppression of national industry had produced its natural fruit in a distressing scarcity of employment, and in 1778, though it was a year of plenty, and meal was at its cheapest, many thousands of the population were starving because they had not the means to buy it; the farmers were unable to pay their rents because they got such poor prices; processions of unemployed paraded the streets of Dublin carrying

a black fleece in token of their want; and the Viceroy from the Castle warned the English ministry that an enlargement of the trade of Ireland had become a matter of the merest necessity, without which she could never pay her national obligations to the English Exchequer.

But it was neither the voice of justice nor the cry of distress that moved the Government; it was the alarm of external danger. The strength of England was then strained as it has never been before or since in an unequal war with the combined forces of France, Spain, and America, and it was no time either to feed or to neglect discontent at home. Ireland had already sent many recruits to the revolutionary army in America, and at this very moment the Irish Protestants, incensed at the indifference of Government to the protection of their ports, had, under the lead of Lord Charlemont, raised an illegal army of 42,000 volunteers, and placed them under arms without the consent of the Crown.

The demand of free trade for Ireland came therefore with sanctions that could not be ignored, and Lord North's first idea was to give Ireland the same rights of trading with the colonies and foreign countries as England enjoyed, except in the two particulars of the export of wool and glass and the import of tobacco. This proposal was not satisfactory to the Irish, because it failed to remove their chief grievance, the restriction on their trade in woollen goods, but it provoked a storm of indignation in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, and all the great manufacturing and trading centres of Great Britain. They petitioned the Government declaring that the proposed measure would ruin them, for a reason with which we are still very familiar, because it would be impossible for any English or Scotch manufacturer to compete against the pauper labour of Ireland. Lord North, frightened, as Burke said, into some concessions by the menaces of Ireland, was now frightened out of them again by the menaces of England, and he cut down his original proposals till the Irish thought he was merely trifling with their troubles, and their whole island was aflame. Associations were formed, commotions broke out; a great meeting in Dublin in April 1779 pledged itself to buy nothing of English or Scotch manufacture; many of the county meetings instructed their representatives in Parliament to vote no money bill for more than six months till Irish grievances were redressed; and the Lord-Lieutenant wrote the Government that popular discontent was seriously increasing, that French and American emissaries were actively abroad, that the outlook was black indeed if next session of Parliament passed without giving the Irish a satisfactory measure of free trade, and that "nothing

short of permission to export coarse woollen goods would in any degree give general satisfaction.”

As soon as the Irish Parliament met in October a new member of the House, who was presently to become a new power in the country, Henry Grattan, rose and moved an amendment to the address, urging the necessity for a free export trade; and the amendment was, on the suggestion of Flood, extended to a general demand for free trade, including imports as well as exports, and in this form was carried without a division. The reply to the address, however, seemed studiously ambiguous, and inflamed the prevailing discontent. On King William’s birthday the statue of that monarch in Dublin was hung over with expressive placards, and the city volunteers turned out and paraded round it; a few days later a mob from the Liberties attacked the house of the Attorney-General, and proceeding to Parliament, swore all the members they found to vote only short money bills till free trade were conceded; and then Grattan, in his place in the House, carried by three to one a resolution to grant no new taxes and to give only six months’ bills for the appropriated duties.

The Government was now thoroughly alarmed; they must at last face the question of free trade for Ireland in dead earnest, and applied themselves without delay to learn from all who understood the subject what would be the real effect on England of removing the Irish restrictions. They requested many of the leading public men whom they trusted in Ireland — Lord Lifford, Hely Hutchinson, Henry Burgh, and others — to prepare detailed statements of their views on the commercial grievances of their country and the operation of the proposed remedies. Mr. Lecky, who has seen those statements at the Record Office, says they are conspicuous for their clear grasp of the principles of free trade, and I think that they may with great probability be considered a fruit of Smith’s then recently published work, because Hely Hutchinson’s statement, or its substance, has been published — it was, indeed, the last book publicly burned in this country — and it makes frequent quotations from the *Wealth of Nations*. It was in these circumstances that the Board of Trade made a double application to Adam Smith for his opinion on the subject. Lord Carlisle, the head of the Board, applied to him through Adam Ferguson, who had been Secretary of the Commission, of which Lord Carlisle had been President, sent out to America the year before to negotiate terms of peace; and Mr. William Eden, Secretary of the Board, applied to him through Henry Dundas. With Eden (afterwards the first Lord Auckland) Smith became later on well acquainted; he was married

in 1776 to a daughter of Smith's old friend, Sir Gilbert Elliot, but at the date of this correspondence their personal acquaintance does not seem to have been intimate.

Smith's letter to Lord Carlisle is as follows: —

My Lord — My friend Mr. Ferguson showed me a few days ago a letter in which your Lordship was so good as to say that you wished to know my opinion concerning the consequence of granting to the Irish that *free trade* which they at present demand so importunately. I shall not attempt to express how much I feel myself flattered by your Lordship's very honourable remembrance of me, but shall without further preface endeavour to explain that opinion, such as it may be, as distinctly as I can.

Till we see the heads of the bill which the Irish propose to send over, it is impossible to know precisely what they mean by a free trade.

It is possible they may mean by it no more than the freedom of exporting all goods, whether of their own produce or imported from abroad, to all countries (Great Britain and the British settlements excepted) subject to no other duties or restraints than such as their own Parliament may impose. At present they can export glass, tho' of their own manufacture, to no country whatever. Raw silk, a foreign commodity, is under the same restraint. Wool they can export only to Great Britain. Woollen manufactures they can export only from certain ports in Ireland to certain ports in Great Britain. A very slender interest of our own manufacturers is the foundation of all these unjust and oppressive restraints. The watchful jealousy of those gentlemen is alarmed least the Irish, who have never been able to supply compleatly even their own market with glass or woollen manufactures, should be able to rival them in foreign markets.

The Irish may mean by a *free trade* to demand, besides, the freedom of importing from wherever they can buy them cheapest all such foreign goods as they have occasion for. At present they can import glass, sugars of foreign plantations, except those of Spain or Portugal, and certain sorts of East India goods, from no country but Great Britain. Tho' Ireland was relieved from these and from all restraints of the same kind, the interest of Great Britain could surely suffer very little. The Irish probably mean to demand no more than this most just and reasonable freedom of exportation and importation; in restraining which we seem to me rather to have gratified the impertinence than to have promoted any solid interest of our merchants and manufacturers.

The Irish may, however, mean to demand, besides, the same freedom of exportation and importation to and from the British settlements in Africa and America which is enjoyed by the inhabitants of Great Britain. As Ireland has contributed little either to the establishment or defence of these settlements, this demand would be less reasonable than the other two. But as I never believed that the monopoly of our Plantation trade was really advantageous to Great Britain, so I cannot believe that the admission of Ireland to a share in that monopoly, or the extension of this monopoly to all the British islands, would be really disadvantageous.

Over and above all this, the Irish may mean to demand the freedom of importing their own produce and manufactures into Great Britain, subject to no other duties than such as are equivalent to the duties imposed upon the like goods of British produce or manufacture. Tho' even this demand, the most unreasonable of all, should be granted, I cannot believe that the interest of Britain would be hurt by it. On the contrary, the competition of Irish goods in the British market might contribute to break down in part that monopoly which we have most absurdly granted to the greater part of our own workmen against ourselves. It would, however, be a long time before this competition could be very considerable. In the present state of Ireland centuries must pass away before the greater part of its manufactures could vie with those of England. Ireland has little coal, the coallieries about Lough Neagh being of little consequence to the greater part of the country; it is ill provided with wood: two articles essentially necessary to the progress of great manufactures. It wants order, police, and a regular administration of justice, both to protect and to restrain the inferior ranks of people: articles more essential to the progress of industry than both coal and wood put together, and which Ireland must continue to want as long as it continues to be divided between two hostile nations, the oppressors and the oppressed, the Protestants and the Papists. Should the industry of Ireland, in consequence of freedom and good government, ever equal that of England, so much the better would it be not only for the whole British Empire, but for the particular province of England. As the wealth and industry of Lancashire does not obstruct but promote that of Yorkshire, so the wealth and industry of Ireland would not obstruct but promote that of England.

It makes me very happy to find that in the midst of the public misfortunes a person of your Lordship's rank and elevation of mind doth not despair of the commonwealth, but is willing to accept of an active share in administration. That your Lordship may be the happy means of

restoring vigour and decision to our counsels, and in consequence of them, success to our arms, is the sincere wish of, my Lord, your Lordship’s most obliged and most obedient servant,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *8th November 1779*.

The letter to Dundas was published in the *English Historical Review* for April 1886 (), by Mr. Oscar Browning, from a copy in the Auckland papers then in his possession. Mr. Browning gives at the same time the previous letters of Dundas to Eden and Smith respectively. To Eden he writes: —

Melville, *30th October 1779*.

My Dear Sir — I received yours last night and have sent it this morning to Smith. When I see or hear from him you shall hear again from me upon the different parts of your letter. The enclosed is a copy of my letter to Smith, which will show you what are my present crude ideas upon the subject of Ireland. — Yours faithfully,

Henry Dundas.

His letter to Smith is as follows: —

Melville, *30th October 1779*.

Dear Sir — I received the enclosed last night from Mr. Eden. The questions he puts would require a Volume to answer them in place of a Letter. Think of it, however, and let me have your ideas upon it. For my own part I confess myself little alarmed about what others seem so much alarmed. I doubt much if a free trade to Ireland is so very much to be dreaded. There is trade enough in the World for the Industry both of Britain and Ireland, and if two or three places either in South or North Britain should suffer some damage, which, by the bye, will be very gradual, from the loss of their monopoly, that is a very small consideration in the general scale and policy of the country. The only thing to be guarded against is the people in Ireland being able to undersell us in foreign mercates from the want of taxes and the cheapness of Labour. But a wise statesman will be able to regulate that by proper distribution of taxes upon the materials and commodities of the respective Countrys. I believe a Union would be best if it can be accomplished; if not the Irish Parliament might be managed by the proper distribution of the Loaves and Fishes, so that the Legislatures of the two countrys may act in union together. In short, it has long appeared to me that the bearing down of Ireland was in truth bearing down a substantial part of the Naval and Military strength of our own Country. Indeed, it has often shocked me in the House of Commons for these two

years past, when anything was hinted in favour of Ireland by friends of giving them only the benefit of making the most of what their soil and climate afforded them, to hear it received as a sufficient answer that a town in England or Scotland would be hurt by such an Indulgence. This kind of reasoning will no longer do. But I find, in place of asking yours, I am giving you my opinion. So adieu. — Yours sincerely,

Henry Dundas.

To this manly, but somewhat inconsistent letter, acknowledging the full right of a people to make the most of what their soil and climate afforded, but yet afraid to give them the whole advantage of their cheapness of labour, Smith sent the following reply, probably on the 1st of November: —

My Dear Lord — I am very happy to find that Your Lordship's opinion concerning the circumstance of granting a free trade to Ireland coincides so perfectly with my own. I cannot believe that the manufacturers of Great Britain can for a century to come suffer much from the Rivalship of those of Ireland, even though the Irish should be indulged in a free trade. Ireland has neither the skill nor the stock which would enable Her to rival England, and tho' both may be acquired in time, to acquire them completely will require the opperation of little less than a Century. Ireland has neither Coal nor wood; the former seems to have been denied to her by nature; and though her Soil and Climate are perfectly suited for raising the Latter, yet to raise it to the same degree as in England will require more than a Century. I perfectly agree with your Lordship too that to Crush the Industry of so great and so fine a Province of the Empire in order to favour the monopoly of some particular Towns in Scotland or England is equally injurious and impolitic. The general opulence and improvement of Ireland must certainly, under proper management, afford much greater Resources to Government than can ever be drawn from a few mercantile or manufacturing Towns.

Till the Irish Parliament sends over the Heads of their proposed Bill, it may perhaps be uncertain what they understand by a Free Trade.

They may perhaps understand by it no more than the power of exporting their own produce to the foreign country where they can find the best mercate. Nothing can be more just and reasonable than this demand, nor can anything be more unjust and unreasonable than some of the restraints which their Industry in this respect at present labours under. They are prohibited under the heaviest penalties to export Glass to any Country. Wool they can export only to Great Britain. Woolen goods they

can export only from certain Ports in their own Country and to certain Ports in Great Britain.

They may mean to demand the Power of importing such foods as they have occasion for from any Country where they can find them cheapest, subject to no other duties and restraints than such as may be imposed by their own Parliament. This freedom, tho' in my opinion perfectly reasonable, will interfere a little with some of our paltry monopolies. Glass, Hops, Foreign Sugars, several sorts of East Indian goods can at present be imported only from Great Britain.

They may mean to demand a free trade to our American and African Plantations, free from the restraints which the 18th of the present King imposed upon it, or at least from some of those restraints, such as the prohibition of exporting thither their own Woolen and Cotton manufactures, Glass, Hatts, Hops, Gunpowder, etc. This freedom, tho' it would interfere with some of our monopolies, I am convinced, would do no harm to Great Britain. It would be reasonable, indeed, that whatever goods were exported from Ireland to these Plantations should be subject to the like duties as those of the same kind exported from England in the terms of the 18th of the present King.

They may mean to demand a free trade to Great Britain, their manufactures and produce when Imported into this country being subjected to no other duties than the like manufactures and produce of our own. Nothing, in my opinion, would be more highly advantageous to both countries than this mutual freedom of trade. It would help to break down that absurd monopoly which we have most absurdly established against ourselves in favour of almost all the different Classes of our own manufacturers.

Whatever the Irish mean to demand in this way, in the present situation of our affairs I should think it madness not to grant it. Whatever they may demand, our manufacturers, unless the leading and principal men among them are properly dealt with beforehand, will probably oppose it. That they may be so dealt with I know from experience, and that it may be done at little expense and with no great trouble. I could even point to some persons who, I think, are fit and likely to deal with them successfully for this purpose. I shall not say more upon this till I see you, which I shall do the first moment I can get out of this Town.

I am much honoured by Mr. Eden's remembrance of me. I beg you will present my most respectful compliments to him, and that you will believe me to be, my dear Lord, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

1st November 1779.

I cannot explain the allusion in the closing parts of the letter to the writer's personal experience of the ease with which the opposition of manufacturers to proposed measures of public policy could be averted by sagacious management and a little expenditure of money. Nor can I say what persons he had in view to recommend as likely to do this work successfully; but his advice seems to imply that he agreed with the political maxim that the opposition of the pocket is best met through the pocket.

He takes no notice of Dundas's suggestion of a union with Great Britain, but we know from the *Wealth of Nations* that he was a strong advocate of a union — not, of course, on Dundas's ground that a union would better enable the English Parliament to counteract the effects of the competition of Irish pauper labour, but for a reason which will sound curiously perhaps in the middle of our present agitations, that a union would deliver the Irish people from the tyranny of an oppressive aristocracy, which was the great cause of that kingdom being then divided into "two hostile nations," to use his words to Lord Carlisle, "the oppressors and the oppressed." He avers in the *Wealth of Nations* that "without a union with Great Britain the inhabitants of Ireland are not likely for many ages to consider themselves one people."

CHAPTER XXIV. THE “WEALTH OF NATIONS” ABROAD AND AT HOME

While these communications with leading statesmen were showing the impression the *Wealth of Nations* had made in this country, Smith was receiving equally satisfactory proofs of its recognition abroad. The book had been translated into Danish by F. Dräbye, and the translation published in two volumes in 1779-80. Apparently the translator was contemplating the publication of a second edition, for he communicated with Smith through a Danish friend, desiring to know what alterations Smith proposed to make in his second edition, of whose appearance the translator had manifestly not heard. Smith thereupon wrote Strahan the following letter, asking him to send a copy of the second edition to Dräbye: —

Dear Sir — I think it is predestined that I shall never write to you except to ask some favour of you or to put you to some trouble. This letter is not to depart from the style of all the rest. I am a subscriber for Watt’s Copying Machine. The price is six guineas for the machine and five shillings for the packing-box; I should be glad too he would send me a ream of the copying paper, together with all the other specimens of ink, etc., which commonly accompany the machine. For payment of this to Mr. Woodmason, the seller, whose printed letter I have enclosed, you will herewith receive a bill of eight Guineas payable at sight. If, after paying for all these, there should be any remnant, there is a tailour in Craven Street, one Heddington, an acquaintance of James M’Pherson, to whom I owe some shillings, I believe under ten, certainly under twenty; pay him what I owe. He is a very honest man, and will ask no more than is due. Before I left London I had sent several times for his account, but he always put it off.

I had almost forgot I was the author of the inquiry concerning the Wealth of Nations, but some time ago I received a letter from a friend in Denmark telling me that it had been translated into Danish by one Mr. Dreby, secretary to a new erected board of trade and Economy in that Kingdom. My correspondent, Mr. Holt, who is an assessor of that Board, desires me, in the name of Mr. Dreby, to know what alterations I propose to make in a second Edition. The shortest answer to this is to send them the second edition. I propose, therefore, by this Post to desire Mr. Cadell to send three copies of the second Edition, handsomely bound and gilt, to

Mr. Anker, Consul-General of Denmark, who is an old acquaintance — one for himself and the other two to be by him transmitted to Mr. Holt and Mr. Dreby. At our final settlement I shall debit myself with these three Books. I suspect I am now almost your only customer for my own book. Let me know, however, how matters go on in this respect.

After begging your pardon a thousand times for having so long neglected to write you, I shall conclude with assuring you that notwithstanding this neglect I have the highest respect and esteem for you and for your whole family, and that I am, most sincerely and affectionately, ever yours,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, Canongate, *26 Oct. 1780.*

As this Danish translation has come up, it may be mentioned here that the *Wealth of Nations* had already been translated into several other languages. The Abbé Blavet's French version ran through the pages of the *Journal de l'Agriculture, des Commerce, des Finances, et des Arts* month by month in the course of the years 1779 and 1780, and was then published in book form in 1781. This was not a satisfactory translation, though through mere priority of occupation it held the field for a number of years and went through a number of editions. In 1790 a second translation appeared by Roucher and the Marquise de Condorcet, and in 1802 a third, the best, by Germain Garnier. Smith's own friend Morellet, receiving a presentation copy from the author through Lord Shelburne on its publication, carried it with him to Brienne, the seat of his old Sorbonne comrade the Archbishop of Toulouse, and set at work to translate it there. But he tells us himself that the ex-Benedictine Abbé (Blavet), who had formerly murdered the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* by a bad translation, anticipated him by his equally bad translation of the *Wealth of Nations*; and so, adds Morellet, "poor Smith was again betrayed instead of being translated, according to the Italian proverb, *Tradottore traditore*." Morellet still thought, however, of publishing his own version, offering it to the booksellers first for 100 louis-d'or and then for nothing, and many years afterwards he asked his friend the Archbishop of Toulouse, when he had become Minister of France, for a grant of 100 louis to pay for its production, but was as unsuccessful with the Minister as he was with the booksellers. All the good Abbé says is that he is sure the money would have been well spent, because the translation was carefully done, and he knew the subject better than any of the other translators. Everything that was abstract in the theory of Smith was, he says, quite unintelligible in Blavet's translation, and even in

Roucher's subsequent one, and could be read to more advantage in his own; but after a good translation was published by Garnier in 1802, the Abbé gave up all thought of giving his to the press.

A German translation by J.F. Schuler appeared, the first volume in 1776 and the second in 1778, but Roscher says it is worse done than Blavet's translation; and little attention was paid to Smith or his work in Germany until about the close of the century, when a new translation was published by Professor Garve, the metaphysician. Roscher observes that neither Frederick the Great nor the Emperor Joseph, nor any of the princes who patronised the Physiocrats so much, paid the least heed to the *Wealth of Nations*; that in the German press it was neither quoted nor confuted, but merely ignored; and that he himself had taken the trouble to look through the economic literature published between 1776 and 1794, to discover any marks of the reception of the book, and found that Smith's name was very seldom mentioned, and then without any idea of his importance. One spot ought to be excepted — the little kingdom of Hanover, which, from its connection with the English Crown, participated in the contemporary French complaint of Anglomania. Göttingen had its influential school of admirers of English institutions and literature; the *Wealth of Nations* was reviewed in the *Gelehrte Anzeigen* of Göttingen early in 1777, and one of the professors of the University there announced a course of lectures upon it in the winter session of 1777-78. But before Smith died his work was beginning to be clearly understood among German thinkers. Gentz, the well-known politician, writes a friend in December 1790 that he had been reading the book for the third time, and thought it "far the most important work which is written in any language on this subject"; and Professor C.J. Kraus writes Voigt in 1796 that the world had never seen a more important work, and that no book since the New Testament has produced more beneficial effects than this book would produce when it got better known. A few years later it was avowedly shaping the policy of Stein.

It was translated into Italian in 1780, and in Spain it had the curious fortune of being suppressed by the Inquisition on account of "the lowness of its style and the looseness of its morals." Sir John Macpherson — Warren Hastings' successor as Governor-General of India — writes Gibbon as if he saw the sentence of the Inquisition posted on the church doors in a Spanish tour he made in 1792; but a change must have speedily come over the censorial mind, for a Spanish translation by J.A. Ortez was published in four volumes in 1794, with additions relating to Spain.

Smith continued, as he says, to be a good customer for his own book. There is another letter which, though undated and unaddressed, was evidently written about this time to Cadell, directing presentation copies of both his books to be sent to Mrs. Ross of Crighton, the wife of his own “very near relation,” Colonel Patrick Ross.

Dear Sir — Mrs. Ross of Crighton, now living in Welbeck Street, is my particular friend, and the wife of Lieutenant-Collonel (*sic*) Patrick Ross, in the service of the East India Company, my very near relation. When she left this she seemed to intimate that she wished to have a copy of my last book from the author. May I therefore beg the favour of you to send her a copy of both my books, viz. of the Theory of Moral Sentiments and of the Enquiry concerning the “Wealth of Nations,” handsomely bound and gilt, placing the same to my account, and writing upon the blank-leaf of each, *From the Authour*. Be so good as to remember me to Mrs. Cadell, Mr. Strahan and family, and all other friends, and believe me, ever yours,

Adam Smith.

Smith’s new duties did not pre-engage his pen from higher work altogether, for before the close of 1782 he had written some considerable additions to the *Wealth of Nations*, which he proposed to insert in the third edition, among them a history of the trading companies of Great Britain, including, no doubt, his history of the East India Company, which Mr. Thorold Rogers supposed him to have written ten years before and kept in his desk. He writes Cadell on the 7th December 1782: —

I have many apologies to make to you for my idleness since I came to Scotland. The truth is, I bought at London a good many partly new books or editions that were new to me, and the amusement I found in reading and diverting myself with them debauched me from my proper business, the preparing a new edition of the *Wealth of Nations*. I am now, however, heartily engaged at my proper work, and I hope in two or three months to send you up the second edition corrected in many places, with three or four very considerable additions, chiefly to the second volume. Among the rest is a short but, I flatter myself, a complete history of all the trading companies in Great Britain. These additions I mean not only to be inserted at their proper places into the new edition, but to be printed separately and to be sold for a shilling or half-a-crown to the purchasers of the old edition. The price must depend on the bulk of the additions when they are all written out. It would give me great satisfaction if you would let me know by the return of the Post if this delay will not be inconvenient. Remember me to Strahan. He will be so good as excuse

my not writing to him, as I have nothing to say but what I have now said to you, and he knows my aversion to writing.

The additions of which he speaks in this letter were published separately in 1783 in quarto, so as to suit the two previous editions of the work, and the new edition containing them was published in the end of 1784 in three volumes octavo, at the price of a guinea. The delay was due to booksellers' reasons. Dr. Swediaur, the eminent Paris physician, who was resident in Edinburgh at the time studying with Cullen, wrote Bentham in November 1784 that Smith, whom he used to see at least once a week, had shown him the new edition printed and finished, but had told him that Cadell would not publish it till all the people of fashion had arrived in London, and would then at once push a large sale. Swediaur adds that he found this was a bookseller's trick very generally practised, and of Smith himself he says he found him "a very unprejudiced and good man."

The principal additions are the result of investigations to which he seems to have been prompted by current agitations of the stream of political opinion. He gives now, for example, a fuller account of the working of the bounty system in the Scotch fisheries, which was then the subject of a special parliamentary inquiry, and on which his experience as a Commissioner of Customs furnished him with many opportunities of gaining accurate information; and he enters on a careful examination of the chartered and regulated corporations, and especially of the East India Company, whose government of the great oriental dependency was at the moment a question of such urgency that Fox introduced his India Bill which killed the Coalition Ministry in 1783, and Pitt established the Board of Control in 1784.

The new matter contains two recommendations which have attracted comment as ostensible contraventions of free trade doctrine. One of them is the recommendation of a tax on the export of wool; but then the tax was to take the place of the absolute prohibition of the export which then existed, and it was not to be imposed for protectionist reasons, but for the simple financial purpose of raising a revenue. Smith thought few taxes would yield so considerable a revenue with so little inconvenience to anybody. The other supposed contravention of free trade doctrine is the sanction he lends to temporary commercial monopolies; but then this is avowedly a device for an exceptional situation in which a project promises great eventual benefit to the public, but the projectors might without the monopoly be debarred from undertaking it by the magnitude of the risk it involved. He places this temporary monopoly in the same

category with authors' copyrights and inventors' patents; it was the easiest and most natural way of recompensing a projector for hazarding a dangerous and expensive experiment of which the public was afterwards to reap the benefit. It was only to be granted for a fixed term, and upon proof of the ultimate advantage of the enterprise to the public.

CHAPTER XXV. SMITH INTERVIEWED

In his letter to Cadell Smith reproaches himself with his idleness during his first few years in Edinburgh. He had bought a good many new books in London, or new editions of old ones, and, says he, “The amusement I found in reading and diverting myself with them debauched me from my proper business, the preparing a new edition of the *Wealth of Nations*.” While he was engaged in this dissipation of miscellaneous reading a young interviewer from Glasgow, who happened to be much in his company in connection with business in the year 1780, elicited his opinions on most of the famous authors of the world, noted them down, and gave them to the public after Smith’s death in the pages of the *Bee* for 1791. In introducing these recollections the editor of the *Bee*, Dr. James Anderson — author of Ricardo’s rent theory — says that even if they had not been sent to him with the strongest assurances of authenticity, he could entertain no doubt on that point after their perusal from the coincidence of the opinions reported in them with those he himself had heard Smith express. The writer, who takes the name Amicus, describes himself as “young, inquisitive, and full of respect” for Smith, and says their conversation, after they finished their business, always took a literary turn, and Smith was “extremely communicative, and delivered himself with a freedom and even boldness quite opposite to the apparent reserve of his appearance.”

The first author Amicus mentions is Dr. Johnson, of whom he thought Smith had a “very contemptuous opinion.” “I have seen that creature,” said Smith, “bolt up in the midst of a mixed company, and without any previous notice fall upon his knees behind a chair, repeat the Lord’s Prayer, and then resume his seat at table. He has played this trick over and over, perhaps five or six times in the course of an evening. It is not hypocrisy but madness. Though an honest sort of man himself, he is always patronising scoundrels. Savage, for example, whom he so loudly praises, was but a worthless fellow; his pension of £50 never lasted him longer than a few days. As a sample of his economy you may take a circumstance that Johnson himself once told me. It was at that period fashionable to wear scarlet cloaks trimmed with gold lace, and the Doctor met him one day just after he had got his pension with one of those cloaks on his back, while at the same time his naked toes were

sticking through his shoes." He spoke highly, however, of Johnson's political pamphlets on the American question, in spite of his disapproval of their opinions, and he was especially charmed with the pamphlet about the Falkland Islands, because it presented in such forcible language the madness of modern wars.

"Contemptuous opinion" is too strong an expression for Smith's view of Johnson, but it is certain he never rated him so high as the world did then or does now. He told Samuel Rogers that he was astonished at Johnson's immense reputation, but, on the other hand, he frequently praised some of the Doctor's individual writings very highly, as he did to this young gentleman of Glasgow. He once said to Seward that Johnson's preface to Shakespeare was "the most manly piece of criticism that was ever published in any country."

Amicus then inquired of Smith his opinion of his countryman Dr. Campbell, author of the *Political Survey*, and Smith replied that he had never met him but once, but that he was one of those authors who wrote on from one end of the week to the other, and had therefore with his own hand produced almost a library of books. A gentleman who met Campbell out at dinner said he would be glad to have a complete set of his works, and next morning a cart-load came to his door, and the driver's bill was £70. He used to get a few copies of each of his works from the printers, and keep them for such chances as that. A visitor one day, casting his eye on these books, asked Campbell, "Have you read all these books?" "Nay," said the other, "I have written them."

Smith often praised Swift, and praised him highly, saying he wanted nothing but inclination to have become one of the greatest of all poets. "But in place of that he is only a gossiper, writing merely for the entertainment of a private circle." He regarded Swift, however, as a pattern of correctness both in style and sentiment, and he read to his young friend some of the short poetical addresses to *Stella*. Amicus says Smith expressed particular pleasure with one couplet —

Say, Stella, feel you no content, Reflecting on a life well spent?

But it was more probably not so much of these two lines as of the whole passage of which they are the opening that Smith was thinking. He thought Swift a great master of the poetic art, because he produced an impression of ease and simplicity, though the work of composition was to him a work of much difficulty, a verse coming from him, as Swift himself said, like a guinea. The Dean's masterpiece was, in Smith's opinion, the lines on his own death, and his poetry was on the whole

more correct after he settled in Ireland, and was surrounded, as he himself said, “only by humble friends.”

Among historians Smith rated Livy first either in the ancient or the modern world. He knew of no other who had even a pretence to rival him, unless David Hume perhaps could claim that honour.

When asked about Shakespeare Smith quoted with apparent approval Voltaire’s remarks that *Hamlet* was the dream of a drunken savage, and that Shakespeare had good scenes but not a good play; but Amicus gathered that he would not permit anybody else to pass such a verdict with impunity, for when he himself once ventured to say something derogatory of *Hamlet*, Smith replied, “Yes, but still *Hamlet* is full of fine passages.” This opinion of Shakespeare was of course common to most of the great men of last century. They were not so much insensible to the poet’s genius as perplexed by it. His plays were full of imagination, dramatic power, natural gifts of every kind — that was admitted; but then they seemed wild, unregulated, savage — even “drunken savage,” to use Voltaire’s expression; they were magnificent, but they were not poetry, for they broke every rule of the art, and poetry after all was an art. And so we find Addison at the beginning of last century writing on the greatest English poets and leaving the name of Shakespeare out; and we find Charles James Fox, a true lover of letters, telling Reynolds at the close of the century that Shakespeare’s reputation would have stood higher if he had never written *Hamlet*. Smith thought Shakespeare had more than ten times the dramatic genius of Dryden, but Dryden had more of the poetic art.

He praised Dryden for rhyming his plays, and said — as Pope and Voltaire used also to say — that it was nothing but laziness that prevented our tragic poets from writing in rhyme like those of France. “Dryden,” said he, “had he possessed but a tenth part of Shakespeare’s dramatic genius, would have brought rhyming tragedies into fashion here as they were in France, and then the mob would have admired them just as much as they then pretended to despise them.” Beattie’s *Minstrel* he would not allow to be called a poem at all, because it had no plan, no beginning, middle, or end. It was only a series of verses, some of them, however, he admitted, very happy. As for Pope’s translation of the *Iliad*, he said, “They do well to call it Pope’s *Iliad*, for it is not Homer’s *Iliad*. It has no resemblance to the majesty and simplicity of the Greek.”

He read over to Amicus Milton’s *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, and explained the respective beauties of each; but he added that all the rest of Milton’s short poems were trash. He could not imagine what made

Johnson praise the poem on the death of Mrs. Killigrew, and compare it with *Alexander's Feast*. Johnson's praise of it had induced him to read the poem over and with attention twice, but he could not discover even a spark of merit in it. On the other hand, Smith considered Gray's *Odes*, which Johnson had damned, to be the standard of lyric excellence.

The Gentle Shepherd he did not admire much. He preferred the *Pastor Fido*, of which, says Amicus, he "spoke with rapture," and the *Eclogues* of Virgil. Amicus put in a word in favour of the poet of his own country, but Smith would not yield a point. "It is the duty of a poet," he said, "to write like a gentleman. I dislike that homely style which some think fit to call the language of nature and simplicity and so forth. In Percy's *Reliques* too a few tolerable pieces are buried under a heap of rubbish. You have read perhaps *Adam Bell, Clym of the Cleugh, and William of Cloudesley*." "Yes," said Amicus. "Well then," continued Smith, "do you think that was worth printing?"

Of Goldsmith Smith spoke somewhat severely — of Goldsmith as a man apparently, not as a writer — relating some anecdotes of his easy morals, which Amicus does not repeat. But when Amicus mentioned some story about Burke seducing a young lady, Smith at once declared it an invention. "I imagine," said he, "that you have got that fine story out of some of the Magazines. If anything can be lower than the Reviews, they are so. They once had the impudence to publish a story of a gentleman having debauched his own sister, and on inquiry it came out that the gentleman never had a sister. As to Mr. Burke, he is a worthy, honest man, who married an accomplished girl without a shilling of fortune." Of the Reviews Smith never spoke but with ridicule and detestation. Amicus tried to get the *Gentleman's Magazine* exempted from the general condemnation, but Smith would not hear of that, and said that for his part he never looked at a Review, nor even at the names of the publishers.

Pope was a great favourite with him as a poet, and he knew by heart many passages from his poems, though he disliked Pope's personal character as a man, saying he was all affectation, and speaking of his letter to Arbuthnot when the latter was dying as a consummate piece of canting. Dryden was another of his favourite poets, and when he was speaking one day in high praise of Dryden's fables, Amicus mentioned Hume's objections, and was told, "You will learn more as to poetry by reading one good poem than by a thousand volumes of criticism." Smith regarded the French theatre as the standard of dramatic excellence.

Amicus concludes his reminiscences by quoting one of Smith's observations on a political subject. He said that at the beginning of the reign of George the Third the dissenting ministers used to receive £2000 a year from Government, but that the Earl of Bute had most improperly deprived them of this allowance, and that he supposed this to be the real motive of their virulent opposition to Government.

These recollections of Amicus provoked a letter in a succeeding number of the *Bee* from Ascanius (the Earl of Buchan) complaining of their publication, not as in any way misrepresenting any of Smith's views, but as obtruding the trifles of the ordinary social hour upon the learned world in a way Smith himself would have extremely disliked. Smith, he says, would rather have had his body injected by Hunter and Monro, and exhibited in Fleet Street or in Weir's Museum. That may very possibly be so; but though Smith, if he were to give his views on literary topics to the public, might prefer putting them in more elaborate dress, yet the opinions he expressed were, it must be remembered, mature opinions on subjects on which he had long thought and even lectured, and if neither Dr. Anderson nor the Earl of Buchan has any fault to find with the correctness of Amicus's report of them, Smith cannot be considered to be any way wronged. The Earl complains too of the matter of the letter being "such frivolous matter"; but it is not so frivolous, and, if it were, is it not Smith himself who used to say to his class at Glasgow, as we are informed by Boswell, that there was nothing too frivolous to be learnt about a great man, and that, for his own part, he was always glad to know that Milton wore latchets to his shoes and not buckles?

In 1781 Gibbon seems to have been in doubt as to continuing his *History*, and desired Robertson, who happened to be up in London at the time, to talk the matter over with Smith after his return to Edinburgh. The result of this consultation is communicated in a letter from Robertson to Gibbon on 6th November 1781. "Soon after my return," says Robertson, "I had a long conversation with our friend Mr. Smith, in which I stated to him every particular you mentioned to me with respect to the propriety of going on with your work. I was happy to find that his opinion coincided perfectly with that which I had ventured to give you. His decisions, you know, are both prompt and vigorous, and he could not allow that you ought to hesitate a moment in your choice. He promised to write his sentiments to you very fully, but as he may have neglected to do this, for it is not willingly he puts pen to paper, I thought it might be agreeable to you to know his opinion, though I imagine you could hardly entertain any doubt concerning it."

Professor B. Faujas Saint Fond, Professor of Geology in the Museum of Natural History at Paris and member of the National Institute of France, paid a visit to Edinburgh in October or November 1782 in the course of a tour he made through Scotland, and received many civilities from Adam Smith, as he mentions in the account of his travels which he published in 1783. Saint Fond says there was nobody in Edinburgh he visited more frequently than Smith, and nobody received him more kindly or studied more to procure for him every information and amusement Edinburgh could afford. He was struck with Smith's numerous and, as he says, excellently chosen library. "The best French authors occupied a distinguished place in his library, for he was fond of our language." "Though advanced in years, he still possessed a fine figure; the animation of his countenance was striking when he spoke of Voltaire." I have already quoted the remark he made ().

One evening when the geologist was at tea with him, Smith spoke about Rousseau also, and spoke of him "with a kind of religious respect." "Voltaire," he said, "set himself to correct the vices and follies of mankind by laughing at them, and sometimes by treating them with severity, but Rousseau conducts the reader to reason and truth by the attractions of sentiment and the force of conviction. His 'Social Compact' will one day avenge all the persecutions he suffered."

Smith asked the Professor if he loved music, and on being told that it was one of his chief delights whenever it was well executed, rejoined, "I am very glad of it; I shall put you to a proof which will be very interesting for me, for I shall take you to hear a kind of music of which it is impossible you can have formed any idea, and it will afford me great pleasure to know the impression it makes upon you." The annual bagpipe competition was to take place next day, and accordingly in the morning Smith came to the Professor's lodgings at nine o'clock, and they proceeded at ten to a spacious concert-room, plainly but neatly decorated, which they found already filled with a numerous assembly of ladies and gentlemen. A large space was reserved in the middle of the room and occupied by gentlemen only, who, Smith said, were the judges of the performances that were to take place, and who were all inhabitants of the Highlands or Islands. The prize was for the best execution of some favourite piece of Highland music, and the same air was to be played successively by all the competitors. In about half an hour a folding door opened at the bottom of the hall, and the Professor was surprised to see a Highlander advance playing on a bagpipe, and dressed in the ancient kilt

and plaid of his country. “He walked up and down the vacant space in the middle of the hall with rapid steps and a martial air playing his noisy instrument, the discordant sounds of which were sufficient to rend the ear. The tune was a kind of sonata divided into three periods. Smith requested me to pay my whole attention to the music, and to explain to him afterwards the impression it made upon me. But I confess that at first I could not distinguish either air or design in the music. I was only struck with a piper marching backward and forward with great rapidity, and still presenting the same warlike countenance, he made incredible efforts with his body and his fingers to bring into play the different reeds of his instrument, which emitted sounds that were to me almost insupportable. He received, however, great praise.” Then came a second piper, who seemed to excel the first, judging from the clapping of hands and cries of bravo that greeted him from every side; and then a third and a fourth, till eight were heard successively; and the Professor began at length to realise that the first part of the music was meant to represent the clash and din and fury of war, and the last part the wailing for the slain, — and this last part, he observed, always drew tears from the eyes of a number of “the beautiful Scotch ladies” in the audience. After the music came a “lively and animated dance,” in which some of the pipers engaged, and the rest all played together “suitable airs possessing expression and character, though the union of so many bagpipes produced a most hideous noise.” He does not say whether his verdict was satisfactory to Smith, but the verdict was that it seemed to him like a bear’s dancing, and that “the impression the wild instrument made on the greater part of the audience was so different from the impression it made on himself, that he could not help thinking that the lively emotion of the persons around him was not occasioned by the musical effect of the air itself, but by some association of ideas which connected the discordant sounds of the pipe with historical events brought forcibly to their recollection.”

Nor were these annual competitions the only local institutions in which Smith took a more or less active interest. One of the duties of a citizen which he undertook will perhaps occasion surprise — he became a Captain of the City Guard. He was made Honorary Captain of the Trained Bands of Edinburgh — the City Guard — on the 4th of June 1781, “with the usual solemnity,” the minutes state, “and after spending the evening with grate joy, the whole corps retired, but in distinct divisions and good order, to quarters.”

The business of this body, according to its minutes, seems practically to have been mostly of a convivial character, and we can sympathise with the honest pride of the clerk in recording in what a condition of good order they were able to retire after celebrating that auspicious occasion with the joy it deserved. Smith no doubt attended their periodical festivities, or paid his fine of eight magnums of claret for absence. But their business was not all claret and punch. On the 8th September 1784, for example, the captains, lieutenants, and ensigns of the Trained Bands were called out, in consequence of an order from the Lord Provost, “to attend the wheeping of Paull and Anderson, actors in the late riots at Cannonmills.” A rescue riot was apprehended, and the Trained Bands met in the old Justiciary Court-room, and were armed there with “stowt oaken sticks.” Marching forth in regular order, they acted as guard to the magistrates during the day, and “by their formidable and respectable appearance had the good effect of detering the multitude so that they became only peaceable spectators.” Whether an honorary captain could be called upon for active service in an emergency I cannot say, but Smith’s name is not mentioned in the list of absentee captains upon this occasion.

In 1783 Smith joined Robertson and others in founding the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Robertson had long entertained the idea of establishing a society on the model of the foreign academies for the cultivation of every branch of science, learning, and taste, and he was at length moved into action by the steps taken in 1782 by the Earl of Buchan and others to obtain a royal charter for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, founded two years before. Robertson was very anxious to have only one learned society in Edinburgh, of which antiquities might be made a branch subject, and he even induced the University authorities to petition Parliament against granting a charter of incorporation to the Antiquarian Society. In this strong step the University was seconded by the Faculty of Advocates and the old Philosophical Society, founded by Colin Maclaurin in 1739, but their efforts failed. Out of the agitation, however, the Royal Society came into being. Whether Smith actively supported Robertson, or supported him at all, in his exertions against the Antiquarian Society, I do not know. He was not, as Robertson was, a member of the Society of Antiquaries. But he was one of the original members of the Royal Society. The society was divided into two branches, — a physical branch or class devoted to science; and a literary branch or class devoted to history and polite letters, — and Smith was one of the four presidents of the literary class. The Duke of Buccleugh

was President of the whole society; and Smith's colleagues in the presidency of the literary class were Robertson, Blair, and Baron Gordon (Cosmo Gordon of Cluny, a Baron of Exchequer and most accomplished man).

Smith never read a paper to this society, nor does he ever seem to have spoken in it except once or twice on a matter of business which had been entrusted to him. The only mention of his name in the printed *Transactions* is in connection with two prizes of 1000 ducats and 500 ducats respectively, which were offered to all the world in 1785 by Count J.N. de Windischgraetz for the two most successful inventions of such legal terminology for every sort of deed as, without imposing any new restraints on natural liberty, would yet leave no possible room for doubt or litigation, and would thereby diminish the number of lawsuits. The Count wished the prizes to be decided by three of the most distinguished literary academies in Europe, and had chosen for that purpose the Royal Academy of Science in Paris, which had already consented to undertake the duty; the Royal Society of Edinburgh, whose consent the Count now sought; and one of the academies of Germany or Switzerland which he was afterwards to name. He addressed his communication to the society through Adam Smith, who must therefore be assumed to have had some private acquaintance or connection with him; and on the 9th of July Smith laid the proposal before the Council of the society, and, as is reported in the *Transactions*, "signified to the meeting that although he entertained great doubt whether the problem of the Count de Windischgraetz admitted of any complete and rational solution, yet the views of the proposer being so highly laudable, and the object itself being of that nature that even an approximation to its attainment would be of importance to mankind, he was therefore of opinion that the society ought to agree to the request that was made to them. He added that it was his intention to communicate his sentiments on the subject to the Count by a letter which he would lay before the Council at a subsequent meeting." This letter was read to the Council on the 13th of December, and after being approved, a copy of it was requested for preservation among their papers, as the author "did not incline that it should be published in the Transactions of the society."

Nothing further is heard of this business till the 6th of August 1787, when "Mr. Commissioner Smith acquainted the society that the Count de Windischgraetz had transmitted to him three dissertations offered as solutions of his problem, and had desired the judgment of the society upon their merits. The society referred the consideration of these papers

to Mr. Smith, Mr. Henry Mackenzie of the Exchequer, and Mr. William Craig, advocate, as a committee to appraise and consider them, and to report their opinion to the society at a subsequent meeting.” At length, on the 21st January 1788, Mr. Commissioner Smith reported that this committee thought none of the three dissertations amounted either to a solution or an approximation to a solution of the Count’s problem, but that one of them was a work of great merit, and the society asked Mr. A. Fraser Tytler, one of their secretaries, to send on this opinion to the Count as their verdict.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE AMERICAN QUESTION AND OTHER POLITICS

Notwithstanding the patronage he received from Lord North and his relations of friendship and obligation with the Duke of Buccleugh and Henry Dundas, Smith continued to be a warm political supporter of the Rockingham Whigs and a warm opponent of the North ministry. The first Earl of Minto (then Sir Gilbert Elliot) visited Edinburgh in 1782, and wrote in his journal. “I have found one just man in Gomorrah, Adam Smith, author of the *Wealth of Nations*. He was the Duke of Buccleugh’s tutor, is a wise and deep philosopher, and although made Commissioner of the Customs here by the Duke and Lord Advocate, is what I call an *honest fellow*. He wrote a most kind as well as elegant letter to Burke on his resignation, as I believe I told you before, and on my mentioning it to him he told me he was the only man here who spoke out for the Rockinghams.” This letter is now lost, but Burke’s answer to it remains, and was sold at Sotheby’s a few years ago. Smith must have expressed the warmest approval of the step Fox and Burke had taken, on the death of the Marquis of Rockingham in July 1782, in resigning their offices in the Ministry rather than serve under their colleague Lord Shelburne, and he must have felt strongly on the subject to overcome his aversion to letter-writing on the occasion. Fox and Burke have been much censured for their refusal to serve under Shelburne, inasmuch as that refusal meant a practical disruption of the Whig party; and Burke could not help feeling strengthened, as he says he was in his letter, by the approval of a man like Smith, who was not only a profound political philosopher, but a thorough and loyal Whig. Notwithstanding his personal friendship with Lord Shelburne, Smith never seems to have trusted him as a political leader. We have already seen him condemning Shelburne at the time of that statesman’s first collision with Fox — the “pious fraud” occasion — and now nineteen years later he shows the same distrust of Shelburne, and doubtless for the same reason, that he believed Shelburne was willing to be subservient to the king’s designs, and to increase the power of the Crown, which it had ever been the aim of the Whigs to limit. Shelburne’s acceptance of office, after the king’s positive refusal to listen to the views of the Rockinghams themselves regarding the leadership of their own party, was probably regarded by Smith as a piece of open treason to the popular cause, and open espousal of the cause of the Court.

In those critical times the thoughts of even private citizens brooded on the arts of war. An Edinburgh lawyer who had never been at sea invented the system of naval tactics which gave Rodney his victories, and here is a Highland laird, who had spent his days among his herds in Skye, writing Smith about a treatise he has composed on fortification, which he believes to contain original discoveries of great importance, and which he sends up to Smith and Henry Mackenzie, with a five-pound note to pay the expenses of its publication. The author was Charles Mackinnon of Mackinnon, the chief of his clan, who fell into adverse circumstances shortly after the date of this correspondence, and parted with all the old clan property, and the treatise on fortification itself still exists among the manuscripts of the British Museum. It is certainly a poor affair, from which the author could have reaped nothing but disappointment, and Smith, who seems to have held Mr. Mackinnon in high esteem personally, strongly dissuades him from giving it to the press. This opinion is communicated in the following candid but kind letter: —

Dear Sir — I received your favour of the 13th of this month, and am under some concern to be obliged to tell you that I have not only not got out of the press, but that I have not yet gone into it, and would most earnestly once more recommend it to your consideration whether upon this occasion we should go into it at all. It was but within these few days that I could obtain a meeting with Mr. Mackinzie, who was occupied with the Exchequer Business. I find he had seen your papers before, and was of the same opinion with me that in their present condition they would not do you the honour we wish you to derive from whatever work you publish. We read them over together with great care and attention, and we both continued of our first opinion. I hope you will pardon me if I take the liberty to tell you that I cannot discover in them those original ideas which you seem to suppose that they contain. I am not very certain whether I understand what you hint obscurely in your former letter, but it seems to me as if you had some fear that some person might anticipate you, and claim the merit of your discoveries by publishing them as his own. From the character of the gentleman to whom your property has been communicated, I should hope there is no danger of this. But to prevent the Possibility of the Public being imposed upon in this manner, your Papers now lie sealed up in my writing Desk, superscribed with directions to my executors to return them unopened to you or your heirs as their proper owners. In case of my death and that of Mr. M’Kinzie, the production of these papers under my seal and superscribed by my hand will be sufficient to refute any plagiarism of this kind. While we live our

evidence will secure to you the reputation of whatever discoveries may be contained in them. I return you the five Pound note, in hopes that you will not insist upon this publication, at least for some time; at any rate, I shall always be happy to advance a larger sum upon your account, though I own I could wish it was for some other purpose. I have not shown your Papers to Smellie. It will give me great pleasure to hear from you, and to be informed that you forgive the freedom I have used in offering you, I am afraid, a disagreeable advice. I can assure you that nothing but the respect which I think I owe to the character of a person whom I know to be a man of worth, delicacy, and honour, could have extorted it from me. — I ever am, dear sir, most faithfully yours,

Adam Smith.

Custom House, Edinburgh,
21st August 1782.

If you should not chuse that your Papers should remain in my custody, I shall either send them to you or deliver to whom you please.

While one Highland laird was planning to save his country by an improved system of fortification, another was conceiving a grander project of saving her by continental alliances. The moment was among the darkest England has ever passed through. We were engaged in a death-struggle against France, Spain, and the American colonies combined. Cornwallis had just repeated at Yorktown the humiliating surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga. Elliot lay locked in Gibraltar. Ireland was growing restive and menacing on one side, and the Northern powers of Europe on the other — the Armed Neutrality, as they were called — sat and watched, with their hands on their sword-hilts and a grudge against England in their hearts. Now Sir John Sinclair believed that these neutral powers held the key of the situation, and wrote a pamphlet in 1782, which he proposed to translate into their respective tongues for the purpose of persuading them to join this country in a crusade against the House of Bourbon, and "to emancipate the colonies both in the West Indies and on the continent of America for the general interest of all nations." The price he was prepared to offer these powers for their adhesion was to be a share in the colonial commerce of England, and the acquisition of some of the French and Spanish colonial dependencies for themselves. Sinclair sent his pamphlet to Smith, apparently with a request for his opinion on the advisability of translating it for the conversion of the powers, and he received the following reply. I may add

that I have not been able to see this pamphlet, but that it is evidently not the pamphlet entitled “Impartial Considerations on the Propriety of retaining Gibraltar,” as Sinclair’s biographer supposes; for in the former pamphlet Sinclair is advocating not only a continuance, but an extension of the war, whereas in the latter he has come round to the advocacy of peace, and instead of contemplating the deprivation of France and Spain of their colonies, he recommends the cession of Gibraltar as a useless and expensive possession, using very much the same line of argument which Smith suggests in this letter. Smith’s letter very probably had some influence in changing his views, though it is true the idea of ceding Gibraltar was in 1782 much favoured by a party in Lord Shelburne’s government, and even by the king himself.

Smith’s letter ran thus: —

My dear Sir — I have read your pamphlet several times with great pleasure, and am very much pleased with the style and composition. As to what effect it might produce if translated upon the Powers concerned in the Armed Neutrality, I am a little doubtful. It is too plainly partial to England. It proposes that the force of the Armed Neutrality should be employed in recovering to England the islands she has lost, and the compensation which it is proposed that England should give for this service is the islands which they may conquer for themselves, with the assistance of England indeed, from France and Spain. There seems to me besides to be some inconsistency in the argument. If it be just to emancipate the continent of America from the dominion of every European power, how can it be just to subject the islands to such dominion? and if the monopoly of the trade of the continent be contrary to the rights of mankind, how can that of the islands be agreeable to these rights? The real futility of all distant dominions, of which the defence is necessarily most expensive, and which contribute nothing, either by revenue or military forces, to the general defence of the empire, and very little even to their own particular defence, is, I think, the subject on which the public prejudices of Europe require most to be set right. In order to defend the barren rock of Gibraltar (to the possession of which we owe the union of France and Spain, contrary to the natural interests and inveterate prejudices of both countries, the important enmity of Spain and the futile and expensive friendship of Portugal) we have now left our own coasts defenceless, and sent out a great fleet, to which any considerable disaster may prove fatal to our domestic security; and which, in order to effectuate its purpose, must probably engage a fleet of superior force. Sore eyes have made me delay writing to you so long. —

I ever am, my dear sir, your most faithful and affectionate humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Custom House, Edinburgh,
14th October 1782.

The strong opinion expressed in this letter of the uselessness of colonial dependencies, which contributed nothing to the maintenance of the mother country, had of course been already expressed in the *Wealth of Nations*. “Perish uncontributing colonies” is the very pith of the last sentence of that work. “If any of the provinces of the British Empire cannot be made to contribute towards the support of the whole empire, it is surely time that Great Britain should free herself from the expense of defending those provinces in time of war and of supporting any part of their civil or military establishments in time of peace; and endeavour to accommodate her future views and designs to the real mediocrity of her circumstances.”

The principles of free trade presently got an impetus from the conclusion of peace with America and France in 1783. Lord Shelburne wrote Abbé Morellet in 1783 that the treaties of that year were inspired from beginning to end by “the great principle of free trade,” and that “a peace was good in the exact proportion that it recognised that principle.” A fitting opportunity was thought to have arisen for making somewhat extended applications of the principle, and many questions were asked about how far such applications should go in this direction or that. When the American Intercourse Bill was before the House in 1783, one of Lord Shelburne’s colleagues in the Ministry, William Eden, approached Smith in considerable perplexity as to the wisdom of conceding to the new republic free commercial intercourse with this country and our colonies. Eden had already done something for free trade in Ireland, and he was presently to earn a name as a great champion of that principle, after successfully negotiating with Dupont de Nemours the Commercial Treaty with France in 1786; but in 1787 he had not accepted the principle so completely as his chief, Lord Shelburne. Perhaps, indeed, he never took a firm hold of the principle at any time, for Smith always said of him, “He is but a man of detail.” Anyhow, when he wrote Smith in 1783 he was under serious alarm at the proposal to give the United States the same freedom to trade with Canada and Nova Scotia as we enjoyed ourselves. Being so near those colonies, the States would be sure to oust

Great Britain and Ireland entirely out of the trade of provisioning them. The Irish fisheries would be ruined, the English carrying trade would be lost. The Americans, with fur at their doors, could easily beat us in hats, and if we allowed them to import our tools free, they would beat us in everything else for which they had the raw materials in plenty. Eden and Smith seem to have exchanged several letters on this subject, but none of them remain except the following one from Smith, in which he declares that it would be an injustice to our own colonies to restrict their trade with the United States merely to benefit Irish fish-curers or English hatters, and to be bad policy to impose special discouragements on the trade of one foreign nation which are not imposed on the trade of others. His argument is not, it will be observed, for free trade, which he perhaps thought then impracticable, but merely for equality of treatment, — equality of treatment between the British subject in Canada and the British subject in England, and equality of treatment between the American nation and the Russian, or French, or Spanish.

Dear Sir — If the Americans really mean to subject the goods of all different nations to the same duties and to grant them the same indulgence, they set an example of good sense which all other nations ought to imitate. At any rate it is certainly just that their goods, their naval stores for example, should be subjected to the same duties to which we subject those of Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, and that we should treat them as they mean to treat us and all other nations.

What degree of commercial connection we should allow between the remaining colonies, whether in North America or the West Indies, and the United States may to some people appear a more difficult question. My own opinion is that it should be allowed to go on as before, and whatever inconveniences result from this freedom may be remedied as they occur. The lumber and provisions of the United States are more necessary to our West India Islands than the rum and sugar of the latter are to the former. Any interruption or restraint of commerce would hurt our loyal much more than our revolted subjects. Canada and Nova Scotia cannot justly be refused at least the same freedom of commerce which we grant to the United States.

I suspect the Americans do not mean what they say. I have seen a Revenue Act of South Carolina by which two shillings are laid upon every hundredweight of brown sugar imported from the British plantations, and only eighteenpence upon that imported from any foreign colony. Upon every pound of refined sugar from the former one penny,

from the latter one halfpenny. Upon every gallon of French wine twopence; of Spanish wine threepence; of Portuguese wine fourpence.

I have little anxiety about what becomes of the American commerce. By an equality of treatment of all nations we must soon open a commerce with the neighbouring nations of Europe infinitely more advantageous than that of so distant a country as America. This is an immense subject upon which when I wrote to you last I intended to have sent you a letter of many sheets, but as I expect to see you in a few weeks I shall not trouble you with so tedious a dissertation. I shall only say at present that every extraordinary, either encouragement or discouragement that is given to the trade of any country more than to that of another may, I think, be demonstrated to be in every case a complete piece of dupery, by which the interest of the state and the nation is constantly sacrificed to that of some particular class of traders. I heartily congratulate you upon the triumphant manner in which the East India Bill has been carried through the Lower House. I have no doubt of its passing through the Upper House in the same manner. The decisive judgment and resolution with which Mr. Fox has introduced and supported that Bill does him the highest honour. — I ever am, with the greatest respect and esteem, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *15th December 1783*.

Fox’s East India Bill, of which Smith expresses such unqualified commendation, proposed to transfer the government of British India from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to a new board of Crown nominees. This measure was entirely to Smith’s mind. He had already in the former editions of his book condemned the company which, as he says, “oppresses and domineers in India,” and in the additional matter which he wrote about the company immediately before this bill was introduced he declared of them that “no other sovereigns ever were, or, from the nature of things, ever could be, so perfectly indifferent about the happiness or misery of their subjects, the improvement or waste of their dominions, the glory or disgrace of their administration, as, from irresistible moral causes, the greater part of the proprietors of such a mercantile company are and necessarily must be.”

CHAPTER XXVII. BURKE IN SCOTLAND

1784-1785

Burke had been elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow in November 1783 in succession to Dundas, and he came down to Scotland to be installed in the following April. He spent altogether eight or ten days in the country, and he spent them all in the company of Smith, who attended him wherever he went. Burke and Smith, always profound admirers of one another's writings, had grown warm friends during the recent lengthened residence of the latter in London. Even in the brilliant circle round the brown table in Gerrard Street there was none Burke loved or esteemed more highly than Smith. One of the statesman's biographers informs us, on the authority of an eminent literary friend, who paid him a visit at Beaconsfield after his retirement from public life, that he then spoke with the warmest admiration of Smith's vast learning, his profound understanding, and the great importance of his writings, and added that his heart was as good and rare as his head, and that his manners were "peculiarly pleasing." Smith on his part was drawn to Burke by no less powerful an attraction. He once paid him a compliment with which the latter appears to have been particularly gratified, for he repeated it to his literary friend on this same occasion. "Burke," said the economist, "is the only man I ever knew who thinks on economic subjects exactly as I do, without any previous communications having passed between us."

The installation of Lord Rector was to take place on Saturday the 10th of April, and Burke arrived in Edinburgh on Tuesday or Wednesday previous. Whether he was Smith's guest while there I am unable to say, but at any rate it was Smith who did the honours of the town to him, and accompanied him wherever he went. Dalzel, the Greek professor, gives an account of the statesman's visit, to his old friend and class-fellow, Sir Robert Liston, and states that "Lord Maitland attended him constantly and Mr. Adam Smith. They brought him," he adds, "to my house the day after he arrived." Lord Maitland was the eldest son of the Earl of Lauderdale, and became a well-known figure both in politics and in scientific economics after he succeeded to the peerage himself. I have already mentioned him for his admiration of Smith, and his defence of him from the disparaging remarks of Fox, though he was himself no

blind follower of the *Wealth of Nations*, but one of the earliest and not the least acute of the critics of that work. He was at this time one of the rising hopes of the Whigs in the House of Commons, which he had entered as representative of a Cornish borough in 1780. Dalzel had been his tutor, and had accompanied him in that capacity to Oxford; and being also a great favourite with Smith, whom he respected above all things for his knowledge of Greek, he was naturally among the first of the eminent citizens to whom they introduced their distinguished guest.

On Thursday morning Burke and Smith went out with Lord Maitland to Hatton, the Lauderdale seat in Midlothian, to dine and stay the night there on their way to Glasgow, and Dugald Stewart and Dalzel joined them later in the day after they had finished their college classes. The conversation happened very naturally to touch on party prospects, for they were at the moment in the thick of a general election — the famous election of 1784, so fatal to the Whigs, when near 160 supporters of the Coalition Ministry— "Fox's martyrs" — lost their seats, and Pitt was sent back with an enormous majority behind him. Parliament had been dissolved a fortnight before, and many of the elections were already past; Burke himself had been returned for Malton on his way north, but the battle was still raging; in Westminster, where the Whig chief was himself fighting, it lasted a month longer, and in many other constituencies the event was as yet undecided. As far as returns had been made, however, things had gone hard with the Whigs, and Burke was despondent. He had been some twenty years in public life without his party being in power as many months, and since the party seemed now doomed, as indeed it was, to twenty years of opposition again, he turned to Lord Maitland and said, "Lord Maitland, if you want to be in office, if you have any ambition or wish to be successful in life, shake us off, give us up." But Smith intervened, and with singular hopefulness ventured to prophesy that in two years things would certainly come round again. "Why," replied Burke, "I have already been in a minority nineteen years, and your two years, Mr. Smith, will just make me twenty-one, and it will surely be high time for me to be then in my majority."

Smith's hearty remark implies his continued loyalty to the Rockinghams, and shows that just as he two years before approved of their separation from Lord Shelburne, which many Whig critics have censured, so he now equally approved of their coalition with their old adversary, Lord North, which Whig critics have censured more severely still. But his sanguine forecast was far astray. Burke never again returned to office, and the whole conversation reads strangely in the light of

subsequent events. Only a few years more and Burke had himself shaken off his friends — from no view to power, it is true — and the young nobleman to whom he gave the advice in jest was to take the lead in avenging the desertion, and to denounce the pension it was proposed to give him as the wages of apostasy. The French Revolution, which drove Burke back to a more conservative position, carried Lord Maitland, who had drunk in Radicalism from Professor John Millar, forward into the republican camp. He went over to Paris with Dugald Stewart and harangued the mob on the streets *pour la liberté*, and he said one day to the Duchess of Gordon, “I hope, madame, ere long to have the pleasure of introducing Mrs. Maitland to Mrs. Gordon.”

On the present occasion at Hatton, however, they were all one in their lamentations over the temporary eclipse the cause of liberty had suffered. On the following morning they all set out together for Glasgow, Stewart and Dalzel being able to accompany them because it was Good Friday, and Good Friday was then a holiday at Edinburgh University. They supped that evening with Professor John Millar, Smith’s pupil and Lord Maitland’s master, and next day they assisted at the ceremony of installation. The chief business was of course the Rector’s address, described in the *Annual Register* of the year as “a very polite and elegant speech suited to the occasion.” Tradition says Burke broke down in this speech, and after speaking five minutes concluded abruptly by saying he was unable to proceed, as he had never addressed so learned an audience before; but though the tradition is mentioned by Jeffrey, who was a student at Glasgow only three years afterwards, and is more definitely stated by Professor Young of the same University in his *Lectures on Intellectual Philosophy* (), there appears to be no solid foundation for it whatever. It is not mentioned by Dalzel, who would be unlikely to omit so interesting a circumstance in the gossiping account of the affair which he gives in his letter to Sir R. Liston.

After the installation they adjourned to the College chapel for divine service, where they heard a sermon from Professor Arthur, and then they dined in the College Hall. On Sunday Stewart and Dalzel returned to Edinburgh for their classes next day, but Smith and Lord Maitland accompanied Burke on an excursion to Loch Lomond, of which we know Smith was a great admirer. He said to Samuel Rogers it was the finest lake in Great Britain, and the feature that pleased him particularly was the contrast between the islands and the shore. They did not return to Edinburgh till Wednesday, and they returned then by way of Carron, probably to see the ironworks. On Thursday evening they dined at

Smith's, Dalzel being again of the party. Burke seems to have been at his best— "the most agreeable and entertaining man in conversation I ever knew," says Dalzel. "We got a vast deal of political anecdotes from him, and fine pictures of political characters both dead and living. Whether they were impartially drawn or not, that is questionable, but they were admirably drawn."

The elections were still proceeding, and the 29th of April was fixed for the election in Lanarkshire, which had been represented for the previous ten years by a strong personal friend of Smith, Andrew Stuart of Torrance. I have already mentioned Stuart's name in connection with his candidature for the Indian Commissionership, for which Sir William Pulteney thought of proposing Smith. Though now forgotten, he was a notable person in his day. He came first strongly into public notice during the proceedings in the Douglas cause. Having, as law-agent for the Duke of Hamilton, borne the chief part in preparing the Hamilton side of the case, he was attacked in the House of Lords — and attacked with quite unusual virulence — both by Thurlow, the counsel for the other side, and by Lord Mansfield, one of the judges; and he met those attacks by fighting a duel with Thurlow, and writing a series of letters to Lord Mansfield, which obtained much attention and won him a high name for ability. Shortly thereafter — in 1774 — he entered Parliament as member for Lanarkshire, and made such rapid mark that he was appointed a Commissioner of Trade and Plantations in 1779, and seemed destined to higher office. But now in 1784, on the very eve of the election, Stuart suddenly retired from the field, in consequence apparently of some personal considerations arising between himself and the Duke of Hamilton. He was extremely anxious to have his reasons for this unexpected step immediately and fully explained to his personal friends in Edinburgh, and on the 22nd of April — the day before he wrote his resignation — he sent his whole correspondence with the Duke of Hamilton about the matter through to John Davidson, W.S., for their perusal, and especially, it would appear, for the perusal of Smith, the only one he names. "There is particularly," he says, "one friend, Mr. Adam Smith, whom I wish to be fully informed of everything." Being the only friend specifically named in the letter, Smith seems to have been consulted by Davidson as to any other "particular friends" to whom the correspondence should be submitted, and he wrote Davidson on the 7th of May 1784 advising him to show it to Campbell of Stonefield, one of the Lords of Session, and a brother-in-law of Lord Bute. He says —

My Lord Stonefield is an old attached and faithful friend of A. Stuart. The papers relative to the County of Lanark may safely be communicated to him. He is perfectly convinced of the propriety of what you and I agreed upon, that the subject ought to be talked of as little as possible, and never but among his most intimate and cordial friends.

A. Smith.

Friday, 7th May.

After being brightened by the agreeable visit of Burke, Smith was presently cast into the deepest sadness by what seems to have been the first trouble of his singularly serene and smooth life — the death of his mother. She died on the 23rd of May, in her ninetieth year. The three avenues to Smith, says the Earl of Buchan, were always his mother, his books, and his political opinions — his mother apparently first of all. They had lived together, off and on, for sixty years, and being most tenderly attached to her, he is said, after her death, never to have seemed the same again. According to Ramsay of Ochtertyre, he was so disconsolate that people in general could find no explanation except in his supposed unbelief in the resurrection. He sorrowed, they said, as those who have no hope. People in general would seem to have little belief in the natural affections; but while they extracted from Smith's filial love a proof of his infidelity, Archdeacon John Sinclair seeks to extract from it a demonstration of his religious faith. It appears that when Mrs. Smith was visited on her deathbed by her minister, her famous son always remained in the room and joined in the prayers, though they were made in the name and for the sake of Christ; and the worthy Archdeacon thinks no infidel would have done that.

The depression Smith showed after his mother's death, however, was unfortunately due in part to the fact that his own health was beginning to fail. He was now sixty-one; as Stewart tells us, he aged very rapidly, and in two years more he was in the toils of the malady that carried him off. The shock of his mother's death could not help therefore telling severely upon him in his declining bodily condition.

Burke was — no doubt at Smith's instance — elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in June 1784, in spite of several black balls; for, as Dalzel observes, "it would seem that there are some violent politicians among us"; and in August 1785 he was again in Scotland attending to the duties of his Rectorship. He was accompanied this time by Windham, who was the most attached and the most beloved of his political disciples, and who had been a student at Glasgow himself in

1766. If Dalzel was delighted with Burke, he was enchanted with Windham, for, says he to Liston, “besides his being a polite man and a man of the world, he is perhaps the very best Greek scholar I ever met with. He did me the honour of breakfasting with me one morning, and sat for three hours talking about Greek. When we were at Hatton he and I stole away as often as we could from the rest of the company to read and talk about Greek.... You may judge how I would delight in him.” Smith was not at Hatton with them this time, but he saw much of them in Edinburgh.

Smith had probably known Windham already, but at any rate, as soon as Burke and he arrived in Edinburgh on the 24th of August and took their quarters in Dun’s Hotel, they paid a visit to Smith, and next day they dined with him at his house. Among the guests mentioned by Windham as being present were Robertson; Henry Erskine, who had recently been Burke’s colleague in the Coalition Ministry as Lord Advocate; and Mr. Cullen, probably the doctor, though it may have been his son (afterwards a judge), who lives in fame chiefly for his feats as a mimic. Windham gives us no scrap of their conversation except a few remarks of Robertson about Holyrood; and though he says he recollected no one else of the company except those he has mentioned, there was at least one other guest whose presence there that evening he was shortly afterwards to have somewhat romantic occasion to recall. This was Sir John Sinclair, who had just re-entered Parliament for a constituency at the Land’s End, after having been defeated in the Wick burghs by Fox. Burke and Windham proposed making a tour in the Highlands, and Sir John advised them strongly, when they came to the beautiful district between Blair-Athole and Dunkeld, to leave their post-chaise for that stage and walk through the woods and glens on foot. They took the advice, and about ten miles from Dunkeld came upon a young lady, the daughter of a neighbouring proprietor, reading a novel under a tree. They entered into conversation with her, and Windham was so much struck with her smartness and talent that though he was obliged at the time, as he said, most reluctantly to leave her, he, three years afterwards, came to Sinclair in the House of Commons and said to him, “I have never been able to get this beautiful mountain nymph out of my mind, and I wish you to ascertain whether she is married or single.” Windham was too late. She was already married to Dr. Dick — afterwards a much-trusted medical adviser of Sir Walter Scott — and had gone with her husband to the East Indies.

They returned to Edinburgh on the 13th of September, and, says Windham, “after dinner walked to Adam Smith’s. Felt strongly the impression of a family completely Scotch. House magnificent and place fine.... Found there Colonels Balfour and Ross, the former late aide-de-camp to General Howe, the latter to Lord Cornwallis. Felt strongly the impression of a company completely Scotch.”

Colonel Nesbit Balfour, who won great distinction in the American war, was the son of one of Smith’s old Fifeshire neighbours, a proprietor in that county, and became afterwards well known in Parliament, where he sat from 1790 to 1812. Colonel (afterwards General) Alexander Ross had also taken a distinguished part in the American war, and was Cornwallis’s most intimate friend and correspondent. He was at this time Deputy-Adjutant-General of the Forces in Scotland. Whether he was a relation of the Colonel Patrick Ross of whom Smith speaks in one of his letters as a kinsman of his own, I cannot say.

Next day, the 14th, Burke and Windham dined with Smith. There was no other guest except a Mr. Skene, no doubt one of Smith’s cousins from Pitlour, probably the Inspector-General of Scotch Roads already mentioned. On the following morning the two statesmen proceeded on their way southward.

One of the visits Burke paid in Edinburgh was to a charming poet, to whom fortune has been singularly unkind, not only treating him cruelly when alive, but instead of granting the usual posthumous reparation, treating him even more cruelly after his death. I mean John Logan, the author of the *Ode to the Cuckoo*, which Burke thought the most beautiful lyric in the language. Logan was at the moment in the thick of his troubles. He had written a tragedy called *Runnymede*, which, though accepted by the management of Covent Garden, was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, who scented current politics in the bold speeches of the Barons of King John, but it was eventually produced in the Edinburgh theatre in 1783. Its production immediately involved the author, as one of the ministers of Leith, in difficulties with his parishioners and the ecclesiastical courts similar to those which John Home had encountered twenty years before, and the trouble ended in Logan resigning his charge in December 1786 on a pension of £40 a year. Smith, who was an admirer and, as Dr. Carlyle mentions to Bishop Douglas, a “great patron” of Logan, stood by him through these troubles. When they first broke out in 1783 he wished, as Logan himself tells his old pupil Sir John Sinclair, to get the poet transferred if possible from his parish in Leith to the more liberal and enlightened parish of the

Canongate, and when Logan eventually made up his mind to take refuge in literature, Smith gave him the following letter of introduction to Andrew Strahan, who had, since his father's death, become the head of the firm: —

Dear Sir — Mr. Logan, a clergyman of uncommon learning, taste, and ingenuity, but who cannot easily submit to the puritanical spirit of this country, quits his charge and proposes to settle in London, where he will probably exercise what may be called the trade of a man of letters. He has published a few poems, of which several have great merit, and which are probably not unknown to you. He has likewise published a tragedy, which I cannot say I admire in the least. He has another in manuscript, founded and almost translated from a French drama, which is much better. But the best of all his works which I have seen are some lectures upon universal history, which were read here some years ago, but which, notwithstanding they were approved and even admired by some of the best and most impartial judges, were run down by the prevalence of a hostile literary faction, to the leaders of which he had imprudently given some personal offence. Give me leave to recommend him most earnestly to your countenance and protection. If he was employed on a review he would be an excellent hand for giving an account of all books of taste, of history, and of moral and abstract philosophy. — I ever am, my dear sir, most faithfully and affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *29th September 1785*.

The lectures which Smith praises so highly were published in 1779, and are interesting as one of the first adventures in what was afterwards known as the philosophy of history. But his memory rests now on his poems, which Smith thought less of, and especially on his *Ode to the Cuckoo*, which he has been accused so often of stealing from his deceased friend Michael Bruce, but to which his title has at last been put beyond all doubt by Mr. Small's publication of a letter, written to Principal Baird in 1791, by Dr. Robertson of Dalmeny, who acted as joint editor with him of their common friend Bruce's poems.

CHAPTER XXVIII. THE POPULATION QUESTION

Dr. Richard Price had recently stirred a sensation by his attempt to prove that the population of England was declining, and had actually declined by nearly 30 per cent since the Revolution, and the first to enter the lists against him was William Eden, who in his *Fifth Letter to the Earl of Carlisle*, published in 1780, exposes the weakness of Price's statistics, and argues that both the population and the trade of the country had increased. Price replied to these criticisms in the same year, and now in 1785 Eden appears to have been contemplating a return to the subject and the publication of another work upon it, in connection with which he entered upon a correspondence with Smith, for the two following letters bearing on this population question of last century, though neither of them bears any name or address, seem most likely to have been written to that politician.

Price had drawn his alarmist conclusions from rough estimates founded on the revenue returns. From a comparison of the hearth-money returns before the Revolution with the window and house tax returns of his own time he guessed at the number of dwelling-houses in the country, and from the number of dwelling-houses he guessed at the number of inhabitants by simply supposing each house to contain five persons. He further tried to support his conclusion by figures drawn from bills of mortality and by references to colonial emigration, consolidation of farms, the growth of London, and the progress of luxury.

Smith thought very poorly of those ill-founded speculations, and even of their author generally, and he appears to have called Eden's attention to a population return relative to Scotland which furnished a sounder basis for a just estimate of the numbers of the people than the statistics on which Price relied. This was a return of the number of examinable persons in every parish of Scotland which had been obtained in 1755 by Dr. Alexander Webster, at the desire of Lord President Dundas, for the information of the Government. Public catechisings were then, and in many parishes are still, part of the ordinary duties of the minister, who visited each hamlet and district of his parish successively for the purpose every year, and consequently every minister kept a list of the examinable persons in his parish — the persons who were old enough to answer his

questions on the Bible or Shorter Catechism. None were too old to be exempt. Webster procured copies of these lists for every parish in Scotland, and when he added to each a certain proportion to represent the number of persons under examinable age, he had a fairly accurate statement of the population of the country. He appears to have procured the lists for 1779 as well as those for 1755, and to have ascertained from a comparison of the two that the population of Scotland had remained virtually stationary during that quarter of a century, the increase in the commercial and manufacturing districts being counterbalanced by a diminution in the purely agricultural districts, due to the consolidation of farms. That, at least, was the impression of the officials of the Ministers' Widows' Fund, through whom the correspondence on the subject with the ministers had been conducted; and they threw doubt on an observation of a contrary import — apparently to the effect that the population of Scotland was increasing — which Smith heard Webster make in one of those hours of merriment for which that popular and useful divine seems destined to be remembered when his public services are forgotten.

Smith's first letter runs thus: —

Sir — I have been so long in answering your very obliging letter of the 8th inst. that I am afraid you will imagine I have been forgetting or neglecting it. I hoped to send one of the accounts by the post after I received your letter, but some difficulties have occurred which I was not aware of, and you may yet be obliged to wait a few days for it. In the meantime I send you a note extracted from Mr. Webster's book by his clerk, who was of great use to him in composing it, and who has made several corrections upon it since.

My letters as a Commissioner of the Customs are paid at the Custom House, and my correspondents receive them duty free. I should otherwise have taken the liberty to enclose them, as you direct, under Mr. Rose's cover. It may perhaps give that gentleman pleasure to be informed that the net revenue arising from the customs in Scotland is at least four times greater than it was seven or eight years ago. It has been increasing rapidly these four or five years past, and the revenue of this year has overleaped by at least one-half the revenue of the greatest former year. I flatter myself it is likely to increase still further. The development of the causes of this augmentation would require a longer discussion than this letter will admit.

Price’s speculations cannot fail to sink into the neglect that they have always deserved. I have always considered him as a factious citizen, a most superficial philosopher, and by no means an able calculator. — I have the honour to be, with great respect and esteem, sir, your most faithful humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Custom House, Edinburgh, *22nd December 1785*.

I shall certainly think myself very much honoured by any notice you may think proper to take of my book.

The second letter followed in a few days: —

Edinburgh, *3rd January 1786*.

Sir — The accounts of the imports and exports of Scotland which you wanted are sent by this day’s post to Mr. Rose.

Since I wrote to you last I have conversed with Sir Henry Moncreiff, Dr. Webster’s successor as collector of the fund for the maintenance of clergymen’s widows, and with his clerk, who was likewise clerk to Dr. Webster, and who was of great use to the Doctor in the composition of the very book which I mentioned to you in a former letter. They are both of opinion that the conversation I had with Dr. Webster a few months before his death must have been the effect of a momentary and sudden thought, and not of any serious or deliberate consideration or inquiry. It was, indeed, at a very jolly table and in the midst of much mirth and jollity, of which the worthy Doctor, among many other useful and amiable qualities, was a very great lover and promoter. They told me that in the year 1779 a copy of the Doctor’s book was made out by his clerk for the use of my Lord North. That at the end of that book the Doctor had subjoined a note to the following purpose, that though between 1755 and 1779 the numbers in the great trading and manufacturing towns and villages were considerably increased, yet the Highlands and Islands were much depopulated, and even the low country, by the enlargement of farms, in some degree; so that the whole numbers, he imagined, must be nearly the same at both periods. Both these gentlemen believe that this was the last deliberate judgment which Dr. Webster ever formed upon this subject. The lists mentioned in the note are the lists of what are called examinable persons — that is, of persons upwards of seven or eight years of age, who are supposed fit to be publicly examined upon religious and moral subjects. Most of our country clergy keep examination rolls of this kind.

My Lord North will, I dare to say, be happy to accommodate you with the use of this book. It is a great curiosity, though the conversation I

mentioned to you had a little shaken my faith in it — I am glad now to suppose, without much reason. — I have the honour to be, with the highest regard, sir, your most obedient humble servant,

Adam Smith.

A new edition of the *Wealth of Nations* — the fourth — appeared in 1786, without any alteration in the text from the previous one, but the author prefixed to it an advertisement acknowledging the very great obligations he had been under to Mr. Henry Hope, the banker at Amsterdam, for (to quote the words of the advertisement) "the most distinct as well as the most liberal information concerning a very interesting and important subject, the Bank of Amsterdam, of which no printed account has ever appeared to me satisfactory or even intelligible. The name of that gentleman is so well known in Europe, the information which comes from him must do so much honour to whoever has been favoured with it, and my vanity is so much interested in making this acknowledgment, that I can no longer refuse myself the pleasure of prefixing this advertisement to this new edition of my book."

Smith had now, as he says in the following letter, reached his grand climacteric — his sixty-third year, according to the old belief, the last and most dangerous of the periodical crises to which man's bodily life was supposed to be subject — and the winter of 1786-87 laid him so low with a chronic obstruction of the bowels that Robertson wrote Gibbon they were in great danger of losing him. That was the winter Burns was in Edinburgh, and it was doubtless owing to this illness and Smith's consequent inability to go into society, that he and the poet never met. Burns obtained a letter of introduction to Smith from their common friend Mrs. Dunlop, but writes her on the 19th of April that when he called he found Smith had gone to London the day before, having recovered, as we know he did, sufficiently in spring to go up there for the purpose of consulting John Hunter. He was still in Edinburgh in March, however, and wrote Bishop Douglas a letter introducing one of his Fifeshire neighbours, Robert Beatson, the author of the well-known and very useful *Political Index*. Beatson had been an officer of the Engineers, but had retired on half-pay in 1766 and become an agriculturist in his native county. While there he compiled his unique and valuable work, which he published in 1786 and dedicated to his old friend Adam Smith. A new edition was called for within a year, and the author proposed to add some new matter, on which he desired the advice of Bishop Douglas. Hence this letter: —

Dear Sir — This letter will be delivered to you by Mr. Robert Beatson of Vicars Grange, in Fifeshire, a very worthy friend of mine, and my neighbour in the country for more than ten years together. He has lately published a very useful book called a Political Index, which has been very successful, and which he now proposes to republish with some additions. He wishes much to have your good advice with regard to these additions, and indeed with regard to every other part of his book. And indeed, without flattering you, I know no man so fit to give him good advice upon this subject. May I therefore beg leave to introduce him to your acquaintance, and to recommend him most earnestly to your best advice and assistance. You will find him a very good-natured, well-informed, inoffensive, and obliging companion.

I was exceedingly vexed and not a little offended when I heard that you had passed through this town some time ago without calling upon me, or letting me know that you was in our neighbourhood. My anger, however, which was very fierce, is now a good deal abated, and if you promise to behave better for the future, it is not impossible that I may forgive the past.

This year I am in my grand climacteric, and the state of my health has been a good deal worse than usual. I am getting better and better, however, every day, and I begin to flatter myself that with good pilotage I shall be able to weather this dangerous promontory of human life, after which I hope to sail in smooth water for the remainder of my days. — I am ever, my dear sir, most faithfully and affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *6th March 1787*.

CHAPTER XXIX. VISIT TO LONDON

1787. *Aet.* 64

In April he had improved enough to undertake the journey to London to consult Hunter, but he was wasted to a skeleton. William Playfair — brother of his friend the Professor of Mathematics, and afterwards one of the early editors of the *Wealth of Nations* — met him soon after his arrival in London, and says he was looking very ill, and was evidently going to decay. While in his usual health he was, though not corpulent, yet rather stout than spare, but he was now reduced to skin and bone. He was able, however, to move about in society and see old friends and make new. Windham in his Diary mentions meeting him at several different places, and he was now introduced for the first time to the young statesman who was only a student in the Temple when he was last in London in 1777, but who was already one of the most powerful ministers England had ever seen, and was at the moment reforming the national finances with the *Wealth of Nations* in his hand. Pitt always confessed himself one of Smith's most convinced disciples. The first few years of his long ministry saw the daybreak of free trade. He brought in a measure of commercial emancipation for Ireland; he carried a commercial treaty with France; he passed, in accordance with Smith's recommendations, laws simplifying the collection and administration of the revenue. In this very year 1787 he introduced his great Consolidation Bill, which created order out of the previous chaos of customs and excise, and was so extensive a work that it took 2537 separate resolutions to state its provisions, and these resolutions had only just been read on the 7th of March, a few weeks before Smith arrived in London.

No one in London therefore was more interested to meet Smith than the young minister who was carrying the economist's principles out so extensively in practical legislation. They met repeatedly, but they met on one occasion, of which recollection has been preserved, at Dundas's house on Wimbledon Green, — Addington, Wilberforce, and Grenville being also of the company; and it is said that when Smith, who was one of the last guests to arrive, entered the room, the whole company rose from their seats to receive him and remained standing. "Be seated, gentlemen," said Smith. "No," replied Pitt; "we will stand till you are

first seated, for we are all your scholars." This story seems to rest on Edinburgh tradition, and was first published, so far as I know, in the 1838 edition of Kay's *Portraits*, more than half a century after the date of the incident it relates. Most of the biographies contained in that work were written by James Paterson, but a few of the earliest, including this of Smith, were not. They were all written, however, from materials which had been long collected by Kay himself, who only died in 1832, or which were obtained before the time of publication from local residents who had known the men themselves, or had mingled with those who did. The whole were edited by the well-known and learned antiquary, James Maidment, whose acceptance of the story is some security that it came from an authoritative though unnamed source.

Smith was highly taken with Pitt, and one evening when dining with him, he remarked to Addington after dinner, "What an extraordinary man Pitt is; he understands my ideas better than I do myself." Other statesmen have been converts to free trade. Pitt never had any other creed; it was his first faith. He was forming his opinions as a young man when the *Wealth of Nations* appeared, and he formed them upon that work. Smith saw much of this group of statesmen during his visit to the capital in that year. We find Wilberforce sounding him about some of his philanthropic schemes, Addington writing an ode to him after meeting him at Pitt's, and Pitt himself seeking his counsels concerning some contemplated legislation, and perhaps setting him to some task of investigation for his assistance. Bentham had in the early part of 1787 sent from Russia the manuscript of his *Defence of Usury*, written in antagonism to Smith's doctrine on the subject, to his friend George Wilson, barrister, and Wilson a month or two later — 14th of July — writes of "Dr. Smith," who can, I think, be no other than the economist: "Dr. Smith has been very ill here of an inflammation in the neck of the bladder, which was increased by very bad piles. He has been cut for the piles, and the other complaint is since much mended. The physicians say he may do some time longer. He is much with the Ministry, and the clerks of the public offices have orders to furnish him with all papers, and to employ additional hands, if necessary, to copy for him. I am vexed that Pitt should have done so right a thing as to consult Smith, but if any of his schemes are effectuated I shall be comforted." It may be, of course, that Smith was examining papers in the public offices in connection with his own work on Government, but Wilson's statement rather leaves the impression that the researches were instituted in pursuance of some idea of Pitt's, probably related to the reform of the finances. If the Dr. Smith

of Wilson's letter is the economist, he would appear to have stayed in London a considerable time on this occasion, and to have suffered a serious relapse of ill-health during his stay there.

Wilberforce did not think quite so highly of Smith as Pitt did, being disappointed to find him too hard-headed to share his own enthusiasm about a great philanthropic adventure of the day, which, to the very practical mind of the economist, seemed entirely wanting in the ordinary conditions of success. With some of the other philanthropic movements in which Wilberforce was interested — with his anti-slavery agitation, for example, begun in that very year 1787 — he would have found no more cordial sympathiser than Smith, who had condemned slavery so strongly in his book. The Sunday school movement, too, started by Thomas Raikes two or three years before, won Smith's strongest commendation; for Raikes writes William Fox on 27th July of this same year, and writes as if the remark had been made in conversation with himself, "Dr. Adam Smith, who has very ably written on the Wealth of Nations, says: 'No plan has promised to effect a change of manners with equal ease and simplicity since the days of the Apostles.'" These schools were instituted for the purpose of giving gratuitous instruction to all comers for four or five hours every Sunday in the ordinary branches of primary education, and they were opposed by some leading ecclesiastics — among others by a liberal divine like Bishop Horsley — on the ground that they might become subservient to purposes of political propagandism. The ecclesiastical mind is too often suspicious of the consequences of mental improvement and independence, but to Smith these were merely the first broad conditions of all popular progress.

No man could be less chargeable with indifference to honest and practicable schemes of philanthropy, but the particular scheme towards which Wilberforce found him "characteristically cool" was one which, in his opinion, held out extravagant expectations that could not possibly be realised. It was a project — first suggested, I believe, by Sir James Steuart, the economist, and taken up warmly after him by Dr. James Anderson, and especially by that earliest and most persistent of crofters' friends, John Knox, bookseller in the Strand — for checking the depopulation and distress of the Scotch Highlands by planting a series of fishing villages all round the Highland coast. Knox's idea was to plant forty fishing villages at spots twenty-five miles apart between the Mull of Cantyre and the Dornoch Firth at a cost of £2000 apiece, or at least as many of them as money could be obtained to start; and the scheme rose

high in public favour when the parliamentary committee on Scotch Fisheries gave it a general recommendation in 1785, and suggested the incorporation of a limited liability company by Act of Parliament in order to carry it out.

The Scotch nobility adopted the suggestion with great spirit, and in 1786 the British Society for extending the Fisheries was incorporated for that purpose by Royal Charter with a capital of £150,000, with the Duke of Argyle for Governor, and many leading personages, one of them being Wilberforce, for directors. It was indeed the grand philanthropic scheme of the day. The shares were rapidly subscribed for sufficiently to justify a start, and when Smith was in London in 1787 the society had just begun operations on a paid-up capital of £35,000. One of the directors, Isaac Hawkins Browne, M.P., was actually down in Scotland choosing the sites for the villages; and Wilberforce was already almost hearing the "busy hum" of the little hives of fishermen, coopers, boat-builders, and ropemakers, whom they were settling along the desolate coasts.

He naturally spoke to Smith about this large and generous project for the benefit of his countrymen, but was disappointed to find him very sceptical indeed as to its practical results. "Dr. Smith," writes Wilberforce to Hawkins Browne, "with a certain characteristic coolness, observed to me that he looked for no other consequence from the scheme than the entire loss of every shilling that should be expended on it, granting, however, with uncommon candour, that the public would be no great sufferer, because he believed the individuals meant to put their hands only in their own pockets."

The event, however, has justified the sagacity of Smith's prognostication. The society began by purchasing the ground for three fishing settlements on the west coast, — one at Ullapool, in Ross-shire; a second at Lochbeg, in Inverness-shire; and a third at Tobermory, in Argyle. They prepared their feuing plans, built a few houses at their own cost, tried to attract settlers by offering building feus at low rents and fishing-boats on credit at low rates, but, except to a slight extent at Ullapool, their offers were not taken; not a single boat ever sailed from Tobermory under their auspices, and before many years elapsed the society deserted these three original west coast stations and sold its interest in them at a loss of some £2000. But meanwhile the directors had in 1803 bought land at a small port on the east coast, Wick, where a flourishing fishery with 400 boats had already been established by local enterprise without their aid, and they founded there the settlement of Pulteneytown (named by them after Smith's friend, Sir William

Pulteney), which has grown with the industry of the port. The society never again tried to resume its original purpose of creating new fishing centres, and here in Pulteneytown it has obviously only acted the part of the shrewd building speculator, investing in the ground-rents of a rising community and prudently helping in its development. Through this change of purpose it has contrived to save some of its capital, and having recently resolved to be wound up, it sold its whole estate in 1893 for £20,000, and after all claims are met may probably have £15,000 of its original capital of £35,000 left to divide. The net result of the scheme therefore on the development of Highland fisheries has been as near *nil* as Smith anticipated; and if the shareholders have not, as he predicted, lost every shilling of their money, they have lost half of it, and only saved the other half by abandoning the scheme for which it was subscribed. In the whole course of its one hundred and eight years' existence the society never paid more than eleven annual dividends, because for many years it saved up its income for building an extension to its harbour, and eventually lost all these savings and £100,000 of Government money besides in a great breakwater, which proved an irremediable engineering failure, and lies now in the bottom of the sea.

Smith returned to Edinburgh deeply pleased with the reception he met with from the ministers and the progress he saw his principles making. He came back, says the Earl of Buchan, "a Tory and a Pittite instead of a Whig and a Foxite, as he was when he set out. By and by the impression wore off and his former sentiments returned, but unconnected either with Pitt, Fox, or anybody else." Had the impression remained till his death, it would be no matter for wonder. A Liberal has little satisfaction in contemplating the conflict of parties during the first years of Pitt's long administration, and seeing the young Tory minister introducing one great measure of commercial reform after another, while his own Whig chief, Charles Fox, offers to every one of them a most factious and unscrupulous opposition.

Soon after his return Smith received another, and to him a very touching, recognition of his merit in being chosen in November Lord Rector of his old alma mater, the University of Glasgow. The appointment lay with the whole University, professors and students together, but as the students had the advantage of numbers, the decision was virtually in their hands, and their unanimous choice came to Smith (as Carlyle said a similar choice came to him) at the end of his labours like a voice of "Well done" from the University which had sent him forth to do them, and from the coming generation which was to enter upon the

fruits of them. There was at first some word of opposition to his candidature, on the good old electioneering plea that he was the professors' nominee, and that it was essential for the students to resent dictation and assert their independence. One of Smith's keenest opponents among the students was Francis Jeffrey, who was then a Tory. Principal Haldane, who was also a student at Glasgow at the time, used to tell of seeing Jeffrey — a little, black, quick-motioned creature with a rapid utterance and a prematurely-developed moustache, on which his audience teased him mercilessly — haranguing a mob of boys on the green and trying to rouse them to their manifest duty of organising opposition to the professors' nominee. His exertions failed, however, and Smith was chosen without a contest.

On receiving intimation of his appointment Smith wrote to Principal Davidson the following reply: —

Reverend and dear Sir — I have this moment received the honour of your letter of the 15th instant. I accept with gratitude and pleasure the very great honour which the University of Glasgow have done me in electing me for the ensuing year to be the Rector of that illustrious Body. No preferment could have given me so much real satisfaction. No man can own greater obligations to a Society than I do to the University of Glasgow. They educated me, they sent me to Oxford, soon after my return to Scotland they elected me one of their own members, and afterwards preferred me to another office to which the abilities and virtues of the never-to-be-forgotten Dr. Hutcheson had given a superior degree of illustration. The period of thirteen years which I spent as a member of that Society, I remember as by far the most useful and therefore as by far the happiest and most honourable period of my life; and now, after three-and-twenty years' absence, to be remembered in so very agreeable a manner by my old friends and protectors gives me a heartfelt joy which I cannot easily express to you.

I shall be happy to receive the commands of my colleagues concerning the time when it may be convenient for them to do me the honour of admitting me to the office. Mr. Millar mentions Christmass. We have commonly at the Board of Customs a vacation of five or six days at that time. But I am so regular an attendant that I think myself entitled to take the play for a week at any time. It will be no inconveniency to me therefore to wait upon you at whatever time you please. I beg to be remembered to my colleagues in the most respectful and the most affectionate manner; and that you would believe me to be,

with great truth, reverend and dear sir, your and their most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *16th November 1787*.

The Rev. Dr. Archibald Davidson,
Principal of the College, Glasgow.

He was installed as Rector on the 12th December 1787 with the usual ceremonies. He gave no inaugural address, nor apparently so much as a formal word of thanks. At least Jeffrey, who might have been present, though he does not seem to speak from personal recollection, says he remained altogether silent. His predecessor, Graham of Gartmore, held the Rector's chair for only one year, but Smith, like Burke and Dundas, was re-elected for a second term, and was Rector therefore from November 1787 till November 1789.

One of the new friends Smith made during his last visit to London was Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, who seems to have shown him particular attentions; and shortly after his return he gave a young Scotch scientific man a letter of very warm recommendation to Sir Joseph. The young man of science was John Leslie, afterwards Sir John, the celebrated Professor of Natural Philosophy in Edinburgh University. Leslie, who belonged to the neighbourhood of Smith's own town of Kirkcaldy, had been employed by him for the previous two years as tutor to his cousin and heir, David Douglas, and being thus a daily visitor at Smith's house, had won a high place in his affections and regard. Accordingly when Leslie in 1787 gave up his original idea of entering the Church, and resolved to migrate to London with a view to literary or scientific employment, Smith furnished him with a number of letters of introduction, and, as Leslie informed the writer of his biography in Chambers's *Biographical Dictionary*, advised him, when the letter was addressed to an author, to be always sure to read that author's book before presenting it, so as to be able to speak of the book should a fit opportunity occur. The letter to Sir Joseph Banks runs as follows: —

Sir — The very great politeness and attention with which you was so good as to honour me when I was last in London has emboldened me to use a freedom which I am afraid I am not entitled to, and to introduce to your acquaintance a young gentleman of very great merit, and who is very ambitious of being known to you. Mr. Leslie, the bearer of this letter, has been known to me for several years past. He has a very

particular happy turn for the mathematical sciences. It is no more than two years and a half ago that he undertook the instruction of a young gentleman, my nearest relation, in some of the higher parts of these sciences, and acquitted himself most perfectly both to my satisfaction and to that of the young gentleman. He proposes to pursue the same lines in London, and would be glad to accept of employment in some of the mathematical academies. Besides his knowledge in mathematics he is, I am assured, a tolerable Botanist and Chymist. Your countenance and good opinion, provided you shall find he deserves them, may be of the highest importance to him. Give me leave, upon that condition, to recommend him in the most anxious and earnest manner to your protection. I have the honour to be, with the highest respect and regard, sir, your most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

Adam Smith.

Edinburgh, *18th December 178*(sic).
Sir Joseph Banks.

Why does so large a proportion of Smith's extant letters consist of letters of introduction? Have they a better principle of vitality than others, that they should be more frequently preserved? There certainly seems less reason to preserve them, but then there is also less reason to destroy them.

Smith's health appears to have improved so much during the spring of 1788 that his friends, who, as we know from Robertson's letter to Gibbon, had been seriously alarmed about his condition, were now again free from anxiety. He seemed to them to be "perfectly re-established." But in the autumn he suffered another great personal loss in the death of his cousin, Miss Jean Douglas, who had lived under his roof for so many years. His home was now desolate. His mother and his cousin — the two lifelong companions of his hearth — were both gone; his young heir was only with him during the vacations from Glasgow College, where he was now living with Professor John Millar, and being a man for whom the domestic affections went for so much, there seemed, amid all the honour, love, obedience, troops of friends that enrich the close of an important career, to remain a void in his life that could not be filled.

Gibbon had sent him a present of the three concluding volumes of the *Decline and Fall*, and Smith writes him in November a brief letter of

thanks, in which he sets the English historian where he used to set Voltaire, at the head of all living men of letters.

Edinburgh, *18th December 1788*.

My Dear Friend — I have ten thousand apologies to make for not having long ago returned you my best thanks for the very agreeable present you made me of the three last volumes of your History. I cannot express to you the pleasure it gives me to find that by the universal consent of every man of taste and learning whom I either know or correspond with, it sets you at the very head of the whole literary tribe at present existing in Europe. — I ever am, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

Adam Smith.

In this letter Smith makes no complaint of his condition of health, but he seems to have got worse again in the course of the winter, for we find Gibbon writing Cadell, the bookseller, with some apparent anxiety on the 11th of February 1789: “If you can send me a good account of Adam Smith, there is no man more sincerely interested in his welfare than myself.” If, however, he were ill then, he recovered in the summer, and was in excellent spirits in July, when Samuel Rogers saw him often during a week he spent in Edinburgh.

CHAPTER XXX. VISIT OF SAMUEL ROGERS

1789

The author of the *Pleasures of Memory*, going to Scotland to make the home tour, as it was called, then much in vogue, brought with him letters of introduction to Smith from Dr. Price and Dr. Kippis, the editor of the *Biographia Britannica*. The poet was then a young man of twenty-three, who had published nothing but his *Ode to Superstition*, and these old Unitarian friends of his father were as yet his chief acquaintances in the world of letters. Their names, notwithstanding the disparaging allusion Smith makes to Price in a letter previously given, won for Rogers the kindest possible reception, and even a continuous succession of civilities, of which he has left a grateful record in the journal he kept during his tour. This journal has been published in Mr. Clayden's *Early Tears of Samuel Rogers*, and a few additional particulars omitted in it are found in Dyce's published and Mitford's unpublished recollections of Rogers's table-talk.

Rogers arrived in Edinburgh apparently on the 14th of July — that momentous 14th of July 1789 which set the world aflame, though not a spark of information of it had reached Edinburgh before he left the city on the 21st; and on the morning of the 15th he walked down Panmure Close and paid his first visit to the economist. He found Smith sitting at breakfast quite alone, with a dish of strawberries before him, and he has preserved some scraps of the conversation, none of them in any way remarkable. Starting from the business then on hand, Smith said that fruit was his favourite diet at that season of the year, and that Scotland produced excellent strawberries, for the strawberry was a northern fruit, and was at its best in Orkney or Sweden. Passing to the subject of Rogers's tour, he said that Edinburgh deserved little notice, that the old town had given Scotland a bad name (for its filth, presumably), and that he himself was anxious to remove to the newer quarters of the town, and had set his heart on George Square (the place where Walter Scott was brought up and Henry Dundas died). He explained that Edinburgh was entirely supported by the three Courts of Session, Exchequer, and Justiciary (possibly to account for the filth of the place, in accordance with his theory that there was always more squalor and misery in a

residential than in an industrial town). While thus apparently slighting or ignoring the beauties of Edinburgh, which were all there then as they are now, he praised Loch Lomond highly. It was the finest lake in Great Britain, the islands being very beautiful and forming a very striking contrast to the shores. The conversation passed from the scenery of Scotland to the soil, and Smith said Scotland had an excellent soil, but a climate so severe that its harvests were too often overtaken by winter before they were housed. The consequence was that the Scotch on the Borders were still in extreme poverty, just as he had noticed half a century before when he rode across the Borders as a student to Oxford, and was greatly struck with the different condition of things he saw as he approached Carlisle. From agriculture they passed on to discuss the corn trade, and Smith denounced the Government's late refusal of corn to France, saying it ought to excite indignation and contempt, inasmuch as the quantity required was so trifling that it would not support the population of Edinburgh for a single day. The population of Edinburgh suggested their houses, and Smith said that the houses were piled high on one another in Paris as well as in Edinburgh. They then touched on Sir John Sinclair, of whom Smith spoke disparagingly in certain aspects, but said that he never knew a man who was in earnest and did not do something at last. Before leaving to return to his hotel Rogers seems to have asked Smith if he knew Mrs. Piozzi, who was then living there, and had called upon Rogers after learning from the landlord that Smith and Robertson had left cards for him, and Smith said he did not know her, but believed she was spoiled by keeping company with odd people. Smith then invited his visitor to dine with him next day at the usual Friday dinner of the Oyster Club, and Rogers came away delighted with the interview, and with the illustrious philosopher's genuine kindness of heart.

On Friday, as appointed, Rogers dined with the Oyster Club as Smith's guest, but he has made no specific entry of the event in his journal, and no record of the conversation. Black and Playfair seem to have been there, and possibly other men of eminence; but the whole talk was usurped by a commonplace member, and Smith felt — and possibly Rogers too — that the day was lost. For next time they met Smith asked Rogers how he liked the club, and said, "*That* Bogle, I was sorry he talked so much; he spoiled our evening." That Bogle was the Laird of Daldowie, on the Clyde. His father had been Rector of Glasgow University in Smith's professorial days, and one of his brothers, George Bogle, attained some eminence through the embassy on which he was

sent by Warren Hastings to the Llama of Thibet, and his account of which has been published quite recently; and the offender himself was a man of ability and knowledge, who had been a West India merchant for many years, was well versed in economic and commercial subjects, and very fond of writing to the Government of the day long communications on those subjects, which seem to have been generally read, and sometimes even acted upon. In society, as we are told by one of his relations, Mr. Morehead, he was generally considered very "tedious, from the long lectures on mercantile and political subjects (for he did not converse when he entered on these, but rather declaimed) which he was in the habit of delivering in the most humdrum and monotonous manner." His tedious lectures must, however, have had more in them than ordinary hearers appreciated, for Smith thought so highly of Bogle's conversation that when he invited Rogers to the club on this particular occasion he mentioned that Bogle, a very clever person, was to be there, and said "I must go and hear Bogle talk."

Rogers was with Smith again on Sunday the 19th, and used ever afterwards to speak of that particular Sunday as the most memorable in his life, for he breakfasted with Robertson, heard him preach in the Old Greyfriars in the forenoon, heard Blair preach in the High Church in the afternoon, drank coffee thereafter with Mrs. Piozzi, and finished the day by supping with Adam Smith. He had called on Smith "between sermons," as they say in Scotland, and apparently close on the hour for service, since "all the bells of the kirks" were ringing. But Smith was going for an airing, and his chair was at the door. The sedan was much in vogue in Edinburgh at that period, because it threaded the narrow wynds and alleys better than any other sort of carriage was able to do. Smith met Rogers at the door, and after exchanging the few observations about Bogle and the club to which I have already alluded, he invited his young friend to come back to supper in the evening, and also to dinner on Monday, because he had asked Henry Mackenzie, the author of the *Man of Feeling*, to meet him. "Who could refuse?" writes Rogers. Smith then set out in his sedan, and Rogers walked up to the High Church to hear Blair. Returning to Panmure House at nine, he found there, he says, all the company who were at the club on Friday except Bogle and Macaulay, and with the addition of a Mr. Muir from Göttingen. (I do not know who Macaulay and Muir were.) They spoke of Junius, and Smith suspected Single-speech Hamilton of the authorship, on the ground of the well-known story, which seems to have been then new to Rogers, and which Smith had been told by Gibbon, that on one occasion when Hamilton

was on a visit at Goodwood, he informed the Duke of Richmond that there was a devilish keen letter from Junius in the *Public Advertiser* of that day, and mentioned even some of the points it made; but when the Duke got hold of the paper he found the letter itself was not there, but only an apology for its absence. From this circumstance Hamilton's name came to be mentioned in connection with the authorship of the letters, and they ceased to appear. Smith's argument was that so long as the letters were attributed to men who were not their writers, such as Lord Lansdowne or Burke, they continued to go on, but immediately the true author was named they stopped. The conversation passed on to Turgot and Voltaire and the Duke of Richelieu, and its particulars have been stated already in previous parts of this work.

On Monday Rogers dined at Smith's house to meet Henry Mackenzie, as had been arranged, and the other guests seem to have been the Mr. Muir of the evening before and Mr. M'Gowan — John M'Gowan, Clerk of the Signet, already referred to. Dr. Hutton came in afterwards and joined them at tea. The chief share in the conversation seems to have been taken by Mackenzie, who, as we know from Scott, was always "the life of company with anecdotes and fun," and related on this occasion many stories of second sight in the Highlands, and especially of the eccentric Caithness laird, who used the pretension as a very effectual instrument for maintaining authority and discipline among his tenantry. They spoke much too about the poetesses, — Hannah More, and Mrs. Charlotte Smith, and Mrs. John Hunter, the great surgeon's wife; but it appears to have still been Mackenzie who bore the burden of the talk. The only thing Rogers reports Smith as saying is a very ordinary remark about Dr. Blair. They had been speaking, as was natural, about the sermon which Rogers — and Mackenzie also — had heard the previous afternoon on "Curiosity concerning the Affairs of Others," and one passage in which, though it reads now commonplace enough in the printed page, Rogers seems to have admired greatly. Smith observed that Blair was too puffed up, and the worthy divine would have been more or less than human if he had escaped the necessary effects of the excessive popularity he so long enjoyed at once as a preacher and as a critic. It will be remembered how Burns detested Blair's absurd condescension and pomposity.

From Smith's the company seems to have proceeded in a body to a meeting of the Royal Society, of which all were members except Muir and Rogers himself. Before going Mackenzie repeated an epigram which had been written on Smith sleeping at the meetings of this society, but

the epigram has not been preserved. Only seven persons were present — Smith and his guests and the reader of the paper for the day, who happened to be the economist, Dr. James Anderson, already mentioned repeatedly in this book as the original propounder of Ricardo's theory of rent. His paper was on "Debtors and the Revision of the Laws that respect them," and Rogers says it was "very long and dull," and, as a natural consequence, "Mr. Commissioner Smith fell asleep, and Mackenzie touched my elbow and smiled," — a curious tableau. When the meeting was over Rogers took leave of his host, went to the play with Mrs. Piozzi, and, though he no doubt saw Smith again before finally quitting Edinburgh, mentions him no more.

Having been so much with Smith during those few days, Rogers's impressions are in some respects of considerable value. He was deeply impressed with the warmth of Smith's kindness. "He is a very friendly, agreeable man, and I should have dined and supped with him every day, if I had accepted all his invitations." He was very communicative, and to Rogers's surprise, considering the disparity of their years and the greatness of his reputation, Smith was "quite familiar." "Who shall we have to dinner?" he would ask. Rogers observed in him no sign of absence of mind, and felt that as compared with Robertson, Smith was far more of a man who had seen much of the world. His communicativeness impressed itself also upon other casual visitors, because his first appearance sometimes gave them the opposite suggestion of reserve. "He was extremely communicative," says the anonymous writer who sent the first letter of reminiscences to the editor of the *Bee*, "and delivered himself on every subject with a freedom and boldness quite opposite to the apparent reserve of his appearance."

Another visitor to Scotland that year who enjoyed a talk with Smith, and has something interesting to communicate about the conversation, is William Adam, barrister and M.P., afterwards Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland, who was a nephew of Smith's schoolfellow and lifelong friend, Robert Adam, the architect. William Adam was an intimate personal friend of Bentham since the days when they ate their way to the bar together and spent their nights in endless discussions about Hume's philosophy and other thorny subjects, and when in Scotland in the summer of 1789 he met Smith, and drew the conversation to his friend Bentham's recently published *Defence of Usury*. This book, it will be remembered, was written expressly to controvert Smith's recommendation of a legal limitation of the rate of interest, and from this conversation with Adam there seems to be some

ground for thinking that the book had the very unusual controversial effect of converting the antagonist against whom it was written. Smith's reason for wanting to fix the legal rate of interest at a maximum just a little above the ordinary market rate was to prevent undue facilities being given to prodigals and projectors; but Bentham replied very justly that, whatever might be said of prodigals, projectors at any rate were one of the most useful classes a community could possess, that a wise government ought to do all it could to encourage their enterprise instead of thwarting it, and that the best policy therefore was to leave the rate of interest alone. In conducting his polemic Bentham wrote as an admiring pupil towards a venerated master, to whom he said he owed everything, and over whom he could gain no advantage except, to use his own words, "with weapons which you have taught me to wield and with which you have furnished me; for as all the great standards of truth which can be appealed to in this line owe, as far as I can understand, their establishment to you, I can see scarce any other way of convicting you of an error or oversight than by judging you out of your own mouth."

Smith was touched with the handsome spirit in which his adversary wrote, and candidly admitted to Adam the force of his assaults. The conversation is preserved in a letter written to Bentham on the 4th December 1789 by another friend and fellow-barrister, George Wilson, as he apparently had the story from Adam's own lips.

"Did we ever tell you," writes Wilson, "what Dr. Adam Smith said to Mr. William Adam, the Council M.P., last summer in Scotland? The Doctor's expressions were that 'the *Defence of Usury* was the work of a very superior man, and that tho' he had given him some hard knocks, it was done in so handsome a way that he could not complain,' and seemed to admit that you were right." This admission, though apparently not made in so many words by Smith, but rather inferred by Adam from the general purport of the conversation, is still not far removed from the confession so definitely reported that his position suffered some hard knocks from the assaults of Bentham. After that confession it is reasonable to think that if Smith had lived to publish another edition of his work, he would have modified his position on the rate of interest.

CHAPTER XXXI. REVISION OF THE "THEORY"

A revision of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* was a task Smith had long had in contemplation. The book had been thirty years before the world and had passed through five editions, but it had never undergone any revision or alteration whatever. This was the task of the last year of the author's life. He made considerable changes, especially by way of addition, and though he wrote the additions, as Stewart informs us, while he was suffering under severe illness, he has never written anything better in point of literary style. Before the new edition appeared there was a preliminary difference between author and publisher regarding the propriety of issuing the additions as the additions to the *Wealth of Nations* had been issued, in a separate form, for the use of those who already possessed copies of the previous editions of the book. Cadell favoured that course, notwithstanding that it would obviously interfere with the sale of the new book, because he was unwilling to incur the charge of being illiberal in his dealings with the public. But Smith refused to assent to it, for reasons quite apart from the sale, but connected, whatever they were, with "the nature of the work." He communicated his decision through Dugald Stewart, who was in London in May 1789 on his way to Paris, and Stewart reports the result of his interview with Cadell in the following letter, bearing the post stamp of 6th May 1789: —

Dear Sir — I was so extremely hurried during the very short stay I made in London that I had not a moment's time to write you till now. The day after my arrival I called on Cadell, and luckily found Strachan (*sic*) with him. They both assured me in the most positive terms that they had published no Edition of the *Theory* since the *Fifth*, which was printed in 1781, and that if a *6th* has been mentioned in any of the newspapers, it must have been owing to a typographical mistake. For your farther satisfaction Cadell stated the fact in his own handwriting on a little bit of paper which I send you enclosed.

I mentioned also to Cadell the resolution you had formed not to allow the Additions to the *Theory* to be printed separately, which he said embarrassed him much, as he had already in similar circumstances more than once incurred the charge of illiberality with the public. On my

telling him, however, that you had made up your mind on the subject, and that it was perfectly unnecessary to write to you, as the nature of the work made it impossible for you to comply with his proposal, he requested of me to submit to your consideration whether it might not (be) proper for you to mention this circumstance, for his justification, in an advertisement prefixed to the Book. This was all, I think, that passed in the course of our conversation. I write this from Dover, which I am just leaving with a fair wind, so that I hope to be in Paris on Thursday. It will give me great-pleasure to receive your commands, if I can be of any use to you in executing any of your commissions. — I ever am, dear sir, your much obliged and most obedient servant,

Dugald Stewart.

In the preface to the 1790 edition the author refers to the promise he had made in that of 1759 of treating in a future work of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions they had undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in what concerns justice, but in what concerns policy, revenue, and arms, and whatever else is the object of law; and he says that in the *Wealth of Nations* he had executed this promise so far as policy, revenue, and arms were concerned, but that the remaining part of the task, the theory of jurisprudence, he had been prevented from executing by the same occupations which had till then prevented him from revising the *Theory*. He adds: “Though my very advanced age leaves me, I acknowledge, very little expectation of ever being able to execute this great work to my own satisfaction, yet, as I have not altogether abandoned the design, and as I wish still to continue under the obligation of doing what I can, I have allowed the paragraph to remain as it was published more than thirty years ago, when I entertained no doubt of being able to execute everything which it announced.”

The most important of the new contributions to this last edition of the *Theory* is the chapter “on the corruption of our moral sentiments, which is occasioned by our disposition to admire the rich and the great, and to despise or neglect persons of poor and mean condition.” In spite of his alleged republicanism he was still a sort of believer in the principle of birth. It was not, in his view, a rational principle, but it was a natural and beneficial delusion. In the light of reason the vulgar esteem for rank and fortune above wisdom and virtue was utterly indefensible, but it had a certain advantage as a practical aid to good government. The maintenance of social order required the establishment of popular deference to some species of superiority, and the superiorities of birth

and fortune were at least plain and palpable to the mob of mankind who have to be governed, whereas the superiorities of wisdom and virtue were often invisible and uncertain, even to the discerning. But however useful this admiration for the wrong things might be for the establishment of settled authority, he held it to be “at the same time the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments.”

But the additions attracted little notice compared with the deletions — the deletion of the allusion to Rochefoucauld associating that writer in the same condemnation with Mandeville, and the deletion of the passage in which the revealed doctrine of the atonement was stated to coincide with the repentant sinner’s natural feeling of the necessity of some other intercession and sacrifice than his own. The omission of the reference to Rochefoucauld has been blamed as a concession to feelings of private friendship in the teeth of the claims of truth; but Stewart, who knew the whole circumstances, says that Smith came to believe that truth as well as friendship required the emendation, and there is certainly difference enough between Rochefoucauld and Mandeville to support such a view.

The suppression of the passage about the atonement escaped notice for twenty years, till a notable divine, Archbishop Magee, in entire ignorance of the suppression, quoted the passage from one of the earlier editions as a strong testimony to the reasonableness of the Scriptural doctrine of the atonement from a man whose intellectual capacity and independence were above all dispute. “Such,” he says, “are the reflections of a man whose powers of thinking and reasoning will surely not be pronounced inferior to those of any, even of the most distinguished champions of the Unitarian school, and whose theological opinions cannot be charged with any supposed taint from professional habits or interests. A layman (and he too a familiar friend of David Hume), whose life was employed in scientific, political, and philosophical researches, has given to the world those sentiments as the natural suggestions of reason. Yet these are the sentiments which are the scoff of sciolists and witlings.”

The sciolists and witlings were not slow in returning the scoff, and pointing out that while Smith was, no doubt, as an intellectual authority all that the Archbishop claimed for him, his authority really ran against the Archbishop’s view and not in favour of it, inasmuch as he had withdrawn the passage relied on from the last edition of his work. Dr. Magee instantly changed his tune, and without thinking whether he had any ground for the statement, attributed the omission to the unhappy

influence over Smith's mind of the aggressive infidelity of Hume. "It adds one proof more," says his Grace, who, having failed to make Smith an evidence for Christianity, will now have him turned into a warning against unbelief,— "it adds one proof more to the many that already existed of the danger, even to the most enlightened, from a familiar contact with infidelity." His intercourse with Hume was at its closest when he first published the passage in 1759, whereas Hume was fourteen years in his grave when the passage was omitted; besides there is probably as much left in the context which Hume would object to as is deleted, and in any case, there is no reason to believe that Smith's opinion about the atonement was anywise different in 1790 from what it was in 1759, or for doubting his own explanation of the omission, which he is said to have given to certain Edinburgh friends, that he thought the passage unnecessary and misplaced. As if taking an odd revenge for its suppression, the original manuscript of this particular passage seems to have reappeared from between the leaves of a volume of Aristotle in the year 1831, when all the rest of the MS. of the book and of Smith's other works had long gone to destruction. It may be added, as so much attention has been paid to Smith's religious opinions, that he gives a fresh expression to his belief in a future state and an all-seeing Judge in one of the new passages he wrote for this same edition of his *Theory*. It is in connection with his remarks on the Calas case. He says that to persons in the circumstances of Calas, condemned to an unjust death, "Religion can alone afford them every effectual comfort. She also can tell them that it is of little importance what men may think of their conduct while the all-seeing Judge of the world approves of it. She alone can present to them a view of another world, — a world of more candour, humanity, and justice than the present, where their innocence is in due time to be declared and their virtue to be finally rewarded, and the same great principle which can alone strike terror into triumphant vice affords the only effectual consolation of disgraced and insulted innocence." Whatever may have been his attitude towards historical Christianity, these words, written on the eve of his own death, show that he died as he lived, in the full faith of those doctrines of natural religion which he had publicly taught.

CHAPTER XXXII. LAST DAYS

The new edition of the *Theory* was the last work Smith published. A French newspaper, the *Moniteur Universelle* of Paris, announced on 11th March 1790 that a critical examination of Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* was about to appear from the pen of the celebrated author of the *Wealth of Nations*, and ventured to predict that the work would make an epoch in the history of politics and of philosophy. That at least, it added, is the judgment of well-informed people who have seen parts of it, of which they speak with an enthusiasm of the happiest augury. But notwithstanding this last statement the announcement was not made on any good authority. Smith may probably enough have dealt with Montesquieu as he dealt with many other topics in the papers he had prepared towards his projected work on government, but there is no evidence that he ever intended to publish a separate work on that remarkable writer, and before March 1790 his strength seems to have been much wasted. The Earl of Buchan, who had some time before gone to live in the country, was in town in February, and paid a visit to his old professor and friend. On taking leave of him the Earl said, "My dear Doctor, I hope to see you oftener when I come to town next February," but Smith squeezed his lordship's hand and replied, "My dear Lord Buchan, I may be alive then and perhaps half a dozen Februaries, but you never will see your old friend any more. I find that the machine is breaking down, so that I shall be little better than a mummy" — with a by-thought possibly to the mummies of Toulouse. "I found a great inclination," adds the Earl, "to visit the Doctor in his last illness, but the mummy stared me in the face and I was intimidated."

During the spring months Smith got worse and weaker, and though he seemed to rally somewhat at the first approach of the warm weather, he at length sank again in June, and his condition seemed to his friends to be already hopeless. Long and painful as his illness was, he bore it throughout not with patience merely but with a serene and even cheerful resignation. On the 21st of June Henry Mackenzie wrote his brother-in-law, Sir J. Grant, that Edinburgh had just lost its finest woman, and in a few weeks it would in all probability lose its greatest man. The finest woman was the beautiful Miss Burnet of Monboddo, whom Burns called "the most heavenly of all God's works," and the greatest man was Adam

Smith. “He is now,” says Mackenzie, “past all hopes of recovery, with which about three weeks ago we had flattered ourselves.”

A week later Smellie, the printer, wrote Smith’s young friend, Patrick Clason, in London: “Poor Smith! we must soon lose him, and the moment in which he departs will give a heart-pang to thousands. Mr. Smith’s spirits are flat, and I am afraid the exertions he sometimes makes to please his friends do him no good. His intellect as well as his senses are clear and distinct. He wishes to be cheerful, but nature is omnipotent. His body is extremely emaciated, and his stomach cannot admit of sufficient nourishment; but, like a man, he is perfectly patient and resigned.”

In all his own weakness he was still thoughtful of the care of his friends, and one of his last acts was to commend to the good offices of the Duke of Buccleugh the children of his old friend and physician, Cullen, who died only a few months before himself. “In many respects,” says Lord Buchan, “Adam Smith was a chaste disciple of Epicurus as that philosopher is properly understood, and Smith’s last act resembled that of Epicurus leaving as a legacy to his friend and patron the children of his Metrodorus, the excellent Cullen.”

When it became evident that the sickness was to prove mortal, Smith’s old friend Adam Ferguson, who had been apparently estranged from him for some time, immediately forgot their coolness, whatever it was about, and came and waited on him with the old affection. “Your friend Smith,” writes Ferguson on 31st July 1790, announcing the death to Sir John Macpherson, Warren Hastings’ successor as Governor-General of India— “your old friend Smith is no more. We knew he was dying for some months, and though matters, as you know, were a little awkward when he was in health, upon that appearance I turned my face that way and went to him without further consideration, and continued my attentions to the last.”

Dr. Carlyle mentions that the harmony of the famous Edinburgh literary circle of last century was often ruffled by little tifts, which he and John Home were generally called in to compose, and that the usual source of the trouble was Ferguson’s “great jealousy of rivals,” and especially of his three more distinguished friends, Hume, Smith, and Robertson. But it would not be right to ascribe the fault to Ferguson merely on that account, for Carlyle hints that Smith too had “a little jealousy in his nature,” although he admits him to have been a man of “unbounded benevolence.” But whatever it was that had come between them, it is pleasant to find Ferguson dismissing it so unreservedly, and

forgetting his own infirmities too — for he had been long since hopelessly paralysed, and went about, Cockburn tells us, buried in furs "like a philosopher from Lapland" — in order to cheer the last days of the friend of his youth.

When Smith felt his end to be approaching he evinced great anxiety to have all his papers destroyed except the few which he judged to be in a sufficiently finished state to deserve publication, and being apparently too feeble to undertake the task himself, he repeatedly begged his friends Black and Hutton to destroy them for him. A third friend, Mr. Riddell, was present on one of the occasions when this request was made, and mentions that Smith expressed regret that "he had done so little." "But I meant," he said, "to have done more, and there are materials in my papers of which I could have made a great deal, but that is now out of the question." Black and Hutton always put off complying with Smith's entreaties in the hope of his recovering his health or perhaps changing his mind; but at length, a week before his death, he expressly sent for them, and asked them then and there to burn sixteen volumes of manuscript to which he directed them. This they did without knowing or asking what they contained. It will be remembered that seventeen years before, when he went up to London with the manuscript of the *Wealth of Nations*, he made Hume his literary executor, and left instructions with him to destroy all his loose papers and eighteen thin paper folio books "without any examination," and to spare nothing but his fragment on the history of astronomy. When the sixteen volumes of manuscript were burnt Smith's mind seemed to be greatly relieved. It appears to have been on a Sunday, and when his friends came, as they were accustomed to do, on the Sunday evening to supper — and they seem to have mustered strongly on this particular evening — he was able to receive them with something of his usual cheerfulness. He would even have stayed up and sat with them had they allowed him, but they pressed him not to do so, and he retired to bed about half-past nine. As he left the room he turned and said, "I love your company, gentlemen, but I believe I must leave you to go to another world." These are the words as reported by Henry Mackenzie, who was present, in giving Samuel Rogers an account of Smith's death during a visit he paid to London in the course of the following year. But Hutton, in the account he gave Stewart of the incident, employs the slightly different form of expression, "I believe we must adjourn this meeting to some other place." Possibly both sentences were used by Smith, for both are needed for the complete expression of

the parting consolation he obviously meant to convey — that death is not a final separation, but only an adjournment of the meeting.

That was his last meeting with them in the earthly meeting-place. He had gone to the other world before the next Sunday came round, having died on Saturday the 17th of July 1790. He was buried in the Canongate churchyard, near by the simple stone which Burns placed on the grave of Fergusson, and not far from the statelier tomb which later on received the remains of his friend Dugald Stewart. The grave is marked by an unpretending monument, stating that Adam Smith, the author of the *Wealth of Nations*, lies buried there.

His death made less stir or rumour in the world than many of his admirers expected. Sir Samuel Romilly, for example, writing on the 20th of August to a French lady who had wanted a copy of the new edition of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, says: “I have been surprised and, I own, a little indignant to observe how little impression his death has made here. Scarce any notice has been taken of it, while for above a year together after the death of Dr. Johnson nothing was to be heard of but panegyrics of him, — lives, letters, and anecdotes, — and even at this moment there are two more lives of him to start into existence. Indeed, one ought not perhaps to be very much surprised that the public does not do justice to the works of A. Smith since he did not do justice to them himself, but always considered his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* a much superior work to his *Wealth of Nations*.” Even in Edinburgh it seemed to make less impression than the death of a bustling divine would have made — certainly considerably less than the death of the excellent but far less illustrious Dugald Stewart a generation later. The newspapers had an obituary notice of two small paragraphs, and the only facts in his life the writers appear to have been able to find were his early abduction by the gipsies, of which both the Mercury and the Advertiser give a circumstantial account, and the characteristics which the Advertiser mentions, that “in private life Dr. Smith was distinguished for philanthropy, benevolence, humanity, and charity.” Lord Cockburn, who was then beginning to read and think, was struck with the general ignorance of Smith’s merits which his fellow-citizens exhibited shortly after his death. “The middle-aged seemed to me to know little about the founder of the science (political economy) except that he had recently been a Commissioner of Customs and had written a sensible book. The young — by which I mean the Liberal young of Edinburgh — lived upon him.” Stewart was no sooner dead than a monument was raised to him on

one of the best sites in the city. The greater name of Smith has to this day no public monument in the city he so long adorned.

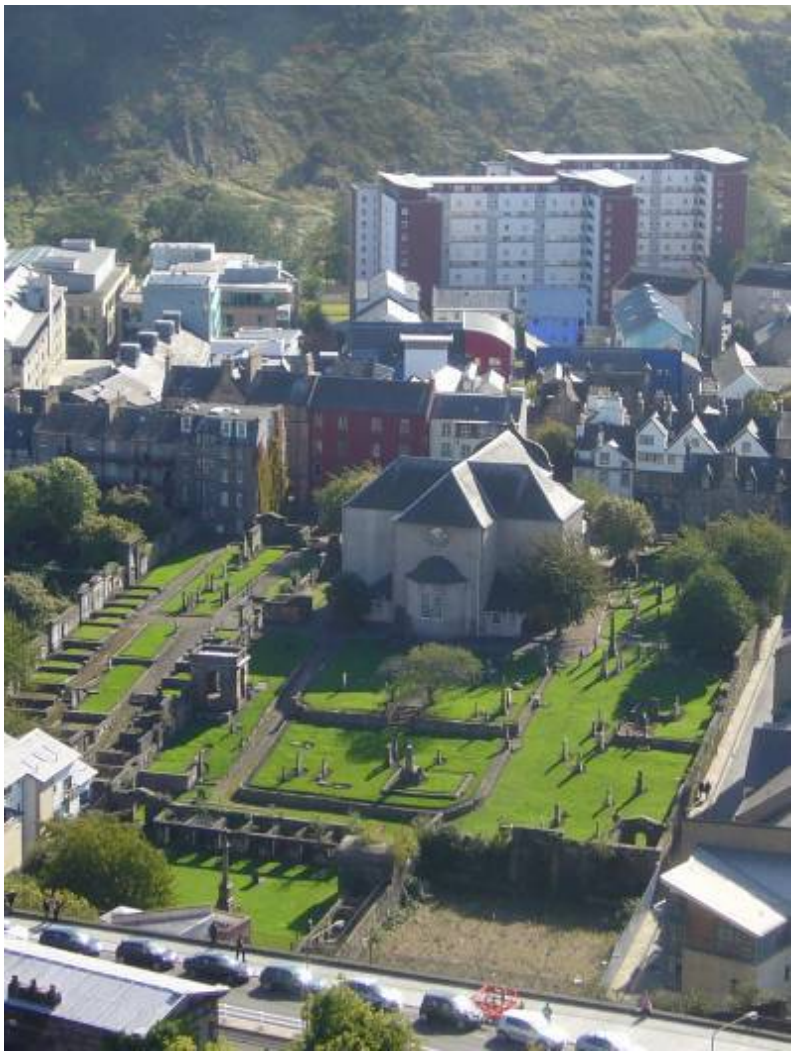
Black and Hutton were his literary executors, and published in 1795 the literary fragments which had been spared from the flames. By his will, dated 6th February 1790, he left his whole property to his cousin, David Douglas, afterwards Lord Reston, subject to the condition that the legatee should follow the instructions of Black and Hutton in disposing of the MSS. and writings, and pay an annuity of £20 a year to Mrs. Janet Douglas, and after her death, a sum of £400 to Professor Hugh Cleghorn of St. Andrews and his wife. The property Smith left, however, was very moderate, and his friends could not at first help expressing some surprise that it should have been so little, because, though known to be very hospitable, he had never maintained anything more than a moderate establishment. But they had not then known, though many of them had long suspected, that he gave away large sums in secret charity. William Playfair mentions that Smith's friends, suspecting him of doing this, had sometimes in his lifetime formed special juries for the purpose of discovering evidences of it, but that the economist was "so ingenious in concealing his charity" that they never could discover it from witnesses, though they often found the strongest circumstantial evidence of it. Dugald Stewart was more fortunate. He says: "Some very affecting instances of Mr. Smith's beneficence in cases where he found it impossible to conceal entirely his good offices have been mentioned to me by a near relation of his and one of his most confidential friends, Miss Ross, daughter of the late Patrick Ross, Esq., of Innernethy. They were all on a scale much beyond what would have been expected from his fortune, and were combined with circumstances equally honourable to the delicacy of his feelings and the liberality of his heart." One recalls the saying of Sir James Mackintosh, who was a student of Cullen and Black's in Smith's closing years, and used occasionally to meet the economist in private society. "I have known," said Mackintosh to Empson many years after this— "I have known Adam Smith slightly, Ricardo well, and Malthus intimately. Is it not something to say for a science that its three greatest masters were about the three best men I ever knew?"

Smith never sat for his picture, but nevertheless we possess excellent portraits of him by two very talented artists who had many opportunities of seeing and sketching him. Tassie was a student at Foulis's Academy of Design in Glasgow College when Smith was there, and he may possibly

even then have occasionally modelled the distinguished Professor, for we hear of models of Smith being in all the booksellers' windows in Glasgow at that time, and these models would, for a certainty, have been made in the Academy of Design. However that may be, Tassie executed in later days two different medallions of Smith. Raspe, in his catalogue of Tassie's enamels, describes one of these in a list of portraits of the largest size that that kind of work admitted of, as being modelled and cast by Tassie in his hard white enamel paste so as to resemble a cameo. From this model J. Jackson, R.A., made a drawing, which was engraved in stipple by C. Picart, and published in 1811 by Cadell and Davies. Line engravings of the same model were subsequently made by John Horsburgh and R.C. Bell for successive editions of the *Wealth of Nations*, and it is accordingly the best known, as well as probably the best, portrait of the author of that work. It is a profile bust showing rather handsome features, full forehead, prominent eyeballs, well curved eyebrows, slightly aquiline nose, and firm mouth and chin, and it is inscribed, "Adam Smith in his 64th year, 1787. Tassie F." In this medallion Smith wears a wig, but Tassie executed another, Mr. J.M. Gray tells us, in what he called "the antique manner," without the wig, and with neck and breast bare. "This work," says Mr. Gray, "has the advantage of showing the rounded form of the head, covered with rather curling hair and curving upwards from the brow to a point above the large ear, which is hidden in the other version." It bears the same date as the former, and it appears never to have been engraved. Raspe mentions a third medallion of Smith in his catalogue of Tassie's enamels— "a bust in enamel, being in colour an imitation of chalcedony, engraved by F. Warner, after a model by J. Tassie," — but this appears from Mr. Gray's account to be a reduced version of the first of the two just mentioned. Kay made two portraits of Smith: the first, done in 1787, representing him as he walked in the street, and the second, issued in 1790, and occasioned, no doubt, by his death, representing him as he has entered an office, probably the Custom House. There is a painting by T. Collopy in the National Museum of Antiquities at Edinburgh, which is thought to be a portrait of Adam Smith from the circumstance that the title *Wealth of Nations* appears on the back of a book on the table in the picture; but in the teeth of Stewart's very explicit statement that Smith never sat for his portrait, the inference drawn from that circumstance cannot but remain very doubtful. All other likenesses of Smith are founded on those of Tassie and Kay. Smith was of middle height, full but not corpulent, with erect figure, well-set head, and large gray or light blue eyes, which are

said to have beamed with “inexpressible benignity.” He dressed well — so well that nobody seems to have remarked it; for while we hear, on the one hand, of Hume’s black-spotted yellow coat and Gibbon’s flowered velvet, and on the other, of Hutton’s battered attire and Henry Erskine’s gray hat with the torn rim, we meet with no allusion to Smith’s dress either for fault or merit.

Smith’s books, which went on his death to his heir, Lord Reston, were divided, on the death of the latter, between his two daughters; the economic books going to Mrs. Bannerman, the wife of the late Professor Bannerman of Edinburgh, and the works on other subjects to Mrs. Cunningham, wife of the Rev. Mr. Cunningham of Prestonpans. Both portions still exist, the former in the Library of the New College, Edinburgh, to which they have been presented by Dr. D. Douglas Bannerman of Perth; and the latter in the possession of Professor Cunningham of Queen’s College, Belfast, except a small number which were sold in Edinburgh in 1878, and a section, consisting almost exclusively of Greek and Latin classics, which Professor Cunningham has presented to the library of the college of which he is a member. Among other relics of Smith that are still extant are four medallions by Tassie, which very probably hung in his library. They are medallions of his personal friends: Black, the chemist; Hutton, the geologist; Dr. Thomas Reid, the metaphysician; and Andrew Lumisden, the Pretender’s old secretary, and author of the work on the antiquities of Rome.



Canongate Kirkyard, Edinburgh — Smith's final resting place



Smith's grave